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DR. BROWN'S LECTURES

ON THE

PHILOSOPHY OF THE MIND.

STEREOTYPED.

Edinburgh:—*Duncan Stevenson*,
Printer to the University.

Thomas Brown M.D.

PROFESSOR OF MORAL PHILOSOPHY

IN THE UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH

Engraved by W. Walker from a Painting by Geo. Watson Esq. in 1826.

LECTURES

ON THE

PHILOSOPHY

OF THE

HUMAN MIND.

BY THE LATE

THOMAS BROWN, M. D.

PROFESSOR OF MORAL PHILOSOPHY IN THE UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH.

WITH A MEMOIR OF THE AUTHOR,

BY THE REV. DAVID WELSH, MINISTER OF ST. DAVID'S,

GLASGOW.

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MDCCCXXVIII.

MEMOIR OF DR. BROWN.*

THOMAS BROWN, M. D. author of the following Lectures, was the youngest son of the Rev. Samuel Brown,† Minister of the united parishes of Kirkmabreck and Kirkdale, and of Mary Smith, daughter of John Smith, Esq. of Wigton. He was born at the manse of Kirkmabreck, on the 9th of January 1778.

His father survived his birth only a year and a half, and about a year after her husband's death Mrs. Brown removed with her family to Edinburgh. Here Dr. Brown received the first rudiments of his education. In the first lesson he learned all the letters of the alphabet, and every succeeding step was equally remarkable. The Bible was his class-book, and he was soon familiar with every part of Scripture history, and showed a spirit of inquiry respecting it far above his years. An anecdote which is related of him about this period is sufficiently illustrative of this. At the same time, when I mention that it happened when he was between four and five, I feel it necessary to assure the reader, that I do not state it without the most satisfactory evidence of its truth.—A lady one day entering into his mother's parlour, found him alone, sitting on the floor with a large family Bible on his knee, which he was dividing into different parts with one of his hands. She asked him if he was going to preach, as she saw he was looking for atext. "No," said he; "I am only wishing to see what the Evangelists differ in; for they do not all give the same account of Christ."

He did not attend any of the schools in Edinburgh. His education at first was entirely of a domestic nature, and his mother was his only tutor. In the middle of his seventh year he was removed to London, under the protection of his maternal uncle, Captain Smith, who placed him at first in a school at Camberwell, from which in a short time he was removed to Chiswick, where he remained several years. It was here that he gave the first promise of his genius for poetry. The death of Charles the First having been given as a theme, the master was so well pleased with his copy of verses that he thought them worthy of being inserted in a Magazine.

As more attention was paid to the classics at this school than corresponded with his uncle's ideas, he resolved—not very wisely perhaps—to place him elsewhere. It was a regulation at this school that when a boy had been once removed from it to another, he should not again be received. Upon the present occasion, however, a *round-robin*, signed by the whole school, was sent to the master, begging him to take back *Tom Brown*, should he wish to return; and another was sent to himself, entreating him to come back to them. But to this his uncle refused to consent, and placed him in a school at Bromley.

The last school he attended, was at Kensington, under Dr. Thomson, with whom he continued till the death of his uncle in 1792, a few months after which event he bade adieu to England, and arrived again in Edinburgh under his maternal roof.

During the time he was at school, he formed many friendships which continued till the end of his life. At Kew, where his uncle resided, he became acquainted with the family of the Grahams, (mother and sisters of Sir Robert Graham, now senior Baron of the English Exchequer,) on whose friendship he always set the highest value. The time spent in the house of Mrs. Graham at Kew Green, he always looked back to as one of the most interesting parts of his life. His recollections of that interesting family are embodied in a short poem of exquisite beauty, accompanying his *Wanderer in Norway*, where he tenderly describes the sensations arising in his mind, upon finding the house no longer the abode of the friends he had loved so well.

Of the particular progress that he made at the different schools he attended, I have not learned any thing with accuracy. He cer-

* Abridged from an "Account of the Life and Writings of Thomas Brown, M. D. Edinburgh, 1825."

† The Rev. Mr. Brown's father was also minister of Kirkmabreck and proprietor of Barharrow. Dr. Brown by his birth was connected with some of the oldest and most respectable families in Galloway.

tainly distinguished himself in them all, and his proficiency in classical literature was very great. Upon his return to Scotland, he used to read aloud to his sisters in English from a Latin or Greek author, and no person could have suspected that he was translating.

Hitherto his reading had been extensive but desultory. Works of imagination were what he most delighted in. His appetite for books was altogether insatiable. At one school he read through the village circulating library. The librarian was prevailed upon by him to put the books under the door of the play ground. His uncle's library was not very extensive; fortunately, however, there was a copy of Shakspeare in it, which he regularly read through every time he paid him the accustomed visit during the holidays.

At this period an accident occurred which prevents me from being more particular respecting his habits of study, or the progress he had made in his education. For some time past he had been a collector of books. All his pocket money was laid out in the purchase of valuable works; and these, with his prizes, and the presents he had received from his companions, formed a considerable library. Upon coming to Scotland, he travelled by land, leaving his books and papers to be sent by sea; and he took the precaution of directing that they should not be sent till the end of winter. But his care was in vain; and when looking for the arrival of his precious store, the vessel that conveyed them was lost, in fine weather, on a sand-bank in Yarmouth Roads. To those who value books only by what they cost, the loss will not appear great. In the history of a man of letters, however, it ranks as an event of considerable importance; the feelings of such an individual, respecting his library, forming an interesting feature in his character. Dr. Brown always remembered the circumstance with regret, and considered it as one of the greatest misfortunes of his early life.

The property which he most valued was his books; and for them he showed an interest unusually great. This interest was increased by a practice adopted by him at an early period, of marking every passage or form of expression that appeared worthy of notice. The same course has been followed by many men of letters, though by few so simply, so judiciously, and so systematically. He never read without a pencil in his hand, and ultimately had no pleasure in reading a book that was not his own. It is not easy to estimate all the advantages with which this method is attended; and few directions of more practical benefit could be given to the young student, than uniformly to follow it.

Dr. Brown may now be considered as upon literary ground, commencing a career, though not noisy, yet as distinguished as has fallen to the lot of any contemporary of his own country. In entering into the University of Edinburgh, he began his course by studying logic under Dr. Finlayson, whose approbation for him was so decidedly expressed, that he felt disappointed, when afterwards, through politics, that individual proved unfriendly to his interests.

The long vacation of the Scotish universities allowed him time to spend part of the summer of 1793 in Liverpool. While there he had the pleasure of being introduced to Dr. Currie, the elegant and benevolent biographer of Burns; who received him with great kindness, and honoured him afterwards with his correspondence. It was certainly flattering to Dr. Brown to have been thus distinguished at so early a period of his life. But I mention his acquaintance with Dr. Currie, not so much on this account, as because it was the means of directing his attention to a subject in which nature had fitted him to excel, and upon his pre-eminence in which his present fame seems chiefly to rest. About this time the first volume of Mr. Stewart's Elements of the Philosophy of the Human Mind was published. Dr. Currie put a copy of the work into the hands of his young friend, with a strong recommendation to persue it. Perhaps this circumstance was accidental, and what he might have done to any young man at the same stage in his studies; though I am rather inclined to think that he must have perceived it to be calculated to attract the notice of his friend. There was something in Dr. Brown's conversation, even when metaphysics was not the subject, which indicated to any one acquainted with the manifestations of intellectual character, that this was the science in which he was peculiarly qualified to excel; and it would be doing injustice to Dr. Currie's penetration to suppose that this escaped his notice. I am not one of those who conceive that the genius is determined by the accident of falling in with a book, or meeting with a friend. But certainly there are *occasions* upon which the powers are first called forth, and the genuine character first exhibits itself. And though, considering the intellectual atmosphere of the Edinburgh university, there seems every reason to suppose that the metaphysical philosophy would ultimately have occupied him, yet the conversation of Dr. Currie, and still more the work he put into his hands—the first metaphysical work he ever read—were calculated to give a more immediate and steady determination to his mental pursuits. Dr. Currie had soon reason to be satisfied with the judiciousness of his recommendation; and was struck, no more with the warmth of admiration that his

friend expressed, than with the acuteness of his objections to many of the doctrines.

The next winter he attended Mr. Stewart's course of lectures. The delight which he experienced upon that occasion he has described with great beauty in his verses* addressed "to Professor Dugald Stewart, with a copy of *Observations on Dr. Darwin's Zoonomia.*"

His admiration, however, of Mr. Stewart's eloquence did not blind him to the deficiency of analysis which often lurks under the majestically flowing veil of his language and imagery; and the disciple longed to combat his master. As an opening for this, he committed to paper some remarks which he had previously stated in conversation to Dr. Currie, upon one of Mr. Stewart's theories; and, after much hesitation, he at last summoned courage, and presented himself to Mr. Stewart at the close of one of his lectures, though personally unknown to him. Those who remember the dignified demeanour of Mr. Stewart in his class, which was calculated to convey the idea of one of those great and gifted men who were seen among the groves of the Academy, will duly appreciate the boldness of our young philosopher. With great modesty he read his observations; to which Mr. Stewart, with a candour that was to be expected from a philosopher, but which not the less on that account did him infinite honour, listened patiently, and then, with a smile of wonder and admiration, read to him a letter which he had received from the distinguished M. Prevost of Geneva, containing the same argument that Dr. Brown had stated. This was followed by an invitation to his house, which Dr. Brown received with a delight that was increased by the hope that in the course of familiar conversation he would have an opportunity of entering more fully into this and his other doctrines. Mr. Stewart, however, with a resolution that seems to have extended to his works, declined entering upon this or any other point of controversy. But though he was disappointed in this, he was not disappointed in the kindness of Mr. Stewart, or in his uniform and warm and generous friendship.

For several years Dr. Brown attended the usual literary and physical classes of the university, enjoying that combination of domestic happiness, and philosophical pursuit, and literary society, which Edinburgh, more perhaps than any other city in the world, affords.

We can conceive nothing more delightful than the manner in which this period was spent by Dr. Brown; with such professors as Stewart, Robison, Playfair, and Black, and such friends as Horner, Leyden, Reddie, and Erskine, and the happiness of living in a family that he loved with the greatest warmth of affection. As he was unwilling to go abroad, many of his college acquaintances came and spent their evenings with him in his mother's house. He was always temperate in his habits. His favourite beverage was tea, and over it, hour after hour was spent in discussing with his youthful companions

> The wondrous wisdom that a day had won.

There was no subject in literature or philosophy, that did not engage their attention. It was often morning before they parted; and such was the amicable spirit in which their discussions were carried on, that no one who happened to be present ever recollected the slightest appearance of irritation. In these peaceful and happy hours, Dr. Brown distinguished himself by the boldness of his speculations, the acuteness of his reflections, and the noonday clearness with which he invested every subject that was introduced. Leyden was, at this time, studying for the church, and this led their discussions frequently to topics of theology, in which Dr. Brown ever showed great knowledge and acuteness.

While Dr. Brown was pursuing his studies at the University of Edinburgh, the Theory of the learned Dr. Darwin was exciting a degree of interest in the literary world, disproportionate to its scientific merits, and which is to be ascribed partly to its novelty, and partly to the splendour of the attainments of its author. In reading Zoonomia, Dr. Brown, as was his custom, marked on the margin such passages as he conceived to be worthy of notice. He then committed a few observations to paper, with the intention of communicating them to some periodical publication. But his matter increasing, he found that he could not do justice to the subject in less than a separate volume.

By the advice of Mr. Stewart, he resolved, before putting his manuscript to the press, to submit it to the perusal of Dr. Darwin.†

The transmission of the manuscript occasioned a considerable delay in the publication, which did not take place till the beginning of 1798.

The work was noticed soon after its publication, in the Monthly Review which at that time occupied the principal place in our periodical literature, in the Annals of Medicine, and in many other periodical works. In none of these was it considered as a

* Poetical Works, ii. 117.

† For the correspondence that in consequence ensued, I must refer to my "Account of the Life and Writings of Dr. Brown." His Letters are worthy of being perused, not merely on account of the light they are calculated to throw upon some parts of his work, but also as containing a record of the progress which, at that early period, he had made in the science of mind. They also evince a degree of ingenuousness and dignity of feeling highly honourable.

juvenile performance, but as the answer of a philosopher to a philosopher, and in this light it received encomiums that might have satisfied the ambition of any veteran in literary warfare.

From those acquainted with his youth, Dr. Brown received approbation still more ample and gratifying. Lord Woodhouselee and Mr. M'Kenzie, with neither of whom at that time he was personally acquainted, spoke of the preface as the most philosophical and elegant production that had been published for many years. Dr. Gregory, Mr. Stewart, and his other distinguished friends in Edinburgh, honoured the work with the most unqualified approbation.

When we consider that the greater part of this work was written before Dr. Brown was nineteen, and that it was published before he had attained his twentieth year, it may perhaps be regarded as the most remarkable, and in some respects, the most valuable of his productions; and I know not if, in the history of philosophy, there is to be found any work exhibiting an equal prematurity of talents and attainments. In a controversial point of view, its interest is greatly diminished, from the lower estimation in which the theory of his opponent is now generally held. It has, however, a value independent of its exposition of particular errors, and contains many philosophical views of great general merit and importance.

Those also who delight to trace the progress of intellect, will find in it the germ of all Dr. Brown's subsequent discoveries in regard to mind, and of those principles of philosophizing by which he was guided in his future inquiries.

In unfolding the errors of his antagonist, he discovered those false principles of philosophizing in which they had their origin, and arrived at more correct views respecting the object of physical inquiry, and the relation of cause and effect; his inquiries also led him into an examination of the doctrines that had been maintained upon the subject of abstraction, and brought him to those conclusions which may be numbered among the most important of his speculations.

Before the publication of his "Observations," and I believe in 1796, Dr. Brown was introduced into the Literary Society; one of those associations into which the young men attending the Edinburgh University so frequently form themselves, in which they may be stimulated into greater ardour in the prosecution of their studies, and have an opportunity of improving themselves in the art of public speaking. Here he met with minds congenial to his own, young men of the most splendid talents, eager like himself in the pursuit of that knowledge, by which many of them have since conferred such honour upon their country.

In 1797 a few of the members of the Literary Society formed themselves into another association, more select, to which they gave the name of the Academy of Physics. The object of this institution was somewhat more ambitious than that of the former, and is set forth in the minute of their first meeting to be "the investigation of nature, the laws by which her phenomena are regulated, and the history of opinions concerning these laws." At this meeting, which was held on the 7th of January, there were present Messrs. Erskine, Brougham, Reddie, Brown, Rogerson, Birbeck, Logan, and Leyden. These gentlemen were afterwards joined by Lord Webb Seymour, Rev. S. Smith, Messrs. Horner, Jeffrey, Gillespie, and many others.

For some time the society proceeded with great spirit;—and in the papers that were read, and in the conversation that took place upon them, were sown the germs that afterwards developed themselves in works that have occupied much of the public attention. Among the most active of the members were Messrs. Brougham, Horner, and Dr. Brown; and the institution owed much to the truly philosophic spirit and excellent sense of Mr. Reddie.

The meetings of the society continued with considerable regularity about three years, when, from various causes, the interest that was taken in it began to decline.

The Academy of Physics will be interesting in the history of letters, not merely on account of the distinguished names that are to be found in the list of its members, but also as having given rise to a publication which has displayed a greater proportion of talent, and exercised a greater influence upon public opinion, than any other similar work in the republic of letters. It can scarcely be necessary to add, that I allude to the Edinburgh Review.

When that work commenced, the ideas of authorship being somewhat different from what they are at present, the papers were contributed without any pecuniary compensation. Some articles were written by Dr. Brown, and bear the marks of his genius. He was the author of the leading article of the second Number—a Review of the Philosophy of Kant,—and I believe every one who has attended to the subject, will allow that he has made it as intelligible as its nature admits.

His connexion with the Review, however, was but of brief continuance. Some liberties that were taken with one of his papers, by the gentleman who had the superintendence of the publication of the third number, led to a misunderstanding, which terminated in his withdrawing his assistance from the work.

Though repeatedly and earnestly solicited

to join again as a contributor to the Edinburgh Review, he constantly declined, and he was never afterwards connected with any individual in any literary work.

In 1796, Dr. Brown commenced the study of law, with the intention of preparing himself for the Scotish bar. He was led to make choice of this profession, not more by the flattering prospects it opens up to the aspiring aims of honourable ambition, than by the hope that he would find professional eminence not incompatible with attention to general learning. He soon discovered, however, that such a union, of which there were so many illustrious examples, would require a frame more robust than he possessed, and he continued his legal studies only for a single year.

Upon relinquishing the study of law he betook himself to that of medicine, and attended the usual course pursued by medical students from the year 1798 till the year 1803. During this time he was far from withdrawing his attention from letters. Besides his contributions to the Edinburgh Review, and his papers and speeches in the societies, to which we have alluded, most of the pieces contained in the first edition of his poems were then written. To the languages he was already acquainted with, he added the knowledge of German, and dipped deeply into the German philosophy. In consequence of the various pursuits in which he indulged, many of his friends entertained apprehensions in regard to his progress in professional acquirements. For this anxiety, however, there was no real cause. It was Dr. Brown's ambition to excel in every thing he undertook. And in the various examinations preparatory to receiving a diploma, which are conducted with an attention and minuteness that other learned bodies, if they consulted the dignity and respectability of their profession, would do well to imitate, he acquitted himself to the entire satisfaction of the professors before whom he appeared. Dr. Gregory was particularly struck with his proficiency, and mentioned, after his examination, that independently of uncommon knowledge in medicine, he expressed himself in Latin with the greatest elegance, and as fast as he could speak in English. The superior appearance that he made evidently resulted from a systematic attention to every branch of study. His acquirements were such as to supersede the necessity of having recourse to the usual preparative instructions of a medical assistant.

His thesis was entitled *De Somno*, and it was equally admired for the ingenuity of the theory and the purity of the Latinity. Its classical merits were such as might have been expected from the attention that had been paid to his education in England, and from his constant habits of composing in Latin, both in prose and verse.

A few months after receiving his degree he gave to the world the first edition of his poems in two volumes. It has been already mentioned, that the greater number of the pieces contained in them were written while he was at college. They are of a very miscellaneous description, and are certainly inferior to many of his subsequent compositions. At the same time they all exhibit the marks of an original and powerful genius and of a singularly refined taste.

The next publication of Dr. Brown was occasioned by the well-known controversy in regard to Mr. Leslie. For many years there had been an obvious intention on the part of many members of the church of filling up the vacant chairs of universities with the clergymen of the cities of the university seat, and their environs. This practice, though it had been strenuously resisted from the beginning, was gaining ground with a rapidity that threatened the best interests of literature and religion. Upon the promotion of Mr. Playfair to the chair of Natural Philosophy, the claims of Mr. Leslie to the mathematical class, which had been left vacant, were so incontestably superior to those of any clerical competitor, as to recommend him to the choice of the electors. The systematic and determined purpose of making the union of offices universal, may be judged of from the means which in these circumstances were resorted to. As there could be no dispute in regard to Mr. Leslie's scientific qualifications, an attempt was made to exclude him on account of his principles; and, by a course of proceeding altogether unprecedented, an endeavour was made to prevent his election. The ostensible ground on which this proceeding was founded, was a note in Mr. Leslie's ingenious essay on Heat, in which he mentions with approbation Mr. Hume's doctrine respecting causation.

In a question where the interests of science and the honour of Scotland were so vitally concerned, Dr. Brown could not remain an unconcerned spectator. Though personally unacquainted with Mr. Leslie, he felt indignant that, while he was receiving the highest honours in England, he should meet with such shameful injustice in his own country, and came voluntarily forward as one of his most zealous advocates. While other writers endeavoured to explain away what seemed objectionable in Mr. Leslie's note, and to reconcile it with the tenets of sound philosophy; and while even Mr. Leslie had unadvisedly been induced to make some concessions in regard to the limitations with which his praise of Hume was to be received, Dr. Brown boldly undertook to prove that the doctrine of Hume upon this point was not fraught with one dangerous consequence,—and though he detected some glaring errors in his theory, he demonstrated

that these errors are of the most harmless description, and not inconsistent with belief in any of the fundamental truths of religion or morality.

As Dr. Brown in his pamphlet studiously avoids all reference to the circumstances that occasioned it, and confines himself exclusively to an abstract examination of the positions contained in Mr. Hume's Essay, I do not feel myself called upon to offer any farther remarks upon the proceedings connected with Mr. Leslie's appointment—proceedings which it may be hoped will in this country prove the last chapter in the history of priestly intolerance at least, if not of priestly ambition.

The great merits of Dr. Brown's "Examination" were universally acknowledged. It was alluded to in the most flattering manner in the Edinburgh Review, in a very able article by Mr. Horner. The following short note from Mr. Stewart is extremely valuable.

My Dear Sir,

It was not in my power till this morning to sit down to your essay with the attention it deserved. I have just read it with a careful and critical eye, and can with great truth assure you that I have received from it *much* pleasure and *much* instruction. Believe me ever, with the sincerest regard,

My Dear Sir,

Yours most truly,

Dugald Stewart.

A second edition of this essay, considerably enlarged, was published in 1806. And in 1818 it appeared in a third edition, under the title "An Enquiry into the Relation of Cause and Effect," matured and perfected into one of the most elegant and profound works on the philosophy of mind that has appeared in modern times.

It was the good fortune of Dr. Brown to have been always noticed and appreciated by men of the most eminent talents, in every department of science. Having practised as a physician in Edinburgh from the time of receiving his diploma, he was, in 1806, associated in partnership with the late Dr. Gregory, whose name is a sufficient passport to medical distinction.

The circumstances that led to this connexion, which was in some respects of a nature rather unusual, were fully explained in a letter which was printed at the time, and put into the hands of Dr. Gregory's patients. By the friends both of Dr. Gregory and Dr. Brown, the arrangement was viewed with great satisfaction, and to the latter especially, it was considered as equally honourable and advantageous.

The letter from which the following is an extract, was written by Dr. Gregory, after he had the fullest opportunity of judging of the character and qualifications of his youthful associate, and when sufficient time had elapsed for the sobering effect of professional intercourse to correct any over-favourable impression that might have been supposed to have its origin in the partialities of private friendship.

"* * * All that I have seen of Dr. Brown in the last fifteen months has tended greatly to confirm and increase the good opinion which I previously entertained of him. If worth, and talents, and learning, and science, can entitle a physician to success, I think Dr. Brown has a fair chance of attaining in due time the highest eminence in his profession." * * *

But success as a physician was not sufficient to satisfy Dr. Brown's ambition, and he would gladly have preferred the most moderate independence with literary leisure, to all the advantages that the highest professional eminence could confer.

At a very early period of his life his peculiar qualifications and habits pointed him out as eminently fitted to enjoy and adorn an academic life. And in the summer of 1799, when the chair of Rhetoric became vacant, great exertions were made to procure it for the author of Observations on Darwin's Zoonomia. The means by which these exertions were defeated, are very instructive in the history of academical patronage, and city politics. I have already alluded to the circumstance, that at that time it was the view of "the courtly side" of the church, that every chair in the University, appropriated to letters and general science, should, as it became vacant, be filled up by clergymen of the city of Edinburgh, as often as individuals belonging to that body could be found fitted, "if a minister of Edinburgh on that courtly side can be ill fitted for any professorship that happens to be vacant at the time when his genius for it is in demand."* It is to this circumstance alone that the defeat of Dr. Brown can be ascribed, as the most eminent of the literary characters in Edinburgh came forward with all their influence in his favour, and the voice of the public was decidedly along with them.

When the Logic chair became vacant by the death of Dr. Finlayson, an exertion was again made on his behalf. Besides the influence of his personal friends, Dr. Brown, at this time, was honoured by the support of the late Lord Meadowbank, who hitherto had known him merely by having read his works. Amidst the violent and often unprincipled opposition that Dr. Brown met with, on account of his political sentiments, it would be improper

* From an unpublished pamphlet by Dr. Brown.

to pass over unnoticed the friendship which he uniformly experienced both from Lord Meadowbank and Lord Woodhouslee.—Learning and genius are of no party; or, at least, the ties of congenial talent are felt to be stronger than all the artificial connexions of political life. And it is certainly not the least distinguishing excellency of the liberal arts, that, in accordance with their noble etymology, they *free* the mind of those who are devoted to them from that sordid spirit which would sacrifice the interests of literature and religion to the unworthy purposes of a servile ambition; making patronage to be considered, not as a sacred trust for the benefit of those for whom it is granted, but as a source of personal advantage, or an instrument of party power, and converting situations, upon which the learning or virtue of a nation may depend, into the reward or the bribe for political subserviency. The influence of such a spirit Dr. Brown often experienced; and it is but justice to except the distinguished individuals to whom I have referred. Upon the present occasion, they exerted themselves with peculiar anxiety. His indisputable superiority as a dialectician seemed to confer upon him the strongest claims to a chair where dialectics form so principal a subject of examination; and the rare union that he was known to exhibit of great powers of metaphysical analysis, and of extensive acquaintance with the physical sciences, seemed to insure his success in enlarging the boundaries of the science of that principle in our nature in which all the other sciences have their origin. Their efforts, however, and those of his other friends were defeated. Another was appointed to the chair, and he had to satisfy himself again with the fame of deserving it.

This disappointment in no degree interfered with his devotion to science; and every hour that was not employed in business was dedicated to learning. In the mean time, his name gradually became more known, and he was now generally considered as among the most distinguished of those who supported the high character of our northern metropolis for literature and genius. In continuing in the practice of physic along with Dr. Gregory, his reputation as a physician also rapidly increased, but without any increase of partiality on his part for a laborious profession, whose frequent and agitating interruptions were found to be unfavourable to close and continuous thought. The discharge of his duties was marked by that assiduous tenderness of attention which might have been expected from a disposition so truly amiable; but still philosophy was his passion, from which he felt it as a misfortune that his duty should so much estrange him.

The period, however, at last approached, when he was to be elevated to a situation suited to his tastes and habits, and where his public duties corresponded with his inclinations. Mr. Stewart, in consequence of the gradual decline of his health, being frequently prevented from attending to the duties of his class, found it necessary to have recourse to some of his friends to supply his place during his temporary absence. In general, it is very easy for a Professor to find a substitute. Nothing more is necessary than that the manuscript lecture should be committed to a friend, by whom it is read to the class. In Mr. Stewart's case, however, it was otherwise. His habits of composition, the numerous transpositions that were to be found in his pages, and the many illustrations of which he sketched merely the outline, trusting the filling up to his extemporaneous powers of discourse, rendered his papers in a great measure useless in any hands but his own. In this difficulty he applied to Dr. Brown, who undertook the arduous task of supplying his place with lectures of his own composition. He first appeared in the Moral Philosophy class in the winter of 1808-9. At this time, however, there was no great call for his exertions, as Mr. Stewart was soon able to resume his public duties.

In the following winter, Mr. Stewart had again recourse to his assistance; after the Christmas holidays Dr. Brown presented himself before the class, and, as an apology for appearing there, read the following letter.

To Dr. Brown.

Kinneil House, Borrowstoness,
30th December, 1809.

My Dear Sir,

As the state of my health at present makes it impossible for me to resume my lectures on Wednesday next, I must again have recourse to your friendly assistance, in supplying my place for a short time. *Two* lectures, or at the utmost *three* in the week will, I think, be sufficient during my absence; and I should wish (if equally agreeable to you) that you would confine yourself chiefly to the *intellectual powers of man;* a part of the course which I was led to pass over this season, in hopes of being able, by contracting my plan, to do more justice to the appropriate doctrines of Ethics. On this last subject I had accordingly entered a few days before the vacation; and it is my intention to prosecute it as soon as I shall find myself in a condition to return.

I shall be anxious till I hear from you in reply to this letter, and am,

My Dear Sir,
Yours very sincerely,
Dugald Stewart.

At this period the course of my studies had brought me to Mr. Stewart's class, and I trust I may be excused for mentioning, that this was the first time that I had the pleasure of seeing Dr. Brown. With his character I was well acquainted, but the first time I saw him was when he was reading the preceding letter. I shall certainly never forget his appearance, or the reception he met with. The eloquent panegyric he pronounced upon Mr. Stewart, and the unaffected modesty with which he announced his intention of coming forward with *three* lectures in the week, had already secured the attention of his hearers, and prepared them for all the ingenuity and eloquence of his introductory discourse. The expectations that were excited by his first appearance were more than equalled by the marvellous display of profound and original thought, of copious reading, of matchless ingenuity, and of great powers of eloquence which were displayed in his succeeding lectures. His elocution also attracted much notice. It was already observed that nature had led him to delight in recitation; and in the English academies, by frequent recitations of select passages in prose and verse, he was trained up to that command of voice and correctness of pronunciation which now obtained for him so decided a superiority in our Scotish University. The classical finish to which he was able in so brief a period to bring his lectures, must no doubt have added greatly to the enthusiastic admiration that day after day was exhibited, and which was beyond any thing of the kind that I can recollect. The Moral Philosophy class at this period presented a very striking aspect. It was not a crowd of youthful students led away in the ignorant enthusiasm of the moment; distinguished members of the bench, of the bar, and of the pulpit, were daily present to witness the powers of this rising philosopher. Some of the most eminent of the professors were to be seen mixing with the students, and Mr. Playfair, in particular, was present at almost every lecture. The originality, and depth, and eloquence of the lectures, was the subject of general conversation, and had a very marked effect upon the young men attending the University, in leading them to metaphysical speculations.

Upon its being announced that Mr. Stewart was to resume his lectures, a meeting of the class was held, when it was resolved that a committee should be appointed to draw up an address, congratulating that illustrious philosopher upon the recovery of his health, and expressing at the same time the feelings of admiration that had been excited by the labours of his substitute. The committee was composed of individuals distinguished for their rank and talents, many of whom are well known to the public. This address contains the highest testimony to the ability which Dr. Brown had displayed in the execution of the arduous task he had undertaken.

The public display of Dr. Brown's talents so overwhelmingly established his character, and pretensions to the chair, that when Mr. Stewart signified a desire to have him united with himself in the professorship, although opposition was at one time threatened, it was but feebly exerted. At the same time, great efforts were deemed necessary by the friends of Dr. Brown, and great efforts were made. Mr. Stewart himself used all the influence that the lustre he had for so many years shed upon the University rendered so great. With an anxiety for the interests of philosophy and the character of his chair highly honourable, he submitted, I believe, personally to solicit the support of every member in the town council in favour of his friend. Many letters were addressed to the patrons of the University, by individuals of the highest eminence, bearing the strongest and most unequivocal testimony to the merits of Dr. Brown. Of these letters, my present limits will allow me to insert only the following from

LORD MEADOWBANK to
MR. K. MACKENZIE.

Edinburgh, 1st May, 1810.

SIR,—I understand it is now in contemplation to appoint a professor for the chair of Moral Philosophy in the university of Edinburgh; and, when the Honourable Patrons consider the high reputation to which that chair has been raised, and the eminence which, for the last seventy years, has belonged to Scotland in Metaphysical Science, they must be sensible that no appointment could form an object of greater interest with the men of letters of this country. On this account I flatter myself with experiencing their indulgence in presuming to trouble them with a few words on a subject, where the favourite studies of my youth, and my attention and habits through life, have rendered me, as I conceive, competent to form a judgment with some degree of confidence.

And I beg leave to lay it down as certain, that only a mind of very singular powers, habits, and accomplishments, is fitted to treat successfully the subjects which enter into the course of Moral Philosophy. It is not enough to have studied attentively the best writers upon them, and to be a person of judgment, worth, and literary talent and taste. There must be a peculiar aptitude of intellect, suited to the extreme subtility of the subject, and united with an inventive vigour of thought, to form a successful teacher. Other sciences may be well taught by persons competent only to describe what is

already known, though unable to add to the hoard of knowledge. But, in the present state of this singular science, without a genius fitted to extend its boundaries, and that of a very superior and peculiar character, no person ever gave a course in Moral Philosophy fitted to enlighten and animate the student. If the lectures are not warmed by the powers of original thinking, they are incurably languid and vapid, or at best descend to be little better than vehicles of amusement, filled with detached observations and pleasing illustrations.

Under these impressions, the appearance of Dr. Thomas Brown as a candidate has given me the greatest pleasure. I have heard several of the lectures which he read this last winter and the preceding, when Mr. Stewart was indisposed; and I will venture to affirm that they were productions of a mind of the first order, of profound, original, clear, and extensive views, stored with well-digested study, and adorned with whatever inexhaustible fancy and exquisite taste can furnish, to render the most abstract of the sciences intelligible, pleasing, and attractive to the opening minds of youth. Such endowments are rarely to be met with. They must, in the natural course of things, bring Dr. Brown forward to the foremost situation in any profession. And if his exertions, in the vigour and inventive period of life, are secured by the patrons to the chair of morals, I shall look forward with the utmost confidence, not only to a still increased celebrity being there speedily acquired, but to a real and effective progress being achieved, in this fundamental science, which will confer new honours on our country, and incalculable benefits on mankind.

I have the honour to be,
Sir,
Your most obedient,
and very faithful servant,
ALLAN MACONOCHIE.

South Castle Street.

At a meeting of the Town Council in May following (1810,) Mr. Stewart was re-elected Professor of Moral Philosophy, and Dr. Brown conjoined with him as Colleague in the election.

Immediately after his appointment, Dr. Brown retired to the country, where he remained till within six weeks of the meeting of the College. He judged that air and exercise might strengthen him for the labours of the winter; and, from the experience of the former year, he had sufficient confidence in his own powers to be assured that he could prepare his lectures upon the spur of the occasion. Accordingly, when the College opened, except the lectures that were written during Mr. Stewart's absence, he had no other preparation in writing. But in his extensive reading, his thorough acquaintance with the science, a copious imagination, great powers of language, with good health and spirits, and the stimulus of an enlightened audience, he had the best of all preparations. From a mind of such a conformation, and in a state of such culture, what is called forth in the excitement of the hour, has certainly far more spirit, and generally as much correctness as the careful and plodding products of timid mediocrity.

He seldom began to prepare any of his lectures till the evening of the day before it was delivered. His labours generally commenced immediately after tea, and he continued at his desk till two or three in the morning. After the repose of a few hours, he resumed his pen, and continued writing often till he heard the hour of twelve, when he hurried off to deliver what he had written. When his lecture was over, if the day was favourable, he generally took a walk, or employed his time in light reading, till his favourite beverage restored him again to a capacity for exertion.

His exertions during the whole of the winter were uncommonly great; and, with his delicate frame, it is surprising that he did not sink altogether under them. For several nights he was prevented from ever being in bed; and, upon one occasion, he did not begin his lecture till one o'clock on the morning of the day on which it was to be delivered. He had been engaged in entertaining a numerous company of literary friends, and it was upon their departure that he commenced his studies. The lecture* contains a theory of avarice; and though I cannot agree in his general doctrine, but conceive that the desire of property is as truly an original part of our nature as the desire of power, or of any of those pleasures into which he so ingeniously endeavours to resolve it, I think it must be allowed to contain much valuable truth, and to bear no marks whatever of the rapidity with which it was composed. The subject of many of his lectures he had never reflected upon till he took up his pen, and many of his theories occurred to him during the period of composition. He never, indeed, at any time, wrote upon any subject without new thoughts, and these often the best, starting up in his mind.

To those who take an interest in the variety of intellectual character, these circumstances will be of a deeper interest than that which arises merely from the proof they convey of the rapidity of his powers of execution. They serve to illustrate a peculiarity of intellect, where the comprehensive energy is so great, that the utmost diversity and no-

* Lecture lxix.

velty of subordinate and particular disquisitions are all kept in complete unison with the general design.

The admiration of the extraordinary talents displayed by Dr. Brown in his lectures, which I experienced in common with all those who attended the Moral Philosophy class, made me very desirous of his acquaintance; and I was happy in having a much valued relative,* whose mother and brother had been amongst his earliest friends and correspondents, and whose own *meekness of wisdom* gave her such a place in his estimation as to secure a very favourable reception to any one whom she might introduce to his notice. From the time of my first interview he showed all that kindly attention by which his manners were characterised; and in a short period I had the happiness of enjoying the most habitual and familiar intercourse with him. I may, with great truth, apply to Dr. Brown the words of the younger Pliny, in speaking of an eminent philosopher of his time: *Penitus domi inspexi, amarique ab eo laboravi, etsi non erat laborandum. Erat enim obvius et expositus, plenusque humanitate quam præcepit. Atque utinam sic ipse spem quam de me concepit impleverim, ut ille multum virtutibus suis addidit. At ego nunc illas miror, quia magis intelligo, quanquam ne nunc quidem satis intelligo.*†

I still fondly dwell upon the many happy and profitable hours spent in his society, and I shall ever look upon it as a happiness and an honour that I succeeded in securing a place in his friendship. To be admitted into the familiar intercourse of a man of virtue and genius,—to see him in his hours of greatest relaxation, when all the restraints of public life are removed, scattering his various opinions upon life and manners in fresh and luxuriant fertility, as out of a soil impregnated with all the seeds of wisdom and goodness, may be considered as one of the greatest enjoyments of life. "Who shall describe," says a celebrated living poet, in alluding to his acquaintance with another living poet of equal eminence, "who shall describe all that he gains in the social, the unrestrained, and the frequent conversations with a friend who is at once communicative and judicious, whose opinions upon all subjects of literary kind are founded on good taste and exquisite feeling!"‡ In speaking upon a similar subject, Dr. Johnson has expressed himself with a greater warmth of feeling than usual, and his words, in regard to an old and respected friend, with some few omissions, I may literally apply in the present instance. "Of Gilbert Walmsley thus presented to me let me indulge myself in the remembrance. I knew him very early; he was one of the first friends that literature procured me, and I hope that at least my gratitude made me worthy of his notice.

"His studies had been so various, that I am not able to name a man of equal knowledge. His acquaintance with books was great; and what he did not immediately know he knew at least where to find. Such was the amplitude of his learning, and such his copiousness of communication, that it might be doubted whether a day now passes in which I have not some advantage from his friendship."§

It might be expected that my narrative should now become fuller and more interesting from the intimacy that began to subsist between us. But every thing like incident in Dr. Brown's life terminated with his appointment to the chair of Moral Philosophy, and the nature of our intercourse afforded but few materials for biography. What I witnessed in the course of my acquaintance with him "affords matter for praise," to use the words of a biographer of Barrow, "rather than narrative." The peaceful and improving hours that are spent in the happiness of domestic privacy, owe their greatest charm to the very absence of events calculated to gratify curiosity; and the features of his domestic life, it would require the exquisite delicacy, and fidelity, and warmth, of his own pencil to portray. The more that my memory dwells upon the years of our acquaintance, the more I feel my inadequacy to the task of conveying any idea of that union of moral and intellectual excellences which adorned his character, and which made his house at once a school for the intellect, and a home to the heart.

There is something indeed in the society of every man of high intellectual endowments, which is to be found only in his society, and which no description can preserve; as the flavour of some fruits is found in perfection only when we pluck them from the tree. I do not allude merely to the advantage and happiness of social intercourse, arising from the exercise of the kindlier affections, the refinements of polished life, the never-resting and intermingling lights of peaceful affection, and easy playfulness, and softened wisdom—the *seria mixta cum jocis*—but to a peculiar liveliness and distinctness, in our perception of truth itself, to which, in such circumstances, we attain. The attractive grace that the soft and flitting lights of gaiety and kindness shed upon the forms of truth seems to give them a readier way to our assent. And every one who has enjoyed the converse of a man of

* The late Mrs. Welsh of Moffat, daughter of the Rev. W. Scott, late of Kirkpatrick Juxta.

† Plin. Ep. lib. ii. ‡ Crabbe.

§ Lives of the Poets.

philosophic genius, must often have experienced a comprehensiveness and clearness in his views, beyond what either books or meditation can bestow. This is to be ascribed partly to that sympathy, by which our faculties are stimulated into a corresponding activity. But it is also in a great measure owing to this circumstance, that, besides those obstacles, in the inquiry after truth, which are common to all, every individual has peculiar difficulties arising from his mental conformation, to which, in their multiplied diversities, the arguments contained in books cannot be accommodated. But in actual conversation, the penetration of the philosopher enables him to detect and to dispossess the special *idol* of our mind. He suits his discussion to the peculiar conformation of our intellect. And the influence of his presence is felt, not merely in the new truths that he presents to us, but in his removing the impediments which check the activity of our faculties. In consequence of this, while the more obvious features in the social character of every great man may be preserved and made obvious to all, there are other traits that are altogether indefinable; and these, too, are what each individual, had he been present, would have valued most, as speaking to his own intellect. Though the excellence is the same in reality, yet it is felt as different by each, being accommodated to each individually. Bacon says, that the best part of beauty is what a painter cannot express. And the recorded conversation of a man of genius can no more convey an idea of the effect of that conversation upon those who actually enjoyed it, than the art which is able to make the eye of his portrait seem to gaze at once upon all, can convey the feeling which each individual in the presence of the original experienced from his living glance of affection and intelligence.

As Dr. Brown's conversational style was not less correct than his written discourse, and exceedingly fluent, those parts of his works, where the subjects admit of being treated in a more familiar manner, may, in some instances, convey a tolerably correct idea of his language in company. But the many pleasing episodes and breaks in his discussions—the elegant turns of wit—the playful personal applications with which he knew how to relieve what might otherwise have become tedious, but which were still felt to be kind even when apparently most satirical; and above all, the accommodation that he made of his views and arguments, according to the character of those with whom he was conversing, cannot be preserved.

Many of the most distinguished literary characters of the age were visitors at Dr. Brown's house, and few foreigners of literary eminence came to Edinburgh without being introduced to him. This certainly made his acquaintance doubly valuable,—though his own society was so delightful that I was never happier than when I found him alone. It was usually in the evening that I waited upon him. His mother and sisters were generally present, and occasionally one or more visitors, who, like myself, were on such terms with the family, that they did not require the formality of an invitation. Nothing could be more delightful than an evening spent with this peaceful and accomplished family. It was impossible not to observe the attention Dr. Brown paid to all; the art with which he made every one feel at home; and his own manners so gracefully varying with the varying theme. The tones of his voice were extremely pleasing. He conversed with the greatest fluency on every topic.* When the subject was of importance, his manners were animated and powerful; when about trifles, playful, with a happy turn of wit and elegance of expression. His kindly consideration encouraged every one to state his sentiments with confidence and freedom; and even when he refuted the opinions that he did not agree with, he did it so as not to offend the most delicate self-love, and poured into the mind such a flood of light, that personal defeat was forgotten in the delight of the perception of truth. When only his own family were present, he would frequently take up any book that happened to be lying on the table, or to which reference might be made, and read such passages as he had marked, with many passing observations, and always courting remark in return.

For some years after his appointment to the Moral Philosophy chair, Dr. Brown had little leisure for engaging in any literary undertaking. Even the long summer vacation he found to be no more than sufficient for recruiting his health and spirits, and preparing him for the exertions of the succeeding season. By degrees, however, he became familiarized with the duties of his situation, and was enabled to indulge occasionally in other pursuits. In the summer of 1814 he brought to a conclusion his *Paradise of Coquettes*, upon which the fame that he at present enjoys as a poet seems chiefly to rest. He had begun this poem, and written a great part of it more than six years before, but was obliged to lay it aside on account of his health. In general, indeed, writing had the effect of raising his pulse very much, and rendered it so irritable as to make a difference of thirty in sitting or standing. When the work to which I at present allude was ready for the press,

* Mira in sermone, mira etiam in ore ipso vultuque suavitas.

he was induced, from various circumstances, to resolve upon publishing it without his name. Every thing, accordingly, was gone about with the greatest secrecy. A gentleman, in whom he reposed great confidence, transacted with an eminent publisher, from whom the name of the author for a time was very carefully concealed, and the poem was published anonymously in London in 1814.

The manner in which this poem was received, must have been gratifying to Dr. Brown's feelings. The sentence of the Reviewers was decidedly favourable; and the opinion of those, whose opinion he valued more than all the fame that a Review can give, was more favourable still. It would be doing injustice to Mr. Stewart not to mention, that upon receiving the poem, he read it with great delight, and that his discerning taste immediately discovered the author.

Dr. Brown's next publication was also poetical. At an early period, he had written some verses to accompany the *Letters of Mary Wollstonecroft from Norway*, as sent to a female friend, who had expressed a desire of reading them. These verses are to be found in the first edition of his Poems. And at Logie, in the neighbourhood of Stirling, where, in the summer of 1815, he had gone for the recovery of his health, he employed himself in filling up the plan that he had originally sketched. Upon this enlarged scale, he selected the poem to give name to a volume, and in the winter of 1815 it was published under the title of *The Wanderer in Norway*.

The poetical merits of the piece consist principally in its containing what he intended it should contain, a picture of an impassioned mind, in circumstances of strong and wild emotion, and of "the country which bears in the rapid variety of its rude and magnificent scenery many analogies to the impetuous but changeful feelings, that may be supposed to have agitated such a mind in the dreadful circumstances in which it was placed."

There are in the poem many beautiful descriptions of external nature, and many passages of exquisite pathos. Its most characteristic features, however, are its nice analyses of feeling, and detection of the secret springs of conduct, in combination with the imagery and fervour of poetry.

The great defect of the poem is, not the predominance of the philosophic over the poetic spirit, with this I do not think it chargeable, but that it takes for granted too intimate an acquaintance, on the part of the reader, with the circumstances to which it refers, and that the merits of the different parts depend more upon their perceived relations to the other parts, than it is wise for a poet who considers the indolent temper in which poetry is generally read to allow them to depend.

After the rising of his class in April, Dr. Brown usually continued two or three months in Edinburgh, when he retired with his sisters to some rural retreat, in the choice of which he was chiefly influenced by the opportunities it afforded him of indulging undisturbed in his admiration of external nature. He had all his life a great love of wandering among intricate paths, climbing high hills, and proceeding to the very brink of precipices, a taste which he not unfrequently indulged to his imminent danger.

> From rock to rock,
> When other steps paus'd shuddering at the chasm
> And the scant footing of the onward cliff,
> His leap was first. It was a joy, to tread
> The airy height, and gaze on all below,
> And feel no hazard but in the firm heart
> That dar'd to master it. Each rugged path
> He knew, and steep recess, whose shadows nurs'd
> The mountain flower.

From the usual sports of the field he shrunk with insuperable aversion; and these were the simple delights in which it was his happiness, with an almost boyish joyousness of spirit, day after day to indulge.

Walking was his favourite exercise, which he preferred to every other, as he was thus able to pause and admire a rock, a wild flower, a brook, or whatever else of beautiful presented itself. This circumstance made him feel the presence of a stranger to be a restraint. His sisters were his chief companions. A small rivulet, and the smoke rising from a cottage sheltered among trees, were the natural objects that he seemed to contemplate with most delight. He never could pass either without pausing first to admire. Many allusions to this are to be found in his poetry.

He spent a considerable part of two summers at Invar, in the immediate neighbourhood of Dunkeld, and the happiness he enjoyed there, and his plans connected with it, entered so largely into his thoughts, that the account of his life would be defective, if I had passed over this circumstance.

It was at Invar, in the autumn of 1816, that he wrote the *Bower of Spring*. It was published in Edinburgh as by the author of the Paradise of Coquettes, and from this and some other circumstances, the name of the author began to be suspected. He at one time hesitated about bringing it out in Edinburgh; and I cannot help thinking, that if it had been published in London, it would have had a much more extensive circulation. In that case, the author for a time would have continued unknown, and as the poem exhibits all the characteristic excellences of the Paradise, and is free from many of its disadvantages, it would have enjoyed at least an equal popularity. The volume, besides the poem which gives it its name,

contains several smaller pieces of very great beauty.

In the year 1817, Dr. Brown lost his mother, whom he loved with the utmost reverence and tenderness of affection. The care and kindness with which he watched over her in her last illness, cannot be described, and his affliction upon her death was deep and lasting. Her remains were at first placed in a vault in Edinburgh, and at the end of the winter session, removed to the family burying-ground in the old church-yard of Kirkmabreck. This romantic and secluded spot, Dr. Brown had always viewed with great interest. A few years before, in visiting his father's grave, he had been altogether overcome, and when he saw the earth closing in upon all that remained on earth of a mother that was so dear to him, *and the long grassy mantle cover all*, his distress was such as to affect every person who saw him.

After his mother's funeral, Dr. Brown resided some months at the Manse of Balmaclellan, where he wrote his *Agnes*, which was published in the beginning of the winter of 1818. Its circulation does not appear to have been more extensive than that of his former poems, a circumstance for which it may appear difficult to account, as the poem is free from those obscurities that had been supposed to diminish the interest in his former pieces, and has the recommendation of an affecting and simple story.

The frequency with which the poetical works of Dr. Brown succeeded each other began to excite remark. And while the devotion of his mind to poetry, to the neglect, as was supposed, of philosophy, was objected to him by his enemies almost as a moral defect in his character, even those who were inclined to judge more favourably, regretted it as a weakness that materially injured his reputation. The objection was somewhat similar to that which Cicero tells us was made to him for the attention he paid to the Greek philosophy. *Non eram nescius, ut hic noster labor in varias reprehensiones incurreret, nam quibusdam, et iis quidem non admodum indoctis, totum hoc displicet, philosophari. quidam autem non id tam reprehendunt, si remissius agatur : sed tantum studium, tamque multam operam ponendam in eo non arbitrantur. . . Postremo aliquos futuros suspicor, qui me ad alias litteras vocent : genus hoc scribendi, etsi sit elegans, personæ tamen, et dignitatis esse negent.*

To these objections Dr. Brown's answer might be the same as Cicero's.

Si delectamur cum scribimus, quis est tam invidus, qui ab eo nos abducat ? sin laboramus, quis est, qui alienæ modum statuat industriæ ?

That Dr. Brown preferred poetry to philosophy, is certain. The rapidity with which he arrived at the knowledge of the questions that have been discussed among philosophers, made him feel it as an irksome task to dwell upon those intermediate steps which were necessary for the satisfaction of other minds, though, to his quicker glance, the conclusion seemed intuitively obvious. How far he was justifiable in yielding to his own taste in the choice of his literary pursuits, it might require a casuist to decide. It must, however, be observed that he neglected none of the duties of his situation which his health would allow, and it does appear to me that to aim at refining the mind by habituating it to the contemplation of the fairest forms of beauty or virtue, may be as worthy as to determine wherein the essence of beauty or virtue consists. And the man who, by his writings, seeks to raise and refine the tone of the moral sentiments of his readers, deserves as well of mankind as if he had endeavoured to disclose to them principles that might have served to augment the wealth of the community.

That Dr. Brown did not consult for his immediate fame in the choice he made, may be readily allowed. But before he brought himself forward in the character of a poet, he was aware of the risk to which he subjected himself. And, having once resolved, he had too much firmness of character to be moved by the censure or neglect of his contemporaries.

In the summer of 1819, after spending a few days in the neighbourhood of Glasgow with his much valued friend Mr. Reddie, he went to London, where, however, he did not long continue. Upon his return, he paid another visit to Dunkeld, with which he was still more delighted than he had ever previously been, and he resolved to spend there a part of every future summer. At this time he began his Text Book, a work which he had long intended to prepare.

In the end of autumn he returned to Edinburgh in high health and spirits, and was remarked by every person who saw him, to look unusually well. As for many reasons he was anxious that his Outlines should speedily be published, he engaged in the work with great ardour. His method of preparing it was, not to satisfy himself with a cold and formal enumeration of the heads of his lectures, but to take a distinct subject, whether it occupied one or more lectures, or was discussed in a part of a lecture, and to conceive himself speaking to one of his pupils, and endeavouring, in as short a space as possible, to convey an idea of his doctrines. Those who consider the abstract nature of the points he had thus to discuss, will perceive at once that his work must have required a very great effort of thought.

A few days before the Christmas holidays he felt rather unwell. During the holidays he confined himself to the house, and was in hopes that, by taking care of his health, he

would be able to meet with his class at their termination. His only complaint at this time was what he seldom failed to be affected with when composing, quickness of pulse, and a feeling of weakness. In such circumstances, losing a little blood had been known to do him good, and his sisters were very anxious that he should again make trial of this remedy; but the fear that it might keep him a few days longer from his duties deterred him. At the end of the holidays, he continued nearly in the same state, and delayed lecturing for a few days. When he again met his class, his lecture unfortunately happened to be one which always excited in him a great deal of emotion. Indeed many of his lectures affected him so much, that he found it difficult to conceal from his pupils what he felt. When he read any thing that contained sublime moral sentiments, or any thing very tender, he never failed to be much moved. The lecture to which I at present refer, is the thirty-fifth in this volume; and those who recollect the manner in which he always recited the very affecting lines from Beattie's Hermit, will not wonder that some who attended his last course should conceive that the emotion he displayed arose from a foreboding of his own approaching dissolution.

'Tis night, and the landscape is lovely no more:
I mourn, but, ye woodlands, I mourn not for you;
For morn is approaching, your charms to restore,
Perfum'd with fresh fragrance, and glittering with dew:
Nor yet for the ravage of winter I mourn;
Kind Nature the embryo blossom will save.
But when shall Spring visit the mouldering urn?
O! when shall it dawn on the night of the grave?

This was the last lecture he ever delivered.

As yet he had not allowed a physician to be sent for. Having often been in the same state before, he apprehended no particular danger. When Dr. Gregory saw him, he did not think his case alarming, and ordered nothing but that he should keep himself quiet, and not go out. On the day after this restriction he wrote the following note.

To Dr. Gregory.

My Dear Sir,—As you would not allow me to think of lecturing this week, may I beg you to take the trouble of intimating your opinion to my class. I know that, to any one else, with as few spare moments in a well-filled day as you have, this would be a very impertinent request. But I have learned by long habit to rely so fully on your friendly kindness, that I fear I have begun to think it an impossible thing to intrude on it.

May I beg you, at the same time, to state to my young Moral Philosophers, how much I regret our separation, and what double enjoyment of health I shall feel in being enabled to return to the official duties that connect me with them. That I am under your care, will, I am sure, be considered by them as a good omen of my return being the speedier.

With best regards,
Ever yours faithfully,
Thos. Brown.

79, *Prince's Street*,
Jan. 17.

The regret he felt in not being able to attend to the duties of his class, and his anxiety to get a person appointed * to read his lectures, injured him greatly.

In the beginning of February he went a few miles out of town, to the country house of his much valued friend Dr. Charles Stuart. The change was for a few days attended with favourable effects. The weather was at that time very mild, he thought himself rather better, and great hopes were entertained of his recovery. But, alas! these hopes were soon dispelled. The mildness of the season was but of brief continuance. A dreadful storm succeeded, with heavy falls of snow. The effect upon his feeble frame was immediate; and from this time his health rapidly declined.

It was while he was here that I saw, for the last time, my ever-lamented friend. The variety of my avocations had, about this period, prevented me from enjoying so much of his society as on former occasions; and indeed, since the commencement of our acquaintance, there never had been a season in which I had been so seldom with him. The last time I had seen him he was in the enjoyment of excellent health, and seemed more than usually sanguine in regard to the completion of his Physiology, with which he was busily engaged. Since that, I had heard merely that he was unwell, without the remotest idea that his complaints were dangerous, and I have no words to express my feelings when I entered his apartment.

Vidi egomet duro graviter concussa dolore
Pectora, in alterius non unquam lenta dolorem;
Et languere oculos vidi, et pallescere amantem
Vultum, quo nunquam Pietas nisi rara, Fidesque,
Altus amor Veri, et purum spirabat Honestum.

I found him in bed; and there was something in the sound of his voice, and in the expression of his countenance altogether, that at the very first look irresistibly impressed upon me that there was nothing more to

* The gentleman appointed was the late Mr. John Stewart, for whom Dr. Brown entertained a high esteem. The superintendence of the publication of the first edition of the following Lectures was committed to Mr. Stewart, and he added the titles and notes of reference, which, with some trifling alterations, are still retained. Upon his lamented death, which took place when the work was little more than half completed, he was succeeded in his editorial labours by the Rev. Edward Milroy.

hope. There was no languor however in his *eye*. His face was pale, his cheeks excessively sunk; but, amidst the death of every other feature, his eyes had all their former mild intelligence.

As upon a former occasion he had derived great benefit from a voyage to London, his medical advisers were urgent with him to try the effect of it immediately, and, as soon as the season allowed, to remove to a milder climate. "They want me," said he, with a tone of voice in which sorrow and something almost approaching to dissatisfaction were conjoined, "they want me to go to London, and then spend the summer in Leghorn, and a thousand other horrid places;" and then, after a pause, and with an altered tone of voice and expression of countenance, such as marked his allowance for human nature, and at the same time that he was stating an interesting truth, he added, "'tis very difficult to convince them that there is such a disease as the love of one's country: many people really cannot be made to comprehend it." He then proceeded with a languid and melancholy smile, "but there *is* such a disease—

Nescio qua natale solum dulcedine captos
Ducit, et immemores non sinit esse sui.

Non sinit—how simply and beautifully expressive—it will not *let* us forget it!"

I shall always consider it as a valuable proof of his confidence and friendship, that at this time he intrusted to me the superintendence of the printing of the sheets that remained of his Physiology.

In a very few days I again waited upon him, when I found him somewhat better, and had much conversation with him, of the most interesting nature; but, being entirely confidential, it is not for publication.

The last time I saw him was on the morning of his departure for London. He had requested me to draw out an advertisement to prefix to his work, stating the cause of its appearing in an unfinished state. I mentioned that, for many reasons, I should prefer the notice to come from himself: and seeing me have a pencil in my hand, he raised himself upon his bed, leaning upon his arm, and, after a moment's pause, pronounced the long sentence which is prefixed to his volume, as fast as I could take it down, and without a single alteration. After this, the interview was too sad to be protracted, and with a heavy heart I bade him farewell.

I had not left the house many minutes, when I recollected that, in the sadness of our parting interview, and in the variety of matters we had to speak upon, there was one subject that had been neglected. As he was much exhausted before I left him, I felt the utmost reluctance in so soon again disturbing him. As I entered slowly, and even unwillingly into the room, his sister drew aside his curtain, and apprized him of my return. When he lifted up his eye, I thought there might be a little surprise, or at least that there would be inquiry. But I did injustice to his friendship. A kind smile spread itself over his languid countenance, and in a soft and tender tone of voice, which in all circumstances was affecting, but then altogether overcoming, he said, "I am glad to have another *look* of you." It was merely a look. I spoke a single sentence, heard his opinion, and hurried away.

Even now, I cannot think of this sad separation without the deepest sorrow; and I shall ever consider it as one of the most striking and painful lessons with which Providence has visited me.

At two o'clock on the same day he set out for Leith. Dr. Gregory, who had attended him during his last illness, saw him on board, and was much affected upon parting with him.

Till the ship arrived in the river, he was able to sit on deck a few hours every day. The more motion there was in the vessel he felt himself the easier.

When he arrived in town Dr. Baillie and Dr. Scudamore were sent for. With the latter he was intimately acquainted, with the former slightly. He also sent for his young friend, Dr. George Gregory, nephew to the late Dr. Gregory of Edinburgh, with whom he had lived, during the time Dr. Brown was connected with him. The kindness with which this very excellent individual watched over Dr. Brown from the moment he arrived in London, made an impression upon the minds of those who witnessed it which cannot be forgotten. When his sisters remarked to Dr. Brown the tender, and zealous, and unwearied attentions of his young friend, he would say, "You know how often I have told you what a fine fellow he is."

His medical friends thought it would be better for him, on account of the air, to go to Brompton, and for a few days he did seem a little better: motion never failed to do him good. But nothing now could permanently retard the progress of his disease. Every thing that skill in medicine could devise was tried in vain: day after day he became weaker.

One painful part of his complaint arose from the want of sleep. He never enjoyed more than an hour of rest at a time, and seldom so much. Every thing that he took to make him sleep disagreed with him.

During the whole period of his illness he never was heard to utter a complaint. Gentle as he ever was, sickness and pain made him still more so. His only anxiety seemed to be the distress which his illness occasioned to those who were dear to him.

After he became unable to sit up he was

carried to the drawing-room every forenoon, where he lay upon a sofa for a few hours. He thought himself much refreshed by this. On the morning before his death he wished to be carried into the drawing-room before breakfast. He had suffered much during the night, but upon his being removed he seemed considerably relieved. When Dr. Gregory called about twelve, he was able to converse with him even cheerfully, and Dr. Gregory thought him better than he had seen him for some time. Soon after his physician left him he became rather faint, and got a little wine, which seemed to revive him for a moment, though he was still very low. His head was raised that he might cough with more ease, and in this state he breathed his last. This was between two and three o'clock of the second of April, 1820.

His remains were put into a leaden coffin, and laid, as was his wish, beside those of his father and mother.

Upon the death of Dr. Brown, a general and deep feeling of regret was excited.—The death of a man of high endowments must always be a subject of mournful reflection. Besides the loss to society,—the only abiding cause perhaps of regret,—there is a more affecting, and it might almost be said, a more disinterested grief, in the contrast between the exercise of those energies that seemed to raise their possessor above the lot of our feeble nature, and the extinction of them all in that sad fate which unites the highest and the lowest in humbling fellowship.

Nec quidquam tibi prodest
Aerias tentasse domos, animoque rotundum
Percurrisse polum, morituro.

Sad however as the death of a man of genius must always be, it may be attended with circumstances that excite a more than usual tenderness of sorrow; and Dr. Brown himself has, with eloquence that may almost be deemed prophetic, described the feelings that his own death excited in all those who knew any thing of what he had projected. "When we survey," says he, in a prefatory notice to one of his poems, "all which the last illness has left of one whose youthful spirit had already dared to form splendid conceptions which were never to be realized, and contrast with what we see the honours which a few years might have given, it is impossible for us not to feel as if much more than life had been lost: and the empire of death seems to have a fearful extension over the future as well as the present, when we are thus led to consider how precariously subject to it has been the glory of names which ages have transmitted to ages with increasing veneration,—a glory that, surviving the ruins of the mightiest empires, seemed the least perishable of all the frail possessions of which our still frailer mortality is proud."* Applicable, however, as these striking reflections must appear to his own melancholy fate, they luckily are not entirely applicable. Though Dr. Brown died too soon, both for his usefulness and his fame, he lived long enough at least "to realize some of his conceptions," and though these may form but a small proportion, either in brilliancy or in value, to those that he had not embodied, they are sufficient to keep his name in lasting remembrance, and will be a permanent record of his accomplishments, his genius, and his virtues. His Lectures, too, were fortunately left, as has been seen, in such a state as to be sufficient of themselves to preserve his reputation. Still, however, no one who knows any thing of the difference between eloquence that is intended to be delivered, and eloquence that is meant for the press, can be ignorant of the very different and more perfect form in which he himself, had he lived, would have brought his views before the public. With all the value therefore that is attached to every production of Dr. Brown's, when we think of the great works he had in contemplation, it is scarcely possible not to feel that all which he has left behind him, can be compared but to some of those magnificent edifices projected by mighty architects, which were prevented from being fully completed by hostile invasion, and which now stand enduring monuments of the majesty of human genius, and of the vanity of human ambition.

I might here introduce many extracts from letters received by Dr. Brown's surviving friends after his death. I shall confine myself, however, to the following very affecting passages from a letter of Mr. Erskine† to Dr. Robert Anderson.

"*Bombay, 26th August*, 1820.

* * * *

"EIGHT days ago, I saw in the newspapers a notice of the death of Dr. Thomas Brown, at Brompton, in the 42d year of his age. You may imagine how such an unexpected and grievous event affected me. I fear that pulmonary complaints and weakness of the chest have proved fatal to the first metaphysician, and one of the best men of our times. The extent of my private loss I cannot express. For seven and twenty years he has been my most affectionate and valued friend. He loved me beyond my deserts, and the loss of him alters all my prospects of home. He occupied a large space in them

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*Poetical Works, vol. ii. p. 92, 2d series.

† Well known as the admirable Translator and Editor (along with Dr. Leyden) of the Memoirs of Baber. I do not think there was one of Dr. Brown's friends of whom he spoke with more regard, and I have met with none who has shown more affectionate veneration for Dr. Brown's memory.

all, and none can supply the void. Whether I may ever revisit the land of my fathers, or not, none can tell; but in all my plans of study, in my summer rambles, and my Christmas gaieties, I looked forward to him as my guide and companion. They seem, for the moment, worthless and insipid where he cannot be. He has fallen, too, at a deplorable moment. It was only in December last that I read the third edition of his Cause and Effect, and wrote him an opinion of it, which he can never read. It seems to me a splendid work, which, I may say, puts metaphysics on a new footing. He had opened by it a full career for his genius in the field in which he was best fitted to shine, and the loss of some of the works which he announces in it cannot now be repaired, either to the world, or to his own fame. Some of the notes to his Cause and Effect settle, in the most masterly way, questions that for ages had been a subject of contention among philosophers. I long to hear more of the melancholy event that tore him away from his friends and his rising reputation. I feel his departure as a sad derangement to all my future plans and prospects. *Quando ullum inveniam parem!* A long farewell."

Dr. Brown was in height rather above the middle size, about five feet nine inches; his chest broad and round; his hair brown; his features regular; his forehead large and prominent; his eyes dark grey, well formed with very long eyelashes, which gave them a very pleasing and soft expression:

> his eye was keen,
> With sweetness mix'd.

His nose might be said to be a mixture of the Grecian and Roman, and his mouth and chin bore a very striking resemblance to those of the Buonaparte family. The expression of his countenance altogether was that of calm reflection.

All Dr. Brown's habits were simple, temperate, studious, and domestic. He could not be called an early riser; but neither did he indulge in the late hours too common among literary men. He seldom studied before breakfast, which took place commonly about eight, but read any light work; or in summer, when the weather was favourable, took a short walk. He never composed immediately after taking exercise, as he thought his ideas less clear then. His time for writing was commonly from breakfast till about two or three; when, if the day was fine, he walked out till the hour of dinner, which was about four. Between dinner and tea he conversed, or read what required little exertion of mind. He thought there was something in the time of day, independently of any other cause, that was unfavourable to mental exertion. About seven he began again his severer studies, and continued at his desk till ten or eleven. In the two periods that he chose for his severer studies, he conceived that we are both intellectually and physically stronger than at any other. These circumstances are minute; but no student will think them too minute. That we may be physically strongest in the morning, is very probable; and that there are certain species of mental labour, (such, for example, as depend upon arrangement and dispatch,) for which we may be then best fitted, I would also admit; but, for all that depends upon the finer faculties of the soul, and where any thing original is aimed at, the evening, as I conceive, is incomparably more favourable. In this opinion I am confirmed by the experience of an eminent friend of Dr. Brown, who connects a faithful attention to what is called the business of life with the habits of a philosopher. It may be allowed, however, that much depends upon the constitution and habits of different individuals.

Even from the time he was a boy, Dr. Brown was most fastidious in every thing he wrote. This early habit of accuracy enabled him afterwards to write with great correctness, even when he had little time for premeditation.

While he was attending the university he invented for himself a method of writing in short-hand. He generally wrote every thing first in that character; afterwards he extended it in the common character, and laid it aside for some time. He then read it occasionally, making such corrections as suggested themselves; and when he had brought it to the state that satisfied his own taste, he made out another copy for the press.

He seldom read any of his works to strangers before publishing them. With the exception of his answer to Darwin, and some of his early poems, I am not sure that he ever read any of his works but to the members of his own family. To his mother and sisters he read every thing he wrote, often more than once; and I hope I may be excused for mentioning that I was considered as one of this domestic circle. His reason for not reading his works to his acquaintances, proceeded, I think, from the fear that they might feel hurt if he did not adopt their suggestions. He had sufficient confidence in himself to be convinced, that he would not publish any thing very absurd. He was, however, far from being averse to criticism, though he never courted it.

His corrections upon his own manuscripts were numerous before he sent them to press, but into the proof sheets he seldom introduced any change except such as the mistakes of the compositors rendered indispensable.

Dr. Brown's whole happiness was at home and in his study. No person could have a greater dislike to visiting. When he found himself again in his own house in the evening, he often said, "We have had a pleasant party, but thank heaven I am home." This could not have been supposed by those who saw him in company, as his manners were often exceedingly sprightly. Soon after he was appointed Professor of moral Philosophy, he allowed himself only two days a-week for going abroad. The last winter of his life he did not accept any invitations. A servant who was long with him said that "his master had always a happy face, but that it never looked so happy as when he was coming in at his own door."

His love of Scotland was so strong that the idea of leaving it for any length of time was painful to him. He had a very perfect knowledge of the language, and thought he excelled more in reading it than in almost any thing he did. He was able to adapt his voice, in the most pleasing and skilful manner, to every variety of the character. He had innumerable old ballads by heart, which he repeated and sung in his own family in the winter evenings with exquisite beauty.

His temper was remarkably good; so perfect was the command he had over it, that he was scarcely ever heard to say an unkind word. Whatever provocation he received, he always consulted the dignity of his own character, and never gave way to anger. Yet he never allowed any one to treat him with disrespect; and his pupils must remember the effect of a single look in producing, instantaneously, the most perfect silence in his class.

In affection as a son and brother he was unequalled. He was a kind and considerate master, and his friendship was truly invaluable.

In every thing that he said and did he had a sacred regard to truth. He was always ready to give praise to what he thought right in an enemy, and he had the courage to condemn what he thought wrong, whoever was the aggressor. He was often consulted by authors in regard to their works, and he uniformly expressed himself in a manner that did equal honour to his candour and critical discernment. Of this I have found many proofs among his papers. And it is pleasing to see that, notwithstanding the alleged vanity of authorship, his conduct was in many instances acknowledged to be more kind than the more flattering panegyrics of critics less conscientious.

One very striking feature in his character was the love and respect he bore for old age. There was something in his voice, his look, and manner altogether, when he spoke to the old or the unhappy, that is seldom seen. Even the little weaknesses of age, when unattended with vice, seemed almost to excite greater interest in him. He listened with so much kindness and attention to the complaints of the afflicted, that they were consoled by finding such an interest felt in them. And, in his professional capacity, when the griefs of his patients were in many respects imaginary, he had the rare art of convincing them that they were so, without wounding their feelings. The poor and the unfortunate he made perfectly at ease with him—which many with good intentions fail in doing—often, perhaps, from an over-anxiety and a too obvious condescension. His art consisted in the kindness of his own heart, which found its way to the heart. And many acknowledged, that while they felt the highest respect for his character, they could speak with more freedom to him than to their own relations.

The tenderness and the quickness of his sympathy was such that he could not bear to see any living thing in pain. The cold-hearted would have smiled perhaps, had they seen the patient and anxious care with which he tried to relieve the sufferings of animals, that to them would have appeared unworthy of a thought. He considered the duties which we owe to the brute creation as a very important branch of ethics, and, had he lived, he would have published an essay upon the subject. He believed that many of the lower animals have the sense of right and wrong, and that the metaphysical argument which proves the immortality of man, extends with equal force to the other orders of earthly existence.

At a very early period Dr. Brown formed those opinions in regard to government to which he adhered to the end of his life. Though he was not led to take any active part in politics, he felt the liveliest interest in the great questions of the day; and his zeal for the diffusion of knowledge and of liberal opinion was not greater than his indignation at every attempt to impede it. The most perfect toleration of all religious opinions, and an unshackled liberty of the press, were the two subjects in which he seemed to take the most interest, and to consider as most essential to national happiness and prosperity. In his judgment upon every political question he was determined solely by its bearings upon the welfare of the human race; and he was very far, therefore, from uniformly approving of the measures of the party to which he was generally understood to belong. Indeed he often said, that liberty, in Scotland at least, suffered more from the Whigs than from the Tories,—in allusion to the departure that he conceived to be sometimes made from professed principles, with a view to present party advantage,—and still more to the over-

readiness that was sometimes shown in making professions of loyalty, when the character for sound principles was unnecessarily maintained at the expense of the cause of liberty. In the College he was uniformly averse to the introduction of political discussions, and disapproved of the practice of sending addresses to the throne. The character of professors, he conceived, like that of judges, should be beyond suspicion. From this circumstance he was often represented as of republican sentiments. This, however, was without foundation. He was a warm admirer of the British constitution, though his admiration was not of that blind and indiscriminate nature that prevented him from supposing it to be susceptible of improvement. Limited and hereditary monarchy he conceived to be perhaps the best that the present state of society admits.

He had the greatest interest in the university of which he was a member, which he showed on various occasions. He was the warm friend of his pupils, and nothing gave him greater pleasure than when he had it in his power to be of use to them. I know, in more instances than one, where he suggested subjects which he conceived to be suited to the talents of his friends; and the success of the works has shown how correctly he judged. He often said, "I feel very grateful to my young friends for the kind and fearless manner in which they express their approbation of my lectures. They come to me without prejudice, and they have always done me justice, which is more than I have met with from some who should have acted differently."

He was intimately acquainted with the principles of almost all the fine arts; and in many of them showed, that practice only was wanting to insure perfection in his powers of execution.

His acquaintance with languages was great, and he might be said to have a talent for languages. French, Italian, and German, he read with the same ease as English. He read also Spanish and Portuguese, though not so fluently. He was as familiar with French literature as with that of our own country. This circumstance had sometimes an unfavourable effect upon his taste, and may be observed occasionally in his style. In commencing the study of a new language, he scarcely at first paid any attention to the grammar, but proceeded at once to peruse some work that was familiar to him. His first step was generally to procure a New Testament in the language he was to study, and he then immediately began with the Gospel by St. John. A similar method, he mentioned to me, was pursued by his friends Leyden and Murray, two of the most eminent linguists that our country has produced.

In any language with which he was acquainted he read with a rapidity that appeared inconceivable. The period from his receiving a volume till his laying it aside was so brief, that his own relations could scarcely be convinced he had perused it, till he satisfied them by showing his acquaintance with its contents.

I have already alluded to his powers of memory. His sisters used often to try him with twenty or thirty lines from a French or Italian author, and after a single reading he was able to repeat them without a mistake. He thought that his memory appeared rather better than it really was, from the power he had of conjecturing quickly, when he knew the subject, what the author was likely to say.

Dr. Brown numbered among his friends many of the most distinguished characters of the day. Dr. Gregory, and Messrs. Playfair, Russell, and Leslie, were his chief friends among the professors. Mr. Leslie has uniformly shown himself a warm friend of Dr. Brown; and the kindness and respect which this eminent philosopher has expressed both in public and private, has made a deep impression upon all Dr. Brown's friends. Among the friends of Dr. Brown, particular mention should be made of Lord Webb Seymour. The nature of the friendship which subsisted between them is sufficiently shown by the request that was made to Dr. Brown by the Duke of Somerset, to prepare an account of his brother's life. This request, the state of Dr. Brown's health, and the variety of works which he had in contemplation, more immediately connected with his professorial situation, obliged him to decline.

Among these works, the first which he proposed, after bringing his Outlines to a conclusion, was to be entitled Ethical Essays. He then intended, in two separate works, to give a theory of Virtue and of Beauty. After this he contemplated a work on the Philosophy of Physical Inquiry. This last work, it is particularly to be regretted that he did not live to accomplish—as in it he would have brought forward some views in regard to the material universe, that would have placed his character as a philosopher in a new aspect. He had a theory of Heat that he intended then to bring forward. Upon this theory he set great value; and when urged to publish it without loss of time, lest others might fall upon it, he said that it was of such a nature that there was no fear of such anticipation. A fragment of the Essay had been committed to paper when he was member of the Academy of Physic; but it contains merely his views upon the theories of others, and there is nothing in it that can enable us, with any show of probability, to conjecture what were his own sentiments.

He intended also to give a very full course of Political Economy. His first intention was to deliver his lectures upon that subject in summer, but he was soon convinced that this would confine him too much to the town; and he resolved for one year to endeavour to give a lecture at three o'clock. Political Economy was a subject which had occupied much of his thoughts before he was elected professor. There is cause to regret that all his notes, from different works, as well as his own views, are lost to the public, having originally been written in short-hand, and never extended.

He intended, after having delivered his lectures upon Political Economy for six or seven years, to resign his situation, and retire to the country, where he proposed to prepare his lectures for publication, and devote himself, without any interruption whatever, to letters and philosophy.

I shall now conclude this sketch with a summary of what I conceive to have been the distinguishing characteristics of Dr. Brown, as a man, and as a philosopher.

Among the more prominent features of Dr. Brown's character, may be enumerated the greatest gentleness and kindness and delicacy of mind, united with the noblest independence of spirit, a generous admiration of every thing affectionate or exalted in character, a manly contempt for every thing mean or selfish, and especially for those arts by which the feeble and unworthy raise themselves to situations that they can only disgrace; (a contempt that he expressed with a freedom which could not but be hurtful to his own popularity, where these arts are so common and so successful;) a detestation for every thing that even bordered on tyranny and oppression, a truly British love of liberty, and the most ardent desire for the diffusion of knowledge, and happiness, and virtue among mankind. In private life, he was possessed of almost every quality that renders society delightful; and was indeed remarkable for nothing more than for his love of home, and the happiness he shed around him there. It was ever his strongest wish to make every one who was with him happy; and with his talents of society, it was scarcely possible that he could fail in his object. His exquisite delicacy of perception gave him a quick fore-feeling of whatever might be hurtful to any one; and his wit, his varied information, his classical taste, and, above all, his mild and gentlemanly manners, and his truly philosophic evenness of temper, diffused around him the purest and most refined enjoyment. Of almost universal knowledge, acquired by the most extensive reading, and by wide intercourse with the world, there was no topic of conversation to which he seemed a stranger; and such was his comprehensiveness and readiness of intellect, that he threw new light on subjects that might have appeared most foreign to his habits of thinking. At the same time, there was no obtrusion of abstruse topics or recondite reflections. He was always willing to follow the stream of conversation wherever it flowed, and was as ready to disport with the commonest topics, as to discuss high points in philosophy. So much was this the case, that strangers sometimes considered the accuracy of his knowledge upon subjects which might be supposed unimportant to a philosopher, as bordering on pedantry, and the interest he seemed to take in them as affected. The fact however was, that his active mind embraced and retained almost without an effort every subject of human knowledge, and his kind heart considered nothing as unimportant, which could in any degree affect the happiness of a single human being.—There generally ran through his conversation a vein of easy pleasantry and wit. His wit was peculiar, and predominated over his humour. The consequence of this was, that his combinations, delicate and original as they were in a high degree, were not always such as excite to laughter. Those, therefore, who have no standard of wit but the noisy merriment it occasions, and who cannot think it natural if it does not flow from a highly excited state of animal spirits, looked upon his feats of intellect as implying an effort which was not always successful; and it required a more refined taste to perceive, that they were in reality the beautiful and altogether unconstrained result of a peculiar conformation of intellect. I have been a little fuller upon these two points in Dr. Brown's character, because they were some times misapprehended. I may also here remark, that his extreme affability was sometimes ascribed, by those who would have been ready to represent a colder and more distant behaviour as indicative of pride, to an affected politeness, in which the heart had little share. The very contrary of this, however, was the fact; bland and kind as his manners were, his heart was still kinder; and warm as were his professions of friendship and attachment, whenever he had an opportunity, he showed that he was more ready to do than to say.

As an author, his fate has been singular, and, during his own lifetime, hard. Though it was never disputed that he had first-rate talents, none of his works, while he was alive, ever attained any great popularity; and, in the reviews of the day, the name of Dr. Brown is almost the only one of any celebrity that is never to be found. As a poet he was peculiarly unsuccessful. The many considered it to be impossible that the subtlest metaphysician of the age could be a tolerable

poet, and paid no attention to his productions; and the obscurity that common readers found in many of them tempted them to endeavour to turn into ridicule what they did not understand. It was, therefore, not very safe to express approbation of any of the poems; and they had thus the uncommon fate of being more read and admired than praised. Those who were charmed, did not choose to subject themselves to the ridicule of owning it. *Thinking what the dull would think, they feared to praise.*

It is only as an elegant writer, and as a metaphysician, that the public have been willing to recognise Dr. Brown; and even as a metaphysician, it is painful to reflect that during his life, his fame was never equal to his merits. Subtleness and acuteness were allowed to him at the expense of his higher qualities. I am disposed to ascribe this to the very greatness and universality of his powers, and am convinced that he would have been a much greater favourite with the great bulk of readers, had he, with the same refinement and eloquence, been less ingenious and profound. But without speculating on the causes that prevented him from obtaining that general popularity which he so well deserved, and which is now beginning to be expressed, when, alas! it is too late for him; it may be better to give a view of those excellences which were but partially appreciated, so that the honours which were withheld from him when he was alive may not be denied him now that he is dead, and that the laurels which can never deck his brow, may at least be hung upon his hearse, and strewed upon his grave.

In the philosophic love of truth, and in the patient investigation of it, Dr. Brown may be pronounced as at least equal, and in subtlety of intellect and powers of analysis, as superior, to any metaphysician that ever existed. Or if there ever was any philosopher who might dispute with him the palm for any one of these qualities, of this at least I am certain, that no one ever combined them all in equal perfection. The predominating quality in his intellectual character was unquestionably his power of analysing—the most necessary of all qualities to a metaphysician. In itself, indeed, it is not, in however high a degree it may be possessed, sufficient to make a perfect metaphysician; but it is the most essential ingredient in the formation of such a character. Without it, a man may make many useful practical observations on the constitution of our nature, and from these he may deduce important conclusions as to the wisdom of God, and as to the conduct becoming a man in the various situations in which he may be placed; but this is all that he can do,—he throws no new light upon the *science* of mind,—he is acquainted with the mental phenomena as an artist merely, and not as a philosopher. In the quickness and subtlety of intellect of which the power of analysing is compounded, and which, whatever may be the estimation in which they are held by men of merely practical understandings, are so indispensably necessary to the philosopher of mind, there cannot be named, after Dr. Brown, any one who can be considered *aut similis aut secundus.* It is impossible, indeed, to turn to a single page in his writings that does not contain some feat of ingenuity. But it was in metaphysics that he turned this power to most account, and where the results are most astonishing. States of mind that had been looked upon for ages as reduced to the last degree of simplicity, and as belonging to those facts in our constitution which the most sceptical could not doubt, and the most subtle could not explain, he brought to the crucible, and evolved from them simpler elements. For the most complicated and puzzling questions that our mysterious and almost inscrutable nature presents to our inquiry, he found a quick and easy solution. No intricacy was too involved for him to unravel, no labyrinth too mazy for him to explore. The knot that thousands had left in despair, as too complicated for mortal hand to undo, and which others, more presumptuous, had cut in twain, in the rage of baffled ingenuity, he unloosed with unrivalled dexterity. The enigmas which a false philosophy had so long propounded, and which, because they were not solved, had made victims of many of the finest and highest-gifted of our race, he at last succeeded in unriddling.

A capacity for analysing like his was not, perhaps, to be expected at an earlier age of the world. As this is the last quality that displays itself in the individual, so it is the last feature that is exhibited in the literature of a country. No ancient nation probably cultivated letters sufficiently long to bring them to this point in their intellectual progress. Certain it is that we should look in vain among the ancients for any extraordinary display of dexterous analysis. Had any one even arisen superior to the age in which he lived, his language would have prevented the full display of his powers; for exquisitely fitted as the ancient languages are to convey complex conceptions, they want flexibility for the nicer turns of thought. A history of the progress of the analytical capacities of language, and a comparison of different languages in this respect, is a desideratum in literature. It would throw much more light upon the intellectual character of nations, and upon the nature of the human mind itself, than seems generally to be supposed.

Since the subject of language has been introduced, I may here make a few observa-

tions upon the use that Dr. Brown made of it in his philosophical investigations. The only real use of abstract language, as has been seen, is to make us acquainted with the truths of which the world is already in possession, and to give permanence to the truths which we ourselves may discover. This fact, however, obvious though it may appear, has been disputed by almost all metaphysical philosophers. Language has been represented by them as the *instrument of thought*; and indeed, to read the trifling and merely verbal disputes of many metaphysicians, it would appear that it was often their only instrument. Dr. Brown, at a very early period of life, acquired correct views of the true purposes for which language is to be employed, and by a habit of analysing every complex term, escaped completely from what Bacon calls the Idola Fori. The habit to which I allude was a very striking characteristic of his intellect; and no account of his character as a philosopher would be complete, in which it was not very particularly noticed. It is impossible to say how much greater efficacy it gave to his acuteness. It derived its origin doubtless from his great activity and ingenuity, and no one, unless he had these qualities in an equal degree of perfection, could arrive at the same dexterity and power; it therefore detracts nothing from the merits of his discoveries, to ascribe the most important of them to this habit. That I do not over-rate its influence, those who are at all acquainted with his works will admit, when they are reminded of the words Power, Volition, Occasional, Efficient, and Physical Causes.—Dr. Brown himself has remarked in the preface to the third edition of his work on Cause and Effect, that "The very simplification of the language itself, in which we are accustomed to think of the abstract relations of things, is one of the most important contributions which metaphysical analysis is occasionally able to make to the Philosophy of Physical Inquiry,—that highest and noblest logic, which, comprehending at once our intellectual nature and every thing which is known to exist, considers the mind in all its possible relations to the species of truths which it is capable of discovering. To remove a number of cumbrous words is, in many cases, all that is necessary to render distinctly visible, as it were, to our very glance, truths which they, and they only, have been for ages hiding from our view."

In these respects, the benefits Dr. Brown has conferred upon philosophy are inestimable. He has in a thousand instances simplified the language in which we are accustomed to think of the abstract relations of things, and he has removed and explained many of those words which, more than any other cause, have had the effect of blinding and misleading metaphysicians. This, indeed, is his favourite *organ* in the discovery and elucidation of truth. He does not in his reasonings trust much to analogy, nor to the bringing of an individual example under a general rule; nor does he attempt to gain our prejudices on his side, by addressing himself to our pride of understanding on the one hand, or to our common sense on the other—the usual methods of our metaphysicians. His object is, by clearly defining his terms, to withdraw the attention of the reader from words to things. This is not always perhaps the most agreeable, but it is by far the shortest and the surest road to truth; for if we could all look upon nature herself with our own eyes, unbiassed by the views that others have taken of her, our conclusions would seldom be erroneous. In metaphysics, and indeed in all the sciences where the human mind is directly concerned, the chief art that we have to learn is to analyse, quickly and directly, the language we employ. For explaining and teaching this art, and for evincing its importance, I know of no works equal to those of Dr. Brown; and they might be recommended to those who wish to acquire this art of thinking, in the same spirit that dictated the famous saying of Locke, "If you wish your son to learn logic, make him read Chillingworth."

To his power of analysis, then, there can be no hesitation in giving the first place, in the view of Dr. Brown's intellectual character. But a mere capacity of analysing, as has been already remarked, though indispensably necessary to all those who would extend the boundaries of science of any description, and above all of metaphysical science, is not of itself sufficient to constitute a philosopher. To form a perfect philosopher, another quality is necessary; a quality which, as Dr. Brown has observed, "sees through a long train of thought a distant conclusion, and separating at every stage the essential from the accessory circumstances, and gathering and combining analogies as it proceeds, arrives at length at a system of harmonious truth. This comprehensive energy is a quality to which acuteness is necessary, but which is not itself necessarily implied in acuteness; or, rather, it is a combination of qualities for which we have not yet an exact name, but which forms a peculiar character of genius, and is, in truth, the very guiding spirit of all philosophic investigation."

The idea is very prevalent, that this comprehensive energy, though involving acuteness, is incompatible with that quality when it exists in a more than usual degree. And it certainly has generally happened that those who have been distinguished for their ingenuity, have wasted their powers in un-

profitable displays of subtlety, satisfied with detecting error, or discovering particular truths, without arranging the result of their analytical efforts into a regular system; and that men of more comprehensive minds have employed themselves in recording the more obvious analogies of things, without attending to their minor differences, in consequence of which their arrangements, however practically useful, have been philosophically erroneous and liable to be exposed by subtler intellects. It might easily be shown, from the principles of our nature, that this has arisen merely from accidental causes, and that there is no real incompatibility between the two qualities. But an abstract discussion of the question is unnecessary: the case of Dr. Brown sets it at rest. His comprehensiveness, though not equally remarkable, was almost equally remarkable with his acuteness. And I recollect no philosopher to whom, with so much justice, can be applied the admirable passage in Bacon, where, in his address *Ad Regem Suum*, he paraphrases the sacred comparison of the heart of the king to the sand of the sea—*Cujus quanquam massa prægrandis, partes tamen minutissimæ; sic mentis indidit Deus majestati tuæ crasim plane mirabilem, quæ cum maxima quæque complectatur, minima tamen prehendat, nec patiatur effluere: cum perdifficile videatur, vel potius impossibile in natura, ut idem instrumentum et grandia opera et pusilla apte disponat.** It is by the union of these two qualities that Dr. Brown may most easily be distinguished from other philosophers. For example, he may thus easily be distinguished from Smith and Hume. Smith had more, perhaps, of the comprehensive quality, and Hume was nearly as acute: but Smith was inferior in metaphysical acumen; and Hume, with all his ingenuity, could not rear a consistent system. The names of Hume and of Smith may be considered as representative of two numerous classes of philosophers. There is another class, at the head of whom may be placed Dr. Reid, who employ themselves chiefly in the induction of facts, in the choice of which they are determined by their practical importance alone, and who scarcely pay any attention to the relations that bind them together. From this class Dr. Brown may be more easily distinguished than from any other. Facts to him had little other interest, but as they were to be analysed and arranged. And his arrangements were made, not according to the accidental uses, but according to the essential properties of objects. He valued truth for its own sake, and no accidental interest or temporary subserviency to particular purposes had any influence with him. He was, in the strictest sense of the word, a man of science. To this last circumstance, more, perhaps, than to any other, is to be ascribed the fact, that the fame he has enjoyed is so little when compared with the character that has been given him. The great bulk of readers value truth, at least such truth as does not interest their passions, merely in reference to its application to use; and abstract truth can never be very useful to any one in the intercourse of life, till the progress of observation and of science brings remote relations frequently before the view of a great proportion of the members of society. The more subtle and profound, therefore, that a philosopher is, if he does not join to his subtlety and comprehensiveness of intellect a practical understanding, the more contracted, for a time, must be his fame. I am aware, accordingly, that my opinion as to the rank that Dr. Brown holds among philosophers must appear to many to be higher than his merits entitle him to. But I am confident, that those who are able to judge for themselves, and who will carefully compare the views of Dr. Brown with the views of the philosophers that preceded him, will ultimately confirm the decision.

Such, then, were Dr. Brown's powers for philosophizing. Next to the powers of a philosopher for discovering truth, is his capacity for illustrating it. I shall now, therefore, make a few remarks upon Dr. Brown's style, understanding by that word all those qualities that are concerned in the statement of a doctrine, or of a system.

The circumstance that is most remarkable in Dr. Brown's style is the synthetical manner in which he states his doctrine. Though the most analytical of all philosophers in his inquiries after truth, he is the most synthetical in delivering the result of them. Some writers lead the reader to a general conclusion by the same path that they themselves pursued in the discovery. They start the doubts that at first occurred to themselves; they suggest the solutions that satisfied their own minds; and thus they proceed, appearing to follow rather than lead their readers. But Dr. Brown pursued a method exactly contrary. After bringing a subject, by a cautious induction of innumerable particulars, to the greatest degree of generality, he then opens it up to the reader in the most systematic manner, presenting the separate truths, neither in the relation in which they suggested themselves to his own mind, nor in the way in which they may insinuate themselves most easily into the mind of the reader, but in the relation which they hold to each other in nature. To those who love truth for its own sake, this is decidedly the best method, and it is desirable that it should be followed in

* De Augmentis Scientiarum, lib. i.

all scientific works. It may, perhaps, have a more uninviting appearance, but it is not in reality more difficult. There is no royal road, as has been observed a thousand times, to science of any kind; if we wish to have a systematic view of a subject, we must submit to much abstract thinking; and it is better to begin with this at once, than to follow any other method which will only in the end lead us to the point where we ought to have begun, or perhaps satisfy us with false or superficial views. An architect, to have an accurate idea of a fabric, would prefer a single view of it, with a plan, on a reduced scale, of all its different apartments, their uses, and mutual connexions, to the most exquisite collection of sketches from different distances in the most picturesque or beautiful points of view, with an unconnected description of one or two of its ampler chambers and more spacious galleries.

This systematic method is especially necessary in metaphysics, where, from the evanescent nature of the objects of our attention, we are apt to be satisfied with vague and undefined ideas. But though it may be the most philosophical, it is by no means the most likely to be popular; and accordingly very different plans have been followed by our most celebrated metaphysicians. Mr. Stewart, for example, to relieve the tedium of abstract disquisition, introduces innumerable illustrations. When Hume states a new doctrine, he opens his subject much in the same way that he would in conversation with a friend; he adduces instances to stimulate and enlighten the mind of the reader; and he uses not merely the familiar phrases of conversation, but abounds also in those rapid transitions, those frequent repetitions, those varied representations, that would do better in society than philosophical discussion. Smith is much more systematical; but he too often introduces his illustrations in such abundance that we forget, in the interest of the subordinate details, the general doctrine he is insisting upon. The peculiarities which I have mentioned, form, to the great bulk of readers, the chief charm of these writers. Few minds are fitted for relishing metaphysics, and most of those who read our popular metaphysical writers, derive the greater part of their delight, not from the abstract doctrines they contain, but from the practical remarks, the precepts of conduct, and the delineations of character, which occur in such abundance as to afford sufficient exercise to the mind, without any very close reference to the doctrines in question. Dr. Brown's writings abound in these beauties; but they are introduced in such a manner, that no one who reads merely to pass an idle hour, will have any great pleasure in them; for they are never introduced for their own sake, but merely as the best illustrations of the doctrine he is maintaining. Accordingly, though in some cases his illustrations are as numerous as those of Mr. Stewart, and though they are scarcely less classical and elegant, still the circumstance most prominent in them is their relation to the great whole. The mind of the indolent reader is not allowed to rest upon the subordinate details without any reference to the truths that go before, and the truths that are to follow. Though there is never wanting what will delight the refined taste and the generous heart, still the predominating pleasure must be that which results from the perception of relation; and where any one is not capable of, or does not relish this pleasure, the works of Dr. Brown can be but imperfectly estimated by him.

This peculiarity of Dr. Brown's style adds much to the precision and satisfactoriness of his reasonings. In Mr. Stewart's writings, example follows example in beautiful and slow succession. This, however, does not always add to the perspicuity of his style, or to the conclusiveness of his reasonings; for the discursive powers are lulled asleep amidst the pleasing excitation of the other faculties. But the more examples Dr. Brown gives, the clearer do his doctrines become, from the circumstance of the relation of the different parts being that which our attention is always chiefly directed to; just as the strength of a bridge is increased by every addition of weight. The same objection that has been made to the works of Mr. Stewart, cannot be urged against those of Mr. Hume, as his illustrations are seldom such as to mislead by interesting the feelings. His defect lies in his inability, or in his unwillingness, to state his views systematically. He trusts little to the acuteness, and nothing to the comprehensiveness, of the reader; he therefore illustrates every position, and repeats it in a thousand varied forms. The consequence is, that in perusing any of his speculations, we think we have a clear conception of his doctrines, but when we come to the termination, we find it scarcely possible to give a summary view of what we have been reading. But Dr. Brown himself never loses, or allows us to lose, the general in the particular. In this way, though it requires a greater effort to comprehend any single passage, yet, when once understood, it is infinitely clearer, and more easily remembered. Hume carries us through a tract of country, showing us, at every step, distinctly the way before us, and amusing us with new views and charming prospects.* But when we come to the end of our journey, we find that our progress has

* It can scarcely be necessary to remind the reader that I speak only of the charms of his style.

been little or nothing. We were never at any great distance from the point at which we started. We have been traversing merely a confined spot, and even of it we have had only many beautiful glimpses, but no commanding view. Stewart, again, presents us with a wider and nobler prospect, more beautiful in itself, and richer in local associations. There is every thing to delight the eye, the ear, the imagination, and the heart. But the masses of shade, magnificent though their effect often be, and the warmth of the atmosphere, which is greater than its transparency, leave the features often obscure, and the outline ill-defined. Dr. Brown conjures up a scene where there are as many beautiful sights and sounds, but they are all in one mighty prospect, and lovely as the separate parts are, our attention is chiefly occupied with the relative position of the mountains, and the course of the rivers. He leads us, too, through classic ground, and over spots that have been dignified by acts of heroism and virtue. Still, however, we are continually reminded, that it is the great outlines of the landscape which we have to do with, and not with its individual charms; and while our admiration is excited for those who, on the noble fields of freedom, bled for their friends and their beloved country, we are never allowed to forget that our present object with these noble scenes is only as parts of the great and magnificent landscape whose features we are to trace.

Next to this peculiarity in the manner of bringing forward his doctrines, is the precision of his style. He not only brings out the idea, but the very shade of the idea. He leaves nothing to the imagination of the reader, but goes on limiting and explaining his terms and his positions, till his doctrines stand forth with every outline clearly defined, and every feature finished with laborious exactness. For this purpose his style is eminently abstract. It is not, however, abstract, from being the translation of his ideas into the language of a system, which is too often the characteristic of metaphysical writers; neither is it like the abstractness of those, who, when they have to do with a subtle idea, use a general or philosophic term, which does little more than direct the mind of the reader into the proper channel, and is loose and deficient in precision from its very abstractness: his style is abstract, from his stripping his language of all those words that conjure up ideas or feelings merely conventional, and by his using a language of the same kind that we use in Algebra, which is perfectly general in its own nature, but, from the signs by which it is connected, is at the same time perfectly precise.

There is another peculiarity in the style of Dr. Brown, arising from the great activity and quickness of his mind. This takes away what is called *repose* from his composition. Every sentence—every clause—every term, is instinct with life. "The pauses of his eloquence," to apply to him a criticism that has been made on the style of another eminent writer, "is filled up by ingenuity. Nothing plain is left in the composition." Amidst the great activity of all his faculties, however, it is curious to remark, that his power of analysis has still the ascendency, and gives a colour to all his other powers. Many writers show equal activity of intellect; but as it takes a different direction, the effect is altogether different. Some accumulate illustration upon illustration—they clothe the same idea in different language—they repeat it with increased emphasis—they show it in different lights—they shed upon it the reflected lustre of analogous truths—they adorn it with wit, and in a thousand different ways amuse and relax the mind of the reader. But Dr. Brown is wholly employed in defining and limiting his positions. Having once found out the best point in which any doctrine can be shown, he confines the view to that alone, and his activity is exerted to remove every obstacle that may prevent us from seeing it in that light. As we observed before, he leaves nothing to the imagination of the reader, he is constantly employed in filling up every part, and trusts nothing to a general outline. His taste, his genius, and his wit, are in constant exercise; but they are all under the direction of his reasoning faculty—they are employed solely to convey more vivid and more precise ideas of the great doctrine. In this way, it is obvious that his writings cannot be understood without a constant exertion of mind, similar in its nature to that made by the author himself. To most readers this is too great an exaction. They delight to repose in generalities. The minor shades of difference appear unimportant to them. When their attention is called to them, they lose sight of the principal distinctions. It has thus always been the fate of subtle writers, that they appear to the great bulk of readers incorrect. People do not believe, because they cannot put themselves to the trouble of comprehending; and it may be asserted without a paradox, that Dr. Brown would have produced a greater effect, had he shown less talent, and that his reasoning appears to many inconclusive, because he has left it altogether unanswerable.

As a foil to so many and so great excellences, it may be allowed, that Dr. Brown occasionally shows a preference of what is subtle to what is useful, and is sometimes more ingenious than solid. His style is too abstract, and his illustrations are not always introduced in the manner that might give them most effect. Many quaintnesses both of thought and expression are to be found in his writings. His sentences are often long, some-

times involved; and there is an occasional obscurity, arising from his anxiety to prevent the possibility of misapprehension. He had a perfect mastery over language; but sometimes he lessens the effect, by showing that he has this mastery. He too often, perhaps, uses a word in an unexpected sense, and then, by an analysis, shows that the application is just: a species of exquisite but quaint refinement that he learned from the younger Pliny. His diction, however, is idiomatic and pure to a degree that is seldom attained by Scotch writers. It may be remarked, in general, that simplicity is the quality in which he is most deficient, as subtlety is that in which he most excels.

To these remarks upon Dr. Brown's character, most of which were written soon after his death, I have nothing more to add. All that was then said, as to his being the first of modern metaphysicians, has been confirmed by public opinion in a manner that I could not have anticipated; the reception of his Lectures has been favourable to a degree of which, in metaphysical works, there is no parallel;* and his virtues as a man are almost universally allowed to be in beautiful accordance with his talents as a philosopher.

Dr. Brown's character as a philosopher will chiefly rest upon his Lectures. The best proof of the estimation in which they are held by the public, is the circumstance of the present edition being already called for. In my more detailed account of the Life and Writings of Dr. Brown, I have given a brief outline of what I conceive to be the most valuable of the contributions to the Philosophy of Mind, which his Lectures contain, and ventured to state the grounds upon which I differ from him in some subordinate particulars. I may perhaps take some opportunity of extending my remarks, and though I may have occasion to add some limitations to my expression of agreement in his doctrines, I shall have no limitation to make of my admiration for his wonderful genius. The limits within which I am obliged in this Preface to confine myself, prevents me from entering at all upon the subject.

I shall merely state in regard to the present volume, that there is the most satisfactory evidence, that about seventy of the lectures were written during the first year of Dr. Brown's professorship, and the whole of the remaining lectures in the following season.

In going over his lectures the following year, his own surprise was great to find that he could make but little improvement upon them. He could account for it in no other way than by his mind having been in a state of very powerful excitement. As he continued to read the same lectures till the time of his death, they were printed from his manuscript exactly as he wrote them, without addition or retrenchment.† Every second

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* To the approbation which has been so generally expressed by the public, there has been one exception, and only one, deserving the name, and that too from a quarter whence least of all it could have been expected.

It was my original intention not to make the remotest allusion to this subject. But it has been repeatedly urged upon me, that, not to notice the attack, would have the appearance of submitting to it as just, and that a regard both to my own character and still more to that of the illustrious subject of this biography, required that it should be met openly and fully.

Had my own feelings as an individual, only been concerned, I should not have been induced to depart from my original purpose of silence; for, sincere though my respect is for many of the qualities of the eminent individual referred to, I can well bear his censure, when I consider how it was incurred, and with whom it is shared.

To the wishes of the admirers of Dr. Brown, however, I am anxious to pay every attention, but I trust that upon consideration they may agree with me that it would be inexpedient to enter into any discussion upon the subject. Had an attempt been made to refute any of Dr. Brown's more important doctrines, the case would have been otherwise. But the mere expression of unfavourable opinion, from however respected a quarter, may be left without argument to the decision of the public, especially when that opinion is neutralized by the different statements which had previously come from the same pen. Besides, upon an occasion like the present, I feel myself bound to follow what I conceive would have been Dr. Brown's own wishes. And I am certain that if he could have believed it possible that such an attack could have come from such an individual, his regard for his own reputation as a philosopher would have been forgotten in his concern for the moral fame of his friend, and his most anxious desire would have been, that a veil should be drawn over the subject for ever.

The last reason is paramount with me, and I rejoice that it allows me to dismiss a topic so truly painful. In ordinary cases, the jealousies of authors may afford legitimate matter for amusement and ridicule; but where, *in circumstances so sacred*, there has been such a melancholy departure from that dignified benignity of temper, and that generous approval of kindred genius which had been exhibited on all former occasions, consecrating a great name to our veneration, and shedding a mild lustre upon the severest pursuits of science, there is room for nothing but mortification and regret.

Who would not laugh if such a man there be,
Who would not weep if Atticus were he?

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† In his preliminary lecture, after his appointment, he introduced, as is usual in such cases, some remarks respecting the circumstances of his appearance, and the character of his predecessors, which, not being applicable but in the first lecture after an appointment, were, in the succeeding years, laid aside. These remarks, though they could not with propriety be introduced into the lectures, are well worthy of being preserved, and I am happy in being able to present them to the reader.

"Two of the most illustrious of my predecessors are yet alive. One of them, long retired from academic labours, in the enjoyment of a repose dignified by old age, and virtue, and literary glory, is known to you, perhaps, only as an author. Yet the historian of Rome, and the author of the Essay on Civil Society, has not trusted his glory to those works alone. In consigning his fame to posterity, he has availed himself of his labours in this place; and, in his System of Moral and Political Philosophy, has given to the world a splendid memorial of his academic eminence. Of the impression, however, which his lectures produced on the minds of those who heard them, and of the consequent interest which they attracted to his subject, I can speak only from the report of his friends and pupils.

"It is *not* so with his illustrious successor, now unfortunately retired from the active exertions of that chair which he so long and so gloriously filled. Of all which he was in this place, I can speak from more than report,—from those feelings which I have shared in common with his whole auditory, and which many of you, probably, have had the happiness to partake.

page was originally left blank, and many of these alternate pages were afterwards filled with new matter. The manuscript contains numerous interlineations; sometimes even four lines are to be found between those which were originally written, though these were not at a considerable distance. Notwithstanding this, they are written with such distinctness, that it is believed that after much care and attention this edition is printed almost *verbatim et literatim*. As the lectures were not prepared for the press, they do not appear without some of the disadvantages of posthumous publications. There is an awkwardness in some of the forms of expression that immediately presents itself to the eye; though even this has a certain value, as affording evidence of perfect genuineness. The recapitulatory statements also, being intended for the convenience of the auditors for whom the lectures were prepared, are not always to be found where the nature of the subject might suggest. It may be added, that the style occasionally bears the marks of the circumstances in which the author was placed; and the want of the benefit of notes may sometimes be experienced. Some other imperfections might perhaps be mentioned, but they are all of minor importance, and do not in any degree affect the essential excellences. Indeed, considering the circumstances under which the work appears, it is matter of admiration that the defects should be so trivial; and that lectures, possessing so great and varied merits, should have been printed in the form in which they were prepared for the purposes of academical instruction, without requiring any alteration, is altogether without a parallel. For metaphysical acuteness, profound and liberal views, refined taste, varied learning, and philosophical eloquence, all under the guidance of a spirit breathing the purest philanthropy and piety, they may challenge comparison with any work that was ever published; and though the admirers of Dr. Brown may regret that they should not have received his last corrections, the circumstance is of little real importance either to their value or to his own fame; for it may be safely predicted, that even in their present form they will always continue a splendid monument of Dr. Brown's academical exertions, and be considered one of the most valuable accessions that was ever made to the Philosophy of Mind.

It is impossible for me—if, on an occasion like the present, I may be allowed to refer to my own feelings—it is impossible for me to forget the time when I sat where you now sit, and when all the wonders and all the delights of intellectual philosophy were first revealed to me, by that luminous reason, which could have given perspicuity even to the obscurest science, and that eloquence, which must have rendered any science delightful.

"There is in every bosom some love of truth, as there is a love of light in every eye that is capable of vision. But the permanent effect of indifference, or zealous interest, which truth produces in the mind, depends as much on the mode in which knowledge is communicated, as on the knowledge itself. In this respect, science is truly like that common sunshine, to which it has been so often compared. It is not in the mere intensity of light that the charm consists. The chief enchantment is in the diversity of colours into which it flows, *adorning* every object which it enables us to *perceive*. And though it would have been no small blessing of nature to have poured light on the eye of man, though all had been *one whiteness*, distinguishing objects only as more or less brilliant, how much more gracious is her bounty, when she spreads, in inexhaustible profusion of tints, her innumerable blossoms at our feet,—when she can bid us look to the valley, and the rock, and the forest, and the ocean, and the heavens, and enjoy, in all its magnificent varieties, that radiance, from which, in its undivided splendour, the eye must soon have turned away, with weariness and pain.

"In this happy art, of throwing, on every subject which he treated, not *light* alone, but those colours which render light itself enchanting, Mr. Stewart was eminently successful. Yet the great merit of his lectures was something more than this. It was not the mere statement of a series of truths in most lucid order, and the decoration of these with a rich and varied profusion of imagery and appropriate expression, but an eloquence of a higher kind; that eloquence of *emotion*, the most animating because itself the most animated, to which genius indeed is necessary, but which genius alone is incapable of producing. There are many most profound reasoners, who lay down their series of arguments so demonstratively, and yet so coldly, that our assent, which we cannot withhold from them, may almost be said to be reluctant; and there are many most ingenious rhetoricians who know how to adorn whatever they write or say, with ornaments so rich and so faultless, that we almost feel it a sort of injustice not to be delighted with them, and who want nothing to prove them truly eloquent, but the sympathy of those whom they address. Far different was the eloquence of Mr. Stewart. Even in treating of subjects abstract and severe in themselves, it made itself truly felt, as *eloquence of the heart*. It did not merely *convince* of truth, but it *impressed* with the conviction. It assimilated, while the magic lasted, every mind to its own ardour, and thus producing that philosophic spirit, which is better than philosophy, led the mind beyond the mere acquiescence of the moment, to dwell on the subjects which it loved, and examine and discover for itself.

"On the loss which you have suffered, and which the University has suffered, by the retirement of my illustrious colleague, it is unnecessary to enlarge. But there is some comfort in thinking that he is not wholly lost to us; that in his retirement he will continue that great office of instruction, which he began and prosecuted so indefatigably in this place; and that, in his writings, we shall still be partakers of all that eloquence which outlives the moment.

"In the perusal of the works, with which his leisure cannot fail to enrich us, you may truly conceive yourselves as listening to him still; not indeed in a narrow auditory, but with that great audience of mankind, in which, from the long series of generations that are yet to exist, patriots and philosophers are listening with you, inspired and animated to virtue by the same truths, with which he instructs, and warms, and purifies his contemporaries. 'Neque enim debet operibus ejus obesse, quod vivit. An si inter eos quos nunquam vidimus floruisset, non solum libros ejus, verum etiam imagines conquireremus, ejusdem nunc honor præsentis et gratia quasi satietate languescet? At hoc pravum malignumque est, non admirari hominem admiratione dignissimum, quia videre, alloqui, audire, complecti, nec laudare tantum, verum etiam amare contingit.'"

LECTURES

ON THE

PHILOSOPHY OF THE HUMAN MIND.

LECTURE I.—(Introduction.)

Gentlemen,

The subject, on which we are about to enter, and which is to engage, I trust, a considerable portion of your attention for many months, is *the Philosophy of the Human Mind*, —not that speculative and passive philosophy only, which inquires into the nature of our intellectual part, and the mysterious connexion of this with the body which it animates, but that practical science, which relates to the duties, and the hopes, and the great destiny of man, and which, even in analyzing the powers of his understanding, and tracing all the various modifications of which it is individually susceptible, views it chiefly as a general instrument of good—an instrument by which he may have the dignity of co-operating with his beneficent Creator, by spreading to others the knowledge, and virtue, and happiness which he is qualified at once to enjoy and to diffuse.

"Philosophy," says Seneca, "is not formed for artificial show or delight. It has a higher office than to free idleness of its languor, and wear away and amuse the long hours of a day. It is that which forms and fashions the soul, which gives to life its disposition and order, which points out what it is our duty to do, what it is our duty to omit. It sits at the helm, and, in a sea of perils, directs the course of those who are wandering through the waves." "Non est philosophia populare artificium, nec ostentationi paratum; non in verbis sed in rebus est. Nec in hoc adhibetur ut aliqua oblectatione consumatur dies, ut dematur otio nausea. Animum format et fabricat, vitam disponit, actiones regit, agenda et omittenda demonstrat, sedet ad gubernaculum, et per ancipitia fluctuantium dirigit cursum." *

Such, unquestionably, is the great practical object of all philosophy. If it increase the happiness and virtue of human kind, it must be allowed to have fulfilled, to human beings, the noblest of earthly ends. The greatness of this primary object, however, perhaps fixed too exclusively the attention of the moral inquirers of antiquity, who, in considering man as capable of virtue and happiness, and in forming nice and subtle distinctions as to his supreme good, and the means by which he might attain it, seem almost to have neglected the consideration of his intellectual nature, as an object of mere physical science. Hence it happens, that, while the systems of ancient philosophy exhibit, in many instances, a dignity of moral sentiment as high, or almost as high, as the unassisted reason of man could be supposed

* Ep. 16.

to reach, and the defects of which we perhaps discover only by the aid of that purer light, which was not indulged to them, they can scarcely be said to have left us a single analysis of the complex phenomena of thought and feeling. By some of them, indeed, especially by the Peripatetics and Stoics, much dialectic subtlety was employed in distinctions, that may seem at first to involve such an analysis; but even these distinctions were verbal, or little more than verbal. The analytical investigation of the mind, in all its complexity of perceptions, and thoughts, and emotions, was reserved to form almost a new science in the comprehensive philosophy of far later years.

If, however, during the flourishing periods of Greek and Roman letters, this intellectual analysis was little cultivated, the department of the philosophy of the mind which relates to practical ethics, was enriched, as I have said, by moral speculations the most splendid and sublime. In those ages, indeed, and in countries in which no revealed will of Heaven had pointed out and sanctioned one unerring rule of right, it is not to be wondered at, that, to those who were occupied in endeavouring to trace and ascertain such a rule in the moral nature of man, all other mental inquiries should have seemed comparatively insignificant. It is even pleasing thus to find the most important of all inquiries regarded as truly the most important, and minds of the highest genius, in reflecting on their own constitution, so richly diversified and adorned with an almost infinite variety of forms of thought, discovering nothing, in all this splendid variety, so worthy of investigation, as the conduct which it is fitting for man to pursue.

But another period was soon to follow, a period in which ages of long and dreary ignorance were to be followed by ages of futile labour, as long and dreary. No beautiful moral speculations were then to compensate the poverty of intellectual science. But morality, and even religion itself, were to be degraded, as little more than technical terms of a cold and unmeaning logic. The knowledge of our mental frame was then, indeed, professedly cultivated with most assiduous zeal; and if much technical phraseology, and much contention, were sufficient to constitute or elaborate science, that assiduous zeal might well deserve to have been rewarded with so honourable a name. But what reasonable hope of a progress truly scientific could be formed, when to treat of the philosophy of mind was to treat of every thing but of the mind and its affections; when some of the most important questions, with respect to it, were, Whether its *essence* were distinct from its *existence*? whether its *essence* therefore might subsist, when it had no actual *existence*? and what were all the qualities inherent in it as a *nonentity*? In morals, whether ethics were an art or a science? whether, if the mind had freedom of choice, this independent will be an entity or a quiddity? and whether we should say, with a dozen schoolmen, that virtue is good, because it has intrinsic goodness, or, with a dozen more, that it has this intrinsic goodness, because it is good?

In natural theology, questions of equal moment were contested with equal keenness and subtlety; but they related less to the Deity, of whose nature, transcendent as it is, the whole universe may be considered as in some degree a faint revelation, than to those spiritual ministers of his power, of whose very existence nature affords no evidence, and of whom revelation itself may be said to teach us little but the mere existence. Whether angels pass from one point of space to another, without passing through the intermediate points? whether they can visually discern objects in the dark? whether more than one can exist at the same moment in the same physical point? whether they can exist in a perfect vacuum, with any relation to the absolute incorporeal void? and whether, if an angel were in vacuo, the void could still truly be termed perfect?—Such, or similar to these, were the great inquiries in that department of Natural Theology, to which, as to a separate science, was given the name of Angelography; and of the same kind were the principal inquiries with respect to the Deity himself, not so much an examination of the evidence which nature affords of his self-existence, and power, and wisdom, and goodness, those sublime qualities which even our weakness cannot contemplate without deriving some additional dignity from the very greatness which it adores, as a solution of more subtle points, whether he exist in imaginary space as much as in the space that is real? whether he can cause a mode to exist without a substance? whether, in knowing all things, he knows universals, or only things singular? and whether he love a possible unexisting angel better than an actually existing insect?

"Indignandum de isto, non disputandum est."—"Sed non debuit hoc nobis esse propositum arguta disserere,* et philosophiam in has angustias ex sua majestate detrahere. Quanto satius est, ire aperta via et recta, quam sibi ipsi flexus disponere, quos cum magna molestia debeas relegere?"†—"Why waste ourselves," says the same eloquent moralist; "why torture and waste ourselves in questions, which there is more real subtlety in despising than in solving?"—"Quid te torques et maceras, in ea quæstione quam subtilius est contempsisse quam solvere?"‡

From the necessity of such inquiries we are now fortunately freed. The frivolous solemnities of argument, which, in the disputations of Scotists and Thomists, and the long controversy of the believers and rejecters of the

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* Argutias serere. *Lect. var.*
† Seneca, Ep. 102. ‡ Ibid. 49.

universal *a parte rei*, rendered human ignorance so very proud of its temporary triumphs over human ignorance, at length are hushed for ever; and, so precarious is all that glory, of which men are the dispensers, that the most subtle works, which for ages conferred on their authors a reverence more than praise, and almost worship, would now scarcely find a philosophic adventurer, so bold as to avow them for his own.

The progress of intellectual philosophy may indeed, as yet, have been less considerable than was to be hoped under its present better auspices. But it is not a little, to have escaped from a labyrinth, so very intricate, and so very dark, even though we should have done nothing more than advance into sunshine and an open path, with a long journey of discovery still before us. We have at last arrived at the important truth, which now seems so very obvious a one, that the mind is to be known best by observation of the series of changes which it presents, and of all the circumstances which precede and follow these; that, in attempting to explain its phenomena, therefore, we should know what those phenomena are; and that we might as well attempt to discover, by logic, unaided by observation or experiment, the various coloured rays that enter into the composition of a sunbeam, as to discover, by dialectic subtleties, *a priori*, the various feelings that enter into the composition of a single thought or passion.

The mind, it is evident, may, like the body to which it is united, or the material objects which surround it, be considered simply as a substance possessing certain qualities, susceptible of various affections or modifications, which, existing successively as momentary states of the mind, constitute all the phenomena of thought and feeling. The general circumstances in which these changes of state succeed each other, or, in other words, the laws of their succession, may be pointed out, and the phenomena arranged in various classes, according as they may resemble each other, in the circumstances that precede or follow them, or in other circumstances of obvious analogy. There is, in short, a science that may be termed mental physiology, as there is another science relating to the structure and offices of our corporeal frame, to which the term physiology is more commonly applied; and as, by observation and experiment, we endeavour to trace those series of changes which are constantly taking place in our material part, from the first moment of animation to the moment of death; so, by observation, and in some measure also by experiment, we endeavour to trace the series of changes that take place in the mind, fugitive as these successions are, and rendered doubly perplexing by the reciprocal combinations into which they flow. The innumerable changes, corporeal and mental, we reduce, by generalizing, to a few classes; and we speak, in reference to the mind, of its faculties or functions of perception, memory, reason, as we speak, in reference to the body, of its functions of respiration, circulation, nutrition. This mental physiology, in which the mind is considered simply as a substance endowed with certain susceptibilities, and variously affected or modified in consequence, will demand of course our first inquiry; and I trust that the intellectual analyses, into which we shall be led by it, will afford results that will repay the labour of persevering attention, which they may often require from you.

In one very important respect, however, the inquiries, relating to the physiology of mind, differ from those which relate to the physiology of our animal frame. If we could render ourselves acquainted with the intimate structure of our bodily organs, and all the changes which take place, in the exercise of their various functions, our labour, with respect to them, might be said to terminate. But though our intellectual analysis were perfect, so that we could distinguish, in our most complex thought or emotion, its constituent elements, and trace with exactness the series of simpler thoughts which have progressively given rise to them, other inquiries, equally or still more important, would remain. We do not know all which is to be known of the mind when we know all its phenomena, as we know all which can be known of matter, when we know the appearances which it presents, in every situation in which it is possible to place it, and the manner in which it then acts or is acted upon by other bodies. When we know that man has certain affections and passions, there still remains the great inquiry, as to the propriety or impropriety of those passions, and of the conduct to which they lead. We have to consider, not merely how he is capable of acting, but also, whether, acting in the manner supposed, he would be fulfilling a duty or perpetrating a crime. Every enjoyment which man can confer on man, and every evil, which he can reciprocally inflict or suffer, thus become objects of two sciences—first of that intellectual analysis which traces the happiness and misery, in their various forms and sequences, as mere phenomena or states of the substance mind;—and secondly, of that ethical judgment, which measures our approbation and disapprobation, estimating, with more than judicial scrutiny, not merely what is done, but what is scarcely thought in secrecy and silence, and discriminating some element of moral good or evil, in all the physical good and evil, which it is in our feeble power to execute, or in our still frailer heart, to conceive and desire.

To this second department of inquiry, belong the doctrines of general ethics.

But, though man were truly impressed with the great doctrine of moral obligation, and truly desirous, in conformity with it, of increasing, as far as his individual influence may extend,

the sum of general happiness, he may still err in the selection of the means which he employs for this benevolent purpose. So essential is knowledge, if not to virtue, at least to all the ends of virtue, that, without it, benevolence itself, when accompanied with power, may be as destructive and desolating as intentional tyranny; and, notwithstanding the great principles of progression in human affairs, the whole native vigour of a state may be kept down for ages, and the comfort, and prosperity, and active industry of unexisting millions be blasted by regulations, which, in the intention of their generous projectors, were to stimulate those very energies which they repressed, and to relieve that very misery which they rendered irremediable. It therefore becomes an inquiry of paramount importance, what are the means best calculated for producing the greatest amount of social good? By what ordinances would public prosperity, and all the virtues which not merely adorn that prosperity, but produce it, be most powerfully excited and maintained? This political department of our science, which is in truth only a subdivision, though a very important one, of general practical ethics, comprehends, of course, the inquiries as to the relative advantages of different forms of government, and the expediency of the various contrivances which legislative wisdom may have established, or may be supposed to establish, for the happiness and defence of nations.

The inquiries, to which I have as yet alluded, relate to the mind, considered simply as an object of physiological investigation; or to man, considered in his moral relations to a community, capable of deriving benefit from his virtues and knowledge, or of suffering by his errors and his crimes. But there is another more important relation in which the mind is still to be viewed—that relation which connects it with the Almighty Being to whom it owes its existence. Is man, whose frail generations begin and pass away, but one of the links of an infinite chain of beings like himself, uncaused, and coeternal with that self-existing world of which he is the feeble tenant? or, Is he the offspring of an all-creating Power, that adapted him to nature, and nature to him,—formed, together with the magnificent scene of things around him, to enjoy its blessings, and to adore, with the gratitude of happiness, the wisdom and goodness from which they flow? What attributes, of a Being so transcendent, may human reason presume to explore? and, What homage will be most suitable to his immensity and our nothingness? Is it only for an existence of a few moments, in this passing scene, that he has formed us? or, Is there something within us, over which death has no power; something, that prolongs and identifies the consciousness of all which we have done on earth, and that, after the mortality of the body, may yet be a subject of the moral government of God? When compared with these questions, even the sublimest physical inquiries are comparatively insignificant. They seem to differ, as it has been said, in their relative importance and dignity, almost as philosophy itself differs from the mechanical arts that are subservient to it. "Quantum inter philosophiam interest et cæteras artes; tantum interesse existimo in ipsa philosophia, inter illam partem quæ ad homines, et hanc quæ ad Deos spectat. Altior est hæc et animosior: multum permisit sibi; non fuit oculis contenta. Majus esse quiddam suspicata est, ac pulchrius, quod extra conspectum natura posuisset."* It is when ascending to these sublimer objects, that the mind seems to expand, as if already shaking off its earthly fetters, and returning to its source: and it is scarcely too much to say, that the delight which it thus takes in things divine is an internal evidence of its own divinity. "Cum illa tetigit, alitur, crescit; ac, velut vinculis liberatus, in originem redit. Et hoc habet argumentum divinitatis suæ, quod illum divina delectant."

I have thus briefly sketched the various important inquiries, which the philosophy of mind, in its most extensive sense, may be said to comprehend. The nature of our spiritual being, as displayed in all the phenomena of feeling and thought; the ties which bind us to our fellow-men, and to our Creator; and the prospect of that unfading existence, of which life is but the first dawning gleam;—such are the great objects to which, in the department of your studies committed to my charge, it will be my office to guide your attention and curiosity. The short period of the few months to which my course is necessarily limited, will not, indeed, allow me to prosecute, with such full investigation as I should wish, every subject that may present itself in so various a range of inquiry. But even these few months, I flatter myself, will be sufficient to introduce you to all which it is most important for you to know in the science, and to give such lights as may enable you, in other hours, to explore, with success, the prospects that here, perhaps, may only have opened on your view. It is not, I trust, with the labours of a single season that such inquiries, on your part, are to terminate. Amid the varied occupations and varied pleasures of your future years,—in the privacy of domestic enjoyment, as much as in the busier scenes of active exertion,—the studies on which you are about to enter must often rise to you again with something more than mere remembrance; because there is nothing that can give you interest, in any period or situation of your life, to which they are not related. The science of mind is the science of yourselves; of all

* Seneca Nat. Quæst. Lib. 1 Præf.

who surround you; of every thing which you enjoy or suffer, or hope or fear: so truly the science of your very being, that it will be impossible for you to look back on the feelings of a single hour, without constantly retracing phenomena that have been here, to a certain extent, the subjects of your analysis and arrangement. The thoughts and faculties of your own intellectual frame, and all which you admire as wonderful in the genius of others; the moral obligation, which, as obeyed or violated, is ever felt by you with delight or with remorse; the virtues, of which you think as often as you think of those whom you love; and the vices, which you view with abhorrence, or with pity; the traces of divine goodness, which never can be absent from your view, because there is no object in nature which does not exhibit them; the feeling of your dependence on the gracious Power that formed you; and the anticipation of a state of existence more lasting than that which is measured by the few beatings of a feeble pulse; these in their perpetual recurrence, must often recal to you the inquiries that, in this place, engaged your early attention. It will be almost as little possible for you to abandon wholly such speculations, as to look on the familiar faces of your home with a forgetfulness of every hour which they have made delightful, or to lose all remembrance of the very language of your infancy, that is every moment sounding in your ears.

Though I shall endeavour, therefore, to give as full a view as my limits will permit of all the objects of inquiry which are to come before us, it will be my chief wish to awake in you, or to cherish, a love of these sublime inquiries themselves. There is a philosophic spirit which is far more valuable than any limited acquirements of philosophy; and the cultivation of which, therefore, is the most precious advantage that can be derived from the lessons and studies of many academic years:—a spirit, which is quick to pursue whatever is within the reach of human intellect; but which is not less quick to discern the bounds that limit every human inquiry, and which, therefore, in seeking much, seeks only what man may learn:—which knows how to distinguish what is just in itself from what is merely accredited by illustrious names; adopting a truth which no one has sanctioned, and rejecting an error of which all approve, with the same calmness as if no judgment were opposed to its own:—but which, at the same time, alive, with congenial feeling, to every intellectual excellence, and candid to the weakness from which no excellence is wholly privileged, can dissent and confute without triumph, as it admires without envy; applauding gladly whatever is worthy of applause in a rival system, and venerating the very genius which it demonstrates to have erred.

Such is that philosophic temper to which, in the various discussions that are to occupy us, it will be my principal ambition to form your minds; with a view not so much to what you are at present, as to what you are afterwards to become. You are now, indeed, only entering on a science, of which, by many of you, perhaps, the very elements have never once been regarded as subjects of speculative inquiry. You have much, therefore, to learn, even in learning only what others have thought. But I should be unwilling to regard you as the passive receivers of a system of opinions, content merely to remember whatever mixture of truths and errors may have obtained your easy assent. I cannot but look to you in your maturer character, as yourselves the philosophers of other years; as those who are, perhaps, to add to science many of its richest truths, which as yet are latent to every mind, and to free it from many errors, in which on one has yet suspected even the possibility of illusion. The spirit which is itself to become productive in you, is, therefore, the spirit which I wish to cultivate; and happy, as I shall always be, if I succeed in conveying to you that instruction which it is my duty to communicate, I shall have still more happiness if I can flatter myself, that, in this very instruction, I have trained you to habits of thought, which may enable you to enrich, with your own splendid discoveries, the age in which you live, and to be yourselves the instructors of all the generations that are to follow you.

LECTURE II.

RELATION OF THE PHILOSOPHY OF MIND TO THE SCIENCES.

In my former Lecture, Gentlemen, I gave you a slight sketch of the departments into which the Philosophy of Mind divides itself, comprehending, in the *first* place, The physiology of the mind, considered as a substance capable of the various modifications, or states, which constitute, as they succeed each other, the phenomena of thought and feeling; *secondly*, The doctrines of general ethics, as to the obligation, under which man lies, to increase and extend, as widely as possible, the happiness of all that live; *thirdly*, The political doctrines as to the means which enable him, in society with his fellow-men, to further most successfully, and with the least risk of future evil, that happiness of all, which it is the duty of each individually to wish and to promote; and, *fourthly*, The doctrines of natural theology, as to the existence and attributes of that greatest of Beings, under whose moral government we live, and the foundations of our confidence that death is only a change of

scene, which, with respect to our mortality indeed, may be said to be its close; but which, with respect to the soul itself, is only one of the events of a life that is everlasting.

Of these great divisions of our subject, the Physiology of the Mind, or the consideration of the regular series of phenomena which it presents, simply as states or affections of the mind, is that to which we are first to turn our attention. But, before entering on it, it may be useful to employ a few Lectures in illustrating the advantages which the study of the mind affords, and the principles of philosophizing, in their peculiar application to it—subjects, which, though of a general kind, will, I trust, leave an influence that will be felt in all the particular inquiries in which we are to be engaged; preparing you, both for appreciating better the importance of those inquiries, and for prosecuting them with greater success.

One very obvious distinction of the physical investigations of mind and matter, is, that, in intellectual science, the materials on which we operate, the instruments with which we operate, and the operating agent, are the same. It is the mind, endowed with the faculties of perception and judgment, observing, comparing, and classifying the phenomena of the mind. In the physics of matter, it is, indeed, the mind which observes, compares, and arranges; but the phenomena are those of a world, which, though connected with the mind by many wonderful relations of reciprocal agency, still exists independently of it—a world that presents its phenomena only in circumstances, over most of which we have no control, and over others a control that is partial and limited. The comparative facility, as to all external circumstances, attending the study of the mental phenomena, is unquestionably an advantage of no small moment. In every situation in which man can be placed, as long as his intellectual faculties are unimpaired, it is impossible that he should be deprived of opportunities of carrying on this intellectual study; because, in every situation in which he can be placed, he must still have with him that universe of thought, which is the true home and empire of the mind. No costly apparatus is requisite—no tedious waiting for seasons of observation. He has but to look within himself to find the elements which he has to put together, or the compounds which he has to analyze, and the instruments that are to perform the analysis or composition.

It was not, however, to point out to you the advantage which arises to the study of our mental frame, from the comparative facility as to the circumstances attending it, that I have led your attention to the difference, in this respect, of the physics of mind and matter. It was to show, what is of much more importance,—how essential a right view of the science of mind is to every other science, even to those sciences which superficial thinkers might conceive to have no connexion with it; and how vain it would be to expect, that any branch of the physics of mere matter could be cultivated to its highest degree of accuracy and perfection, without a due acquaintance with the nature of that intellectual medium, through which alone the phenomena of matter become visible to us, and of those intellectual instruments, by which the objects of every science, and of every science alike, are measured, and divided, and arranged. We might almost as well expect to form an accurate judgment, as to the figure, and distance, and colour of an object, at which we look through an optical glass, without paying any regard to the colour and refracting power of the lens itself. The distinction of the sciences and arts, in the sense in which these words are commonly understood, is as just as it is familiar; but it may be truly said, that, in relation to our power of discovery, science is itself an art, or the result of an art. Whether, in this most beautiful of processes, we regard the mind as the instrument or the artist, it is equally that by which all the wonders of speculative, or practical knowledge, are evolved. It is an agent operating in the production of new results, and employing for this purpose the known laws of thought, in the same manner as, on other occasions, it employs the known laws of matter. The objects, to which it may apply itself, are indeed various, and, as such, give to the sciences their different names. But, though the objects vary, the observer and the instrument are continually the same. The limits of the powers of this mental instrument, are not the limits of its powers alone; they are also the only real limits, within which every science is comprehended. To the extent which it allows, all those sciences, physical or mathematical, and all the arts which depend on them, may be improved; but, beyond this point, it would be vain to expect them to pass; or rather, to speak more accurately, the very supposition of any progress beyond this point would imply the grossest absurdity; since human science can be nothing more than the result of the direction of human faculties to particular objects. To the astronomer, the faculty by which he calculates the disturbing forces that operate on a satellite of Jupiter, in its revolution round its primary planet, is as much an instrument of his art, as the telescope by which he distinguishes that almost invisible orb; and it is as important, and surely as interesting, to know the real power of the intellectual instrument, which he uses, not for calculations of this kind only, but for all the speculative and moral purposes of life, as it can be to know the exact power of that subordinate instrument, which he uses only for his occasional survey of the heavens.

To the philosophy of mind, then, every speculation, in every science, may be said to have relation as to a common centre. The know-

ledge of any quality of matter, in the whole wide range of physics, is not itself a phenomenon of matter, more than the knowledge of any of our intellectual or moral affections; it is truly, in all its stages of conjecture, comparison, doubt, belief, a phenomenon of mind; or, in other words, it is only the mind itself existing in a certain state. The inanimate bodies around us might, indeed, exhibit the same changes as at present, though no mind had been created. But science is not the existence of these inanimate bodies; it is the principle of thought itself variously modified by them, which, as it exists in certain states, constitutes that knowledge which we term astronomy; in certain other states, that knowledge which we term chymistry; in other states our physiology, corporeal or mental, and all the other divisions and subdivisions of science. It would surely be absurd to suppose, that the mixture of acids and alkalies constitutes chymistry, or that astronomy is formed by the revolution of planets round a sun. Such phenomena, the mere objects of science, are only the occasions on which astronomy and chymistry arise in the mind of the inquirer, Man. It is the mind which perceives bodies, which reasons on their apparent relations, which joins them in thought as similar, however distant they may be in space, or separates them in thought as dissimilar, though apparently contiguous. These perceptions, reasonings, and classifications of the mind must, of course, be regulated by the laws of mind, which mingle in their joint result with the laws of matter. It is the object indeed which affects the mind when sentient; but it is the original susceptibility of the mind itself which determines and modifies the particular affection, very nearly, if I may illustrate what is mental by so coarse an image, as the impression which a seal leaves on melted wax depends, not on the qualities of the wax alone, or of the seal alone, but on the softness of the one, and the form of the other. Change the external object which affects the mind in any case, and we all know that the affection of the mind will be different. It would not be less so, if, without any change of object, there could be a change in the mere feeling, whatever it might be, which would result from that different susceptibility, becoming instantly as different, as if not the mind had been altered, but the object which it perceived. There is no physical science, therefore, in which the laws of mind are not to be considered together with the laws of matter; and a change in either set of laws would equally produce a change in the nature of the science itself.

If, to take one of the simplest of examples, the mind had been formed susceptible of all the modifications which it admits at present, with the single exception of those which it receives on the presence of light, of how many objects and powers in nature, which we are now capable of distinguishing, must we have remained in absolute ignorance! But would this comparative ignorance of many objects be the only effect of such a change of the laws of mind as I have supposed? Or rather, is it not equally certain, that this simple change alone would be sufficient to alter the very nature of the limited science of which the mind would still be capable, as much as it narrowed its extent? Science is the classification of relations; varying too, in every case, as the relations observed are different; and how very differently should we, in such circumstances, have classed the few powers of the few objects, which might still have become known to us, since we could no longer have classed them according to any of those visual relations, which are always the most obvious and prominent. It is even, perhaps, an extravagant supposition, that a race of the blind, unless endowed with some other sense to compensate the defect of sight, could have acquired so much command of the common arts of life, or so much science of any sort, as to preserve themselves in existence. But though all this, by a very strong license of supposition, were taken for granted, it must surely be admitted, that the knowledge which man could in those circumstances acquire, would be not merely less in degree, but would be as truly different from that which his powers at present have reached, as if the objects of his science, or the laws which regulate them, had themselves been changed to an extent, at least as great as the supposed change in the laws of mind. The astronomy of the blind, if the word might still be used to express a science so very different from the present, would, in truth, be a sort of chymistry. Day and night, the magnificent and harmonious revolution of season after season, would be nothing more than periodical changes of temperature in the objects around; and that great dispenser of the seasons, the source of light, and beauty, and almost of animation, at whose approach nature seems not merely to awake, but to rise again, as it was at first, from the darkness of its original chaos, if its separate existence could be at all inferred, would probably be classed as something similar, though inferior in power, to that unknown source of heat, which, by a perilous and almost unknown process, was fearfully piled and kindled on the household hearth.

So accustomed are we, however, to consider the nature and limits of the different sciences, as depending on the objects themselves, and not on the laws of the mind, which classes their relations, that it may be difficult for you at first to admit the influence of these mere laws of mind, as modifying general physics, at least to the extent which I have now stated. But, that a change in the laws of human thought, whatever influence it might have in altering the very nature and limits of the physical sciences, would at least affect greatly the state of their

progress, must be immediately evident to those who consider for a moment on what discovery depends; the progress of science being obviously nothing more than a series of individual discoveries, and the number of discoveries varying with the powers of the individual intellect. The same phenomena which were present to the mind of Newton, had been present, innumerable times before, not to the understandings of philosophers only, but to the very senses of the vulgar. Every thing was the same to him and to them, except the observing and reasoning mind. To him alone, however, they suggested those striking analogies, by which, on a comparison of all the known circumstances in both, he ventured to class the force which retains the planets in their orbits, with that which occasions the fall of a pebble to the earth.

> "Have ye not listen'd, while he bound the suns
> And planets to their spheres! the unequal task
> Of human kind till then. Oft had they roll'd
> O'er erring man the year, and oft disgraced
> The pride of schools.
> ——He took his ardent flight
> Through the blue infinite; and every star
> Which the clear concave of a winter's night
> Pours on the eye, or astronomic tube,
> Far-stretching, snatches from the dark abyss,
> Or such as farther in successive skies
> To fancy shine alone, at his approach
> Blazed into suns, the living centre each
> Of an harmonious system; all combined,
> And ruled unerring by that single power
> Which draws the stone projected to the ground."*

It is recorded of this almost superhuman genius, whose powers and attainments at once make us proud of our common nature, and humble us with our disparity, that, in acquiring the elements of geometry, he was able, in a very large proportion of cases, to pass immediately from theorem to theorem, by reading the mere enunciation of each, perceiving, as it were intuitively, that latent evidence, which others are obliged slowly to trace through a long series of propositions. When the same theorem was enunciated, or the same simple phenomenon observed, the successions of thought, in his mind, were thus obviously different from the successions of thought in other minds; but it is easy to conceive the original susceptibilities of all minds such, as exactly to have corresponded with those of the mind of Newton. And if the minds of all men, from the creation of the world, had been similar to the mind of Newton, is it possible to conceive, that the state of any science would have been, at this moment, what it now is, or in any respect similar to what it now is, though the laws which regulate the physical changes in the material universe had continued unaltered, and no change occurred, but in the simple original susceptibilities of the mind itself?

The laws of the observing and comparing mind, then, it must be admitted, have modified, and must always continue to modify, every science, as truly as the laws of that particular department of nature of which the phenomena are observed and compared. But it may be said,—We are chymists, we are astronomers, without studying the philosophy of mind. And true it certainly is, that there are excellent astronomers, and excellent chymists, who have never paid any peculiar attention to intellectual philosophy. The general principles of philosophizing, which a more accurate intellectual philosophy had introduced, have become familiar to them without study. But those general principles are not less the effect of that improved philosophy of mind, any more than astronomy and chymistry themselves have now a less title to be considered as sciences; because, from the general diffusion of knowledge in society, those who have never professedly studied either science, are acquainted with many of their most striking truths. It is gradually, and almost insensibly, that truths diffuse themselves. At first admired and adopted by a few, who are able to compare the present with the past, and who gladly own them, as additions to former knowledge,—from them communicated to a wider circle, who receive them without discussion, as if familiar and long known; and at length, in this widening progress, becoming so nearly universal, as almost to seem effects of a natural instinctive law of human thought; like the light, which we readily ascribe to the sun, as it first flows directly from him, and forces his image on our sight, but which, when reflected from object to object, soon ceases to remind us of its origin, and seems almost to be a part of the very atmosphere which we breathe.

I am aware, that it is not to improvements in the mere philosophy of mind, that the great reformation in our principles of physical inquiry is commonly ascribed. Yet it is to this source—certainly at least to this source chiefly, that I would refer the origin of those better plans of philosophical investigation which have distinguished with so many glorious discoveries the age in which we live, and the ages immediately preceding. When we think of the great genius of Lord Bacon, and of the influence of his admirable works, we are too apt to forget the sort of difficulties which his genius must have had to overcome, and to look back to his rules of philosophizing, as a sort of ultimate truths, discoverable by the mere perspicacity of his superior mind, without referring them to those simple views of nature in relation to our faculties of discovery, from which they were derived. The rules which he gives us, are rules of physical investigation; and it is very natural for us, therefore, in estimating their value, to think of the erroneous physical opinions which preceded them, without paying sufficient attention to the false theories of intellect which had led to those very physical absurdities. Lord Bacon, if he

* Thomson's Poem on the Death of Sir Isaac Newton

was not the first who discovered that we were in some degree idolators, to use his own metaphor, in our intellectual worship, was certainly the first who discovered the extent of our idolatry. But we must not forget, that the temple which he purified, was not the temple of external nature, but the temple of the mind; that in its inmost sanctuaries were all the idols which he overthrew; and that it was not till these were removed, and the intellect prepared for the presence of a nobler divinity, that Truth would deign to unveil herself to adoration; as in the mysteries of those Eastern religions, in which the first ceremony for admission to the worship of the god is the purification of the worshipper.

In the course of our analysis of the intellectual phenomena, we shall have frequent opportunities of remarking the influence, which errors with respect to these mere phenomena of mind must have had, on the contemporary systems of general physics, and on the spirit of the prevailing plans of inquiry. It may be enough to remark at present the influence of one fundamental error, which, as long as it retained its hold of the understanding, must have rendered all its energies ineffectual, by wasting them in the search of objects, which it never could attain, because in truth they had no real existence,—to the neglect of objects that would have produced the very advantage which was sought. I allude to the belief of the schools, in the separate existence, or entity as they technically termed it, of the various orders of universals, and the mode in which they conceived every acquisition of knowledge in reasoning, to take place, by the intervention of certain intelligible forms or species, existing separately in the intellect, as the direct objects of thought; in the same manner as they ascribed simple perception to the action of species of another order, which they termed sensible species,—the images of things derived indeed from objects without, but, when thus derived, existing independently of them. When we amuse ourselves with inquiring into the history of human folly—that most comprehensive of all histories—which includes, at least for many ages, the whole history of philosophy; or rather, to use a word more appropriate than amusement, when we read with regret the melancholy annals of genius aspiring to be pre-eminently frivolous, and industry labouring to be ignorant,—we often discover absurdities of the grossest kind, which almost cease to be absurdities, on account of other absurdities, probably as gross, which accompany them; and this is truly the case, in the grave extravagance of the logic of the schools. The scholastic mode of philosophizing, ridiculous as it now seems, was far from absurd, when taken in connexion with the scholastic philosophy. It was indeed the only mode of procedure which that philosophy could consistently admit. To those who believed that singular objects could afford no real knowledge, singularium nullam dari scientiam; and that this was to be obtained only from what they termed intelligible species, existing not in external things, but in the intellect itself,—it must have seemed as absurd to wander, in quest of knowledge, out of that region in which alone they supposed it to exist, and to seek it among things singular, as it would now, to us, seem hopeless and absurd, to found a system of physical truths on the contemplation and comparison of universals. While this false theory of the mental phenomena prevailed, was it possible, that the phenomena of matter should have been studied on sounder principles of investigation, when any better plan must have been absolutely inconsistent with the very theory of thought? It was in mind that the student of general nature was to seek his guiding light, without which all then was darkness. The intellectual philosopher, if any such had then arisen, to analyse simply the phenomena of thought, without any reference to general physics, would in truth have done more in that dark age, for the benefit of every physical science, than if he had discovered a thousand properties of as many different substances.

Let us suppose, for a moment, that an accurate view of the intellectual process of abstraction could have been communicated to a veteran sage of the schools, at the very moment when he was intently contemplating the tree of Porphyry, in all its branches of species and genera, between the individual and the *summum genus;* and when he was preparing, perhaps, by this contemplation of a few universals, to unfold all the philosophy of colours, or of the planetary movements—would the benefit which he received from this clearer view of a single process of thought, have terminated in the mere science of mind; or would not rather his new views of mind have extended with a most important influence to his whole wide views of matter? He must immediately have learned, that, in the whole tree of genera and species, the individual at the bottom of his scale was the only real independent existence, and that all the rest, the result of certain comparisons of agreement or disagreement, were simple modifications of his own mind, not produced by any thing existing in his intellect but by the very constitution of his intellect itself; the consideration of a number of individuals as of one species being nothing more than the feeling of their agreement in certain respects, and the feeling of this agreement being as simple a result of the observation of them together, as the perception of each, individually, was of its individual presence. It would surely have been impossible for him, with this new and important light, to return to his transcendental inquiries, into entities, and quiddities, and substantial forms; and the simple discovery of a

better theory of abstraction, as a process of the mind, would thus have supplied the place of many rules of philosophizing.

The philosophy of mind, then, we must admit, did, in former ages at least, exercise an important influence on general science: and are we to suppose that it has now no influence?

Even though no other advantage were to be obtained from our present juster views of mind, than the protection which they give, from those gross errors of inquiry to which the philosophers of so long a series of ages were exposed, this alone would surely be no slight gain. But, great as this advantage is, are we certain, that it is all which the nicest mental analysis can afford; or rather, is it not possible at least, that we may still, in our plans of physical investigation, be suffering under the influence of errors from which we should be saved, by still juster views of the faculties employed in every physical inquiry?

That we are not aware of any such influence, argues nothing; for, to suppose us aware of it, would be to suppose us acquainted with the very errors which mislead us. Aquinas and Scotus, it is to be presumed, and all their contentious followers, conceived themselves as truly in the right path of physical investigation, as we do at this moment; and, though we are free from their gross mistakes, there may yet be others of which we are the less likely to divest ourselves, from not having as yet the slightest suspicion of their existence. The question is not, Whether our method of inquiry be juster than theirs?—for, of our superiority in this respect, if any evidence of fact were necessary, the noble discoveries of these later years are too magnificent a proof to allow us to have any doubt; but, Whether our plan of inquiry may not still be susceptible of improvements, of which we have now as little foresight, as the Scotists and Aquinists of the advantages which philosophy has received from the general prosecution of the inductive method? There is, indeed, no reason now to fear, that the observation of particular objects, with a view to general science, will be despised as incapable of giving any direct knowledge, and all real science be confined to universals. "Singularium datur scientia." But, though a sounder view of one intellectual process may have banished from philosophy much idle contention, and directed inquiry to fitter objects, it surely does not therefore follow, that subsequent improvements in the philosophy of mind are to be absolutely unavailing. On the contrary, the presumption unquestionably is, that if, by understanding better the simple process of abstraction, we have freed ourselves from many errors in our plans of inquiry, a still clearer view of the nature and limits of all the intellectual processes concerned in the discovery of truth, may lead to still juster views of philosophizing.

Even at present, I cannot but think that we may trace, in no inconsiderable degree, the influence of false notions, as to some of the phenomena of the mind, in misdirecting the spirit of our general philosophy. I allude, in particular, to one very important intellectual process,—that by which we acquire our knowledge of the relation on which all physics may be said to be founded. He must have paid little attention to the history of philosophy, and even to the philosophy of his own time, who does not perceive, how much the vague and obscure notions entertained of that intermediate tie, which is supposed to connect phenomena with each other, have tended to favour the invention and ready admission of physical hypotheses, which otherwise could not have been entertained for a moment;—hypotheses, which attempt to explain what is known by the introduction of what is unknown; as if successions of phenomena were rendered easier to be understood merely by being rendered more complicated. This very unphilosophic passion for complexity (which, unphilosophic as it is, is yet the passion of many philosophers,) seems, to me, to arise, in a great measure, from a mysterious and false view of causation; as involving always, in every series of changes, the intervention of something unobserved, between the observed antecedent and the observed effect; a view of which may very naturally be supposed to lead the mind, when it has observed no *actual* intervention, to imagine any thing, which is not absolutely absurd, that it may flatter itself with the pleasure of having discovered a *cause*. It is unnecessary, however, to enlarge at present on this subject, as it must again come before us; when you will perhaps see more clearly, how much the general diffusion of juster views, as to the nature and origin of our notion of the connexion of events, would tend to the simplification, not of our theories of mind only, but, in a still higher degree, of our theories of matter.

The observations already made, I trust, have shown how important, to the perfection of every science, is an accurate acquaintance with that intellectual medium, through which alone the objects of every science become known to us, and with those intellectual instruments, by which, alike in every science, truth is to be detected and evolved. On this influence, which the philosophy of mind must always exercise on general philosophy, I have dwelt the longer, because, important as the relation is, it is one which we are peculiarly apt to forget; and the more apt to forget it, on account of that very excellence of the physical sciences, to which it has itself essentially contributed. The discoveries, which reward our inquiry into the properties of matter, as now carried on, on principles better suited to the nature and limits of our powers of investigation, are too splendid to allow us to look

back to the circumstances which prepared them at a distance; and we avail ourselves of rules, that are the result of logical analysis, without reflecting, and almost without knowing, that they are the result of any analysis whatever. We are, in this respect, like navigators on the great ocean, who perform their voyage successfully by the results of observations of which they are altogether ignorant; who look, with perfect confidence, to their compass and chart, and think of the stars as useful only in those early ages, when the pilot, if he ventured from shore, had no other directors of his course. It is only some more skilful mariner who is still aware of their guidance; and who knows how much he is indebted to the satellites of Jupiter for the accuracy of that very chart, by which the crowds around him are mechanically directing their course.

The chief reason, however, for my dwelling so long on this central and governing relation, which the philosophy of intellect bears to all other philosophy, is that I am anxious to impress their relation strongly on your minds; not so much with a view to the importance which it may seem to give to the particular science that is to engage us together, as with a view to those other sciences in which you may already have been engaged, or which may yet await you in the course of your studies. The consideration of mind, as universally present and presiding—at once the medium of all the knowledge which can be acquired, and the subject of all the truths of which that knowledge consists, gives, by its own unity, a sort of unity and additional dignity to the sciences, of which their scattered experiments and observations would otherwise be unsusceptible. It is an unfortunate effect of physical inquiry, when exclusively devoted to the properties of external things, to render the mind, in our imagination, subordinate to the objects on which it is directed; the faculties are nothing, the objects every thing. The very nature of such inquiry leads us perpetually without to observe and arrange, and nothing brings us back to the observer and arranger within; or, if we do occasionally cast an inquisitive glance on the phenomena of our thought, we bring back with us what Bacon, in his strong language, calls "the smoke and tarnish of the furnace;" —the mind seems, to us, to be broken down to the littleness of the objects which it has been habitually contemplating; and we regard the faculties that measure earth and heaven, and that add infinity to infinity, with a curiosity of no greater interest than that with which we inquire into the angles of a crystal, or the fructification of a moss. "Ludit istis animus," says one of the most eloquent of the ancients, "Ludit istis animus, non proficit; et philosophiam a fastigio deducit in planum." To rest in researches of this minute kind, indeed, if we were absolutely to *rest* in them, without any higher and profounder views, would truly be, as he says, to drag down philosophy from that pure eminence on which she sits, to the very dust of the plain on which we tread. To the inquirer, however, whose mind has been previously imbued with this first philosophy, and who has learned to trace, in the wonders of every science, the wonders of his own intellectual frame, there is no physical research, however minute its object, which does not at once elevate the mind, and derive elevation from it. Nothing is truly humble, which can exercise faculties that are themselves sublime

> —Search, undismayed, the dark profound,
> Where Nature works in secret; view the beds
> Of mineral treasure, and the eternal vault
> That bounds the hoary ocean; trace the forms
> Of atoms, moving with incessant change,
> Their elemental round; behold the seeds
> Of being, and the energy of life,
> Kindling the mass with ever active flame:
> Then to the secrets of the working mind
> Attentive turn; from dim oblivion call
> Her fleet ideal band: and bid them go
> Break through time's barrier, and o'ertake the hour
> That saw the heavens created: then declare,
> If aught were found in these external scenes
> To move thy wonder now.*

In the physics of the material universe, there is, it must be owned, much that is truly worthy of our philosophic admiration, and of the sublimest exertions of philosophic genius. But even that material world will appear more admirable, to him who contemplates it, as it were from the height of his own mind, and who measures its infinity with the range of his own limited but aspiring faculties. He is unquestionably the philosopher most worthy of the name, who unites to the most accurate knowledge of mind, the most accurate knowledge of all the physical objects amid which he is placed; who makes each science, to each, reciprocally a source of additional illumination; and who learns, from both, the noblest of all the lessons which they can give,—the knowledge and adoration of that divine Being, who has alike created, and adapted to each other, with an order so harmonius, the universe of matter and the universe of thought.

LECTURE III.

INFLUENCE OF THE PHILOSOPHY OF MIND ON THE UNDERSTANDING.

In my last Lecture, Gentlemen, I illustrated, at great length, the relation which the philosophy of mind bears to all the other sciences, as the common centre of each. These sciences I represented, as, in their relation to

* Akenside's Pleasures of Imagination, Book I. v. 512 —526.

the powers of discovery, that are exercised in them, truly arts, in all the various intellectual processes, of which the artist is the same, and the instruments the same; and as, to the perfection of any of the mechanical arts, it is essential, that we know the powers of the instruments employed in it, so, in the inventive processes of science of every kind, it seems essential to the perfection of the process, that we should know, as exactly as possible, the powers and the limits of those intellectual instruments, which are exercised alike in all; that we may not waste our industry, in attempting to accomplish with them what is impossible to be accomplished, and at the same time may not despair of achieving with them any of the wonders to which they are truly adequate, if skilfully and perseveringly exerted; though we should have to overcome many of those difficulties which present themselves, as obstacles to every great effort, but which are insurmountable, only to those who despair of surmounting them.

It was to a consideration of this kind, as to the primary importance of knowing the questions to which our faculties are competent, that we are indebted for one of the most valuable works in our science,—a work, which none can read even now, without being impressed with reverence for the great talents of its author; but of which it is impossible to feel the whole value, without an acquaintance with the verbal trifling, and barren controversies, that still perplexed and obscured intellectual science at the period when it was written.

The work to which I allude, is the *Essay on the Human Understanding*, to the composition of which Mr Locke, in his preface, states himself to have been led by an accidental conversation with some friends who had met at his chamber. In the course of a discussion, which had no immediate relation to the subject of the Essay, they found themselves unexpectedly embarrassed by difficulties that appeared to rise on every side, when, after many vain attempts to extricate themselves from the doubts which perplexed them, it occurred to Mr Locke, that they had taken a wrong course, —that the inquiry in which they were engaged was probably one which was beyond the reach of human faculties, and that their first inquiry should have been, into the nature of the uuderstanding itself, to ascertain what subjects it was fit to explore and comprehend.

"When we know our own strength," he remarks, "we shall the better know what to undertake with hopes of success: and when we have well surveyed the powers of our own minds, and made some estimate what we may expect from them, we shall not be inclined either to sit still, and not set our thoughts on work at all, in despair of knowing any thing; or, on the other side, question every thing, and disclaim all knowledge, because some things are not to be understood. It is of great use to the sailor, to know the length of his line, though he cannot with it fathom all the depths of the ocean. It is well he knows, that it is long enough to reach the bottom, at such places as are necessary to direct his voyage, and caution him against running upon shoals that may ruin him.—This was that which gave the first rise to this essay concerning the understanding. For I thought, that the first step towards satisfying several inquiries the mind of man was very apt to run into, was to take a survey of our own understandings, examine our own powers, and see to what things they were adapted. Till that was done, I suspected we began at the wrong end, and in vain sought for satisfaction in a quiet and sure possession of truths that most concerned us, whilst we let loose our thoughts into the vast ocean of being, as if all that boundless extent were the natural and undoubted possession of our understandings.—Thus men, extending their inquiries beyond their capacities, and letting their thoughts wander into those depths where they can find no sure footing, it is no wonder that they raise questions and multiply disputes, which, never coming to any clear resolution, are proper only to continue and increase their doubts, and to confirm them, at last, in perfect scepticism; whereas, were the capacities of our understandings well considered, the extent of our knowledge once discovered, and the horizon found, which sets the bounds between the enlightened and dark parts of things, between what is and what is not comprehensible by us, men would perhaps, with less scruple acquiesce in the avowed ignorance of the one, and employ their thoughts and discourse, with more advantage and satisfaction in the other."*

These observations of Mr Locke illustrate, very happily, the importance of a right view of the limits of our understanding, for directing our inquiries to the objects that are truly within our reach. It is not the waste of intellect, as it lies torpid in the great multitude of our race, that is alone to be regretted in relation to science, which, in better circumstances, it might improve and adorn. It is, in many cases, the very industry of intellect, busily exerted, but exerted in labours that must be profitless, because the objects, to which the labour is directed, are beyond the reach of man. If half the zeal, and, I may add, even half the genius, which, during so many ages, were employed in attempting things impossible, had been given to investigations, on which the transcendental inquirers of those times would certainly have looked down with contempt, there are many names that are now mention-

* Essay on the Human Understanding.—Introd. sect. 6, 7.

ed only with ridicule or pity, for which we should certainly have felt the same deep veneration which our hearts so readily offer to the names of Bacon and Newton; or perhaps even the great names of Bacon and Newton might, in comparison with them, have been only of secondary dignity. It was not by idleness that this high rank of instructors and benefactors of the world was lost, but by a blind activity more hurtful than idleness itself. To those who never could have thought of numbering the population of our own little globe, it seemed an easy matter to number, with precise arithmetical accuracy, the tribes of angels, and to assign to each order of spiritual beings its separate duties, and separate dignities, with the exactness of some heraldic pomp; and, amid all those visible demonstrations of the Divinity which surround us wherever we turn our view, there were minds that could think, in relation to him, of every thing but his wisdom and goodness; as if He, who created us, and placed around us this magnificent system of things, were an object scarcely worthy of our reverence, till we had fixed his precise station in our logical categories, and had determined, not the majestic relations which he bears to the universe, as created and sustained by his bounty, but all the frivolous relations which he can be imagined to bear to impossibilities and nonentities.

> O, sons of earth! attempt ye still to rise,
> By mountains piled on mountains, to the skies!
> Heaven still, with laughter, the vain toil surveys
> And buries madmen in the heaps they raise.*

It is indeed, then, to borrow Mr Locke's metaphor, of no slight importance to know the length of our line, though we cannot, with it, fathom all the depths of the ocean. With the knowledge that, to a certain depth, at least, we may safely confide in it, we shall not be constrained, by our fear, to coast along the shore with such cautious timidity as to lose all the treasures which might be obtained by a more adventurous voyage; nor tempted, in the rashness of ignorance or despair, to trust ourselves wildly to every wind, though our course should be amidst rocks and quicksands.

The study of the natural limits of the faculties of the mind, has, indeed, sometimes been misrepresented, as favouring a tendency to vague and unlimited doubt on all subjects, even on those most important to individual and social happiness; as if the great names, to which we have long given our admiration, for the light which they have thrown on the powers and weaknesses of the human understanding, were not also the very names which we have been accustomed, not to admire merely, but to venerate, for excellence of a still nobler kind. Far from leading to general scepticism, it is, on the contrary, a sound study of the principles of our intellectual and moral nature, which alone can free from the danger of it. If the sceptical philosophy be false, as the asserters of this objection will allow that it most assuredly is, it can be overcome and destroyed only by a philosophy that is true; and the more deeply, and the more early, the mind is imbued with the principles of truth, the more confidently may we rely on its rejection of the errors that are opposed to them. It is impossible for one, who is not absolutely born to labour, to pass through life without forming, in his own mind, occasionally, some imperfect reflections on the faculties by which he perceives and reasons; or without catching, from those with whom he may associate, some of those vague notions of a vague philosophy, which pass unexamined from mind to mind, and become current in the very colloquial language of the day. The alternatives, therefore, (if we can, indeed, think of any other alternative when truth is one,) are not those of knowledge and absolute ignorance of the mental phenomena, but of knowledge more or less accurate; because absolute ignorance, even though it were a state to be wished, is beyond our power to preserve, in one who enjoys, in any respects, the benefit of education and liberal society. We might, with much greater prospect of success, attempt, by merely keeping from his view all professed treatises on astronomy, to prevent him from acquiring that slight and common acquaintance with the system of the heavenly bodies, which is necessary for knowing that the sun does not go round the earth, than we could hope to prevent him from forming, or receiving, some notions, accurate or inaccurate, as to the nature of mind; and we surely cannot suppose, that the juster those opinions are, as to the nature and force of the principles of belief, the feebler must the principles of belief appear. It is not so, that Nature has abandoned us, with principles which we must fear to examine, and with truths and illusions which we must never dare to separate. In teaching us what our powers are incapable of attaining, she has, at the same time, taught us what truths they may attain; and, within this boundary, we have the satisfaction of knowing, that she has placed all the truths that are important for our virtue and happiness. He, whose eyes are the clearest to distinguish the bounding circle, cannot, surely, be the dullest to perceive the truths that are within. To know, only to doubt, is but the first step in philosophy; and to rest at this first step, is either imbecility or idleness. It is not there that wisdom sees, and compares, and pronounces: it is ignorance, that, with dazzled eyes, just opening from the darkness of the night, perceives that she has been dreaming, without being able to distinguish, in the sunshine, what objects really existing are around. He alone is the philosopher truly awake, who

* Pope's Essay on Man, Ep. iv. v. 75—76.

knows both how to doubt, and how to believe; believing what is evident on the very same principles, which lead him to doubt, with various degrees of uncertainty, where the evidence is less sure. To conceive that inquiry must lead to scepticism, is itself a species of scepticism, as to the power and evidence of the principles to which we have given our assent, more degrading, because still more irrational, than that open and consistent scepticism which it dreads. It would, indeed, be an unworthy homage to truths, which we profess to venerate, to suppose, that adoration can be paid to them only while we are ignorant of their nature; and that to approach their altars would be to discover, that the majestic forms which seem animated at a distance, are only lifeless idols, as insensible as the incense which we have offered to them.

The study of the powers and limits of the understanding, and of the sources of evidence in external nature and ourselves, instead of either forming or favouring a tendency to scepticism, is then, it appears, the surest, or rather the only mode of removing the danger of such a tendency. That mind may soon doubt even of the most important truths, which has never learned to distinguish the doubtful from the true. But to know well the irresistible evidence on which truth is founded, is to believe in it, and to believe in it for ever.

Nor is it from the danger of scepticism only, that a just view of the principles of his intellectual constitution tends to preserve the philosophic inquirer. It saves him, also, from that presumptuous and haughty dogmatism, which, though free from doubt, is not, therefore, necessarily free from error; and which is, indeed, much more likely to be fixed in error than in truth, where the inquiry, that precedes conviction, has been casual and incomplete. A just view of our nature as intelligent beings, at the same time that it teaches us enough of our strength to allow us to rest with confidence on the great principles, physical, moral, and religious, in which alone it is of importance for us to confide, teaches us also enough of our weakness to render us indulgent to the weakness of others. We cease to be astonished that multitudes should differ from us; because we know well, that while nature has made a provision for the universal assent of mankind to those fundamental physical truths, which are essential to their very existence, and those fundamental truths of another kind, which are equally essential to their existence as subjects of moral government, she has left them, together with principles of improvement that insure their intellectual progress, a susceptibility of error, without which there could be no progression; and, while we almost trace back the circumstances which have modified our own individual belief, we cannot but be aware, at the same time, how many sources there are of prejudice, and, consequently, of difference of opinion, in the various situations in which the multitudes that differ from us have been placed. To feel anger at human error, says an ancient philosopher, is the same thing as if we were to be angry with those who stumble in the dark; with the deaf for not obeying our command; with the sick; with the aged; with the weary. That very dulness of discernment, which excites at once our wonder and our wrath, is but a part of the general frailty of mortality; and the love of our errors is not less inherent in our constitution than error itself. It is this general constitution which is to be studied by us, that we may know with what mistakes and weaknesses we must have to deal, when we have to deal with our fellow-men; and the true art, therefore, of learning to forgive individuals, is to learn first how much we have to forgive to the whole human race. "Illud potius cogitabis, non esse irascendum erroribus. Quid enim, si quis irascatur in tenebris parum vestigia certa ponentibus? Quid si quis surdis, imperia non exaudientibus? Quid si pueris, quod neglecto dispectu officiorum, ad lusus et ineptos æqualium jocos spectent? Quid si illis irasci velis, qui ægrotant, senescunt, fatigantur? Inter cætera mortalitatis incommoda, et hæc est, caligo mentium: nec tantum necessitas errandi, sed errorum amor. Ne singulis irascaris, universis ignoscendum: generi humano venia tribuenda est."*

How much of the fury of the persecuting spirit of darker ages would have been softened and turned into moderation, by juster views of the nature of man, and of all the circumstances on which belief depends! It appears to us so very easy to believe what we consider as true,—or rather it appears to us so impossible to disbelieve it,—that, if we judge from our own momentary feelings only, without any knowledge of the general nature of belief, and of all the principles in our mental constitution by which it is diversified, we very naturally look on the dissent of others as a sort of wilful and obstinate contrariety, and almost as an insulting denial of a right of approbation, which we consider ourselves, in these circumstances, as very justly entitled to claim. The transition from this supposed culpability to the associated ideas of pains and penalties, is a very natural one; and there is, therefore, a sufficient fund of persecution in mere ignorance, though the spirit of it were not, as it usually is, aggravated by degrading notions of the Divine Being, and false impressions of religious duty. Very different are the sentiments which the science of mind produces and cherishes. It makes us tolerant, not merely by showing the absurdity of endeavouring to overcome, by punishment, a belief which does not depend on suffering; but which may remain, and even gather additional strength, in imprisonment, in

* Seneca, de Ira, lib. ii. cap. 9.

exile, under the axe, and at the stake. The absurdity of every attempt of this kind it shows indeed; but it makes us feel, still more intimately, that injustice of it, which is worse than absurdity,—by showing our common nature, in all the principles of truth and error, with those whom we would oppress; all having faculties that may lead to truth, and tendencies of various kinds which may mislead to error, and the mere accidental and temporary difference of power being, if not the greatest, at least the most obvious circumstance, which, in all ages, has distinguished the persecutor from the persecuted.

> Let not this weak, unknowing hand,
> Presume thy bolts to throw;
> Or deal damnation round the land,
> On all I judge thy foe!
>
> If I am right,—thy grace impart,
> Still in the right to stay:
> If I am wrong,—O, teach my heart
> To find the better way.*

Such is the language of devout philosophy. No proud assertion of individual infallibility,—no triumph over the consequences in others, of a fallible nature, which ourselves partake in common,—but the expression of feelings more suited to earthly weakness,—of a modest joy of belief, which is not less delightful for the humility that tempers it; and of a modest sorrow for the seeming errors of others, to which the consciousness of our own nature gives a sympathy of warmer interest. The more important the subject of difference, the greater, not the less, will be the indulgence of him who has learned to trace the sources of human error,—of error, that has its origin not in our weakness and imperfection merely, but often in the most virtuous affections of the heart,—in that respect for age, and admiration of virtue, and gratitude for kindness received, which make the opinions of those whom we love and honour, seem to us, in our early years, as little questionable, as the virtues which we love to contemplate, or the very kindness which we feel at every moment beaming on our heart, in the tender protection that surrounds us. That the subjects, on which we may differ from others, are important to happiness, of course implies, that it is no slight misfortune to have erred; and that the mere error, therefore, must be already too great an evil to require any addition from our individual contempt or indignation, far less from the vengeance of public authority,—that may be right, in the opinions which it conceives to be insulted by partial dissent; but which must be wrong, in the means which it takes to avenge them. To be sincerely thankful for truths received, is, by the very nature of the feeling, to be sensible how great a blessing those have lost who are deprived of the same enjoyment; and to look down, then, with insolent disdain, on the unfortunate victim of error, is, indeed, to render contemptible, (as far as it is in our feeble power to render it contemptible,) not the error which we despise, but the truth which allows us to despise it.

The remarks which I have as yet made, on the effects of acquaintance with the Philosophy of Mind, relate to its influence on the general spirit of philosophical inquiry; the advantage which must be derived, in every science, from a knowledge of the extent of the power of the intellectual instruments which we use for the discovery of truth; the skill which we thence acquire in distinguishing the questions in which we may justly hope to discover truth, from those questions of idle and endless controversy, the decision of which is altogether beyond the reach of our faculties; and the consequent moderation in the temper, with which we look both to our own possible attainments, and to the errors of others.

But, beside these general advantages, which the Philosophy of Mind extends to all the inquiries of which human genius is capable, there are some advantages more peculiarly felt in certain departments of science or art. It is not merely with the mind that we operate; the subject of our operations is also often the mind itself. In education, in criticism, in poetry, in eloquence, the mind has to act upon mind, to produce in it either emotions that are temporary, or affections and opinions that are permanent. We have to instruct it, to convince it, to persuade it, to delight it, to soften it with pity, to agitate it with terror or indignation; and all these effects, when other circumstances of genius are the same, we shall surely be able to produce more readily, if we know the natural laws of thought and emotion; the feelings which are followed by other feelings; and the thoughts, which, expanding into other thoughts, almost of themselves produce the very passion, or conviction, which we wish to excite.

"One considerable advantage," says Mr Hume, "which results from the accurate and abstract philosophy, is its subserviency to the easy and humane; which, without the former, can never attain a sufficient degree of exactness in its sentiments, precepts, or reasonings. All polite letters are nothing but pictures of human life in various attitudes and situations; and inspire us with different sentiments of praise or blame, admiration or ridicule, according to the qualities of the object which they set before us. An artist must be better qualified to succeed in this undertaking, who, besides a delicate taste and quick apprehension, possesses an accurate knowledge of the internal fabric, the operations of the understanding, the workings of the passions, and the various species of sentiment which discriminate vice and virtue. However painful this inward search or inquiry may appear, it

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* Pope's Universal Prayer, v. 25—32.

becomes, in some measure, requisite to those who would describe with success the obvious and outward appearances of life and manners. The anatomist presents to the eye the most hideous and disagreeable objects; but his science is highly useful to the painter in delineating even a Venus or an Helen. While the latter employs all the richest colours of his art, and gives his figures the most graceful and engaging airs, he must still carry his attention to the inward structure of the human body, the position of the muscles, the fabric of the bones, and the use and figure of every part or organ. Accuracy is, in every case, advantageous to beauty, and just reasoning to delicacy of sentiment; in vain would we exalt the one by depreciating the other."*

There is a most striking passage to the same purport, in that beautiful dialogue on ancient oratory, which has been ascribed, without any very satisfactory evidence, to various authors, particularly to Quinctilian, the younger Pliny, and Tacitus, and which is not unworthy of the most eminent of the names to which it has been ascribed. After dwelling on the universal science and erudition of the great master of Roman eloquence, the chief speaker in the dialogue proceeds to show the peculiar advantage which oratory must derive from moral and intellectual science, to the neglect of which fundamental study, as superseded by the frivolous disputations of the rhetorical schools, he ascribes the decay of eloquence in the age of which he speaks.

" Ita enim est, optimi viri, ita, ex multa eruditione, ex pluribus artibus, et omnium rerum scientia, exundat et exuberat illa admirabilis eloquentia. Neque oratoris vis et facultas, sicut cæterarum rerum, angustis et brevibus terminis eluditur; sed is est orator, qui de omni quæstione pulchrè, et ornatè, et ad persuadendum aptè dicere, pro dignitate rerum ad utilitatem temporum, cum voluptate audientium possit. Hæc sibi illi veteres persuadebant. Ad hæc efficienda intelligebant opus esse, non ut Rhetorum scholis declamarent,—sed ut his artibus pectus implerent, in quibus de bonis ac malis, de honesto ac turpi, de justo et injusto disputatur;—de quibus copiosè, et variè, et ornatè, nemo dicere potest, nisi qui cognovit naturam humanam.—Ex his fontibus etiam illa profluunt, ut facilius iram judicis vel instiget, vel leniat, qui scit quid ira, promptius ad miserationem impellat qui scit quid sit misericordia, et quibus animi motibus concitetur. In his artibus exercitationibusque versatus orator, sive apud infestos, sive apud cupidos, sive apud invidentes, sive apud tristes, sive apud timentes dicendum habuerit, tenebit habenas animorum, et prout cujusque natura postulabit, adhibebit manum et temperabit orationem, parato omni instrumento, et ad usum reposito."*

What is the whole art of criticism, in its most important applications, but the knowledge of the most natural successions of thought and feeling in the mind? We judge of the perspicuity and order of a discourse, by knowing the progress in which the mind, by the developement of truth after truth, may be made at last to see the full meaning of the most complex proposition. We judge of the beauty of impassioned poetry or eloquence, by knowing whether the figures, the images, the very feelings described, be such as, from our observation of the laws that regulate the internal series of changes in the mind, we know to be consistent with that state of emotion, in which a mind must exist that has been placed in the situation supposed. If all other circumstances be equal, he will undoubtedly be the best critic, who knows best the phenomena of human thought and feeling; and, without this knowledge, criticism can be nothing but a measurement of words, or a repetition of the ever repeated and endless common-places of rhetoric. The knowledge of nature, of the necessity of which critics speak so much, and so justly, and which is as essential to the critic himself, as to the writer on whom he sits in judgment, is only another name for the knowledge of the successive transitions of feeling of the mind, in all the innumerable diversities in which it is capable of being modified by the variety of circumstances in which it may be placed. It is for this reason, that, with so great an abundance of the mere art, or rather of the mere technical phrases of criticism, we have so very little of the science of it; because the science of criticism implies an acquaintance with the philosophy of thought and passion, which few can be expected to possess; and though nothing can be easier than to deliver opinions, such as pass current in the drawing-room, and even in the literary circle, which the frivolous may admire as profound, and the ignorant as erudite, and which many voices may be proud to repeat; though even the dull and pedantic are as able as the wise to say, in fluent language, that one passage of a work of genius is beautiful and another the reverse, because one of them is in accordance with some technical rules, or because Homer and Milton have passages similar to the one, and not to the other,—it is far from being equally easy to show, how the one passage is beautiful, from its truth of character, and the other, though perhaps rich in harmony of rhythm and rhetorical ornament, is yet faulty, by its violation of the more important harmony of thought and emotion: a harmony which nature observes as faithfully, in the progress of those

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Inquiry concerning the Human Understanding, sect. 1.

* Tacitus, *edit. Lipsii*, p. 484, 5.

vehement passions that appear most wild and irregular, as in the calmest successions of feeling of the most tranquil hours. It would, indeed, be too much to say, as in the well-known couplet of Pope,

> "Let such teach others who themselves excel,
> And censure freely who have written well;*

for the critic requires only one of the two great talents, which, in the poet, ought to exist together, but which may yet exist separately. In the poet, there must be, in the first place, an inventive fancy to bring together thoughts and images which have never been combined before; and, with this inventive fancy, a discriminating judgment, which is to measure, by the standard of nature, the products of invention; and to retain them, only if they appear such, as though perhaps never before combined, might yet, in conformity with the natural laws of thought, have occurred to a mind, in the circumstances represented, as truly, as the other thoughts or images, which the works of other poets have rendered more familiar. This latter talent,—the judgment which determines the intrinsic beauty and fidelity to general nature,—is all which is absolutely requisite to the critic, who is not, therefore, under the necessity of being himself "the great sublime" which he draws. Yet, though all the elements of excellence in the artist are not absolutely requisite for the judgment of the sage and discriminating admirer of the noble works which that excellence may have produced, some of these elements unquestionably are requisite,—elements, for which the critic may search in vain in all the rules of rhetoricians, and even in the perusal of all the masterpieces of ancient and modern times, unless, to an acquaintance with these, he add an accurate acquaintance with that intellectual and moral nature of man, the beautiful conformity to which was the essential charm of all the pathos, and all the eloquence, which he has admired.

There is another art, however, to which knowledge of the intellectual and moral nature of man is still more important—that noble art, which has the charge of training the ignorance and imbecility of infancy into all the virtue, and power, and wisdom of mature manhood—of forming, of a creature, the frailest and feeblest perhaps which heaven has made, the intelligent and fearless sovereign of the whole animated creation, the interpreter, and adorer, and almost the representative of the Divinity. The art, which performs a transformation so wondrous, cannot but be admirable itself; and it is from observation of the laws of mind, that all which is most admirable in it is derived. These laws we must follow indeed, since they exist not by our contrivance, but by the contrivance of that nobler wisdom, from which the very existence of the mind has flowed; yet if we know them well, we can lead them, in a great measure, even while we follow them. And, while the helpless subject of this great moral art is every moment requiring our aid,—with an understanding, that may rise, from truth to truth, to the sublimest discoveries, or may remain sunk for ever in ignorance, and with susceptibilities of vice that may be repressed, and of virtue that may be cherished,—can we know too well the means of checking what is evil, and of fostering what is good? It is too late to lie by, in indolent indulgence of affection, till vice be already formed in the little being whom we love, and to labour then to remove it, and to substitute the virtue that is opposite to it. Vice, already formed, is almost beyond our power. It is only in the state of latent propensity, that we can with much reason expect to overcome it, by the moral motives which we are capable of presenting; and to distinguish this propensity before it has expanded itself, and even before it is known to the very mind in which it exists,—to tame those passions which are never to rage, and to prepare, at a distance, the virtues of other years,—implies a knowledge of the mental constitution, which can be acquired only by a diligent study of the nature, and progress, and successive transformations of feeling. It is easy to know, that praise or censure, reward or punishment, may increase or lessen the tendency to the repetition of any particular action; and this, together with the means of elementary instruction, is all which is commonly termed education. But the true science of education is something far more than this. It implies a skilful observation of the past, and that long foresight of the future, which experience and judgment united afford. It is the art of seeing, not the immediate effect only, but the series of effects which may follow any particular thought or feeling, in the infinite variety of possible combinations—the art often of drawing virtue from apparent evil, and of averting evil that may arise from apparent good. It is, in short, the philosophy of the human mind applied practically to the human mind; enriching it, indeed, with all that is useful or ornamental in knowledge, but at the same time giving its chief regard to objects of yet greater moment; averting evil, which all the sciences together could not compensate, or producing good, compared with which all the sciences together are as nothing.

* Essay on Criticism, v. 1516.

LECTURE IV.

RELATION OF THE PHILOSOPHY OF MIND TO MORALITY.

We have already, Gentlemen, considered the relation which the Philosophy of Mind bears to the sciences in general, and its particular application to those sciences and arts, in which the mind is not merely the instrument with which we carry on our intellectual operations, but the very subject on which we operate, as in the great arts of reasoning, and persuading, of delighting with all the charms of poetry and eloquence, of judging of the degrees of excellence that have been attained in these delightful arts; and, still more, its application to the noblest, though, in proportion to its value, the least studied of all the arts,—the art of education. It remains still to point out some moral effects which the study of the science of mind produces in the inquirer himself, effects which may not be obvious at first sight, but which result from it, as truly as the intellectual advantages already pointed out.

One very powerful and salutary influence of moral science arises directly from the mere contemplation of the objects with which it is conversant — the benevolent affections, the pleasure which attends these, the sacrifices that are made by generous virtue, and all the sublime admiration which they excite; the sordid and malevolent, and joyless passions of the selfish; the fear and shame that attend the guilty in society, and the horrors that, with a certainty of constant return more dreadful than their very presence, await them in their solitary hours. It is good to have these often before us, and to trace and contrast all the immediate and all the remote effects of vice and virtue, even though we should form, at the time, no direct reference to our own past or future conduct. Without any such reference to ourselves, we must still be sensible of the pleasure and serene confidence which attend the one, and of the insecurity and remorse which for ever hang over the other; and the remaining impressions of love and disgust, will have an influence on our future conduct, of which we may probably be altogether unconscious at the time. It is, in truth, like the influence of the example of those with whom we habitually associate, which no one perceives at any particular moment, though all are every moment subject to it; and to meditate often on virtue and happiness, is thus almost to dwell in a sort of social communion with the virtuous and happy. The influence of moral conceptions has, in this respect, been compared to that of light, which it is impossible to approach, without deriving from it some faint colouring, even though we should not sit in the very sunshine; or to that of precious odours, amid which we cannot long remain, without bearing away with us some portion of the fragrance. "Ea enim philosophiæ vis est, ut non solum studentes, sed etiam conversantes juvet. Qui in solem venit, licet non in hoc venerit, colorabitur: qui in unguentaria taberna resederunt, et paulo diutius commorati sunt, odorem secum loci ferunt: et qui apud philosophiam fuerunt, traxerint aliquid necesse est, quod prodesset etiam negligentibus." *

The nature of the process, by which this moral benefit arises from the mere contemplation of moral objects, frequently repeated, is far from obscure, though it depends on a cause to which you may perhaps as yet have paid little attention, but which, in an after part of the course, I shall have an opportunity of illustrating at length—the influence of the associating principle in the mind — of that principle, by which ideas, and other feelings, that have often co-existed, acquire, for ever after, an almost indissoluble union. It is not merely, therefore, by having traced more accurately than others the consequences of vice and virtue, as affecting the general character, that the lover of moral science strengthens his admiration of virtue, and his abhorrence of vice. But by the frequent consideration of virtue, together with the happiness which it affords, and of vice, together with its consequent misery, the notions of these become so permanently, and so deeply associated, that future virtue appears almost like happiness about to be enjoyed, and future vice like approaching misery. The dread of misery, and the love of happiness, which are essential principles of our very physical existence, are thus transformed into principles of moral conduct, that operate before reflection, with the rapidity, and almost with the energy of instincts; and that, after reflection, add to our virtuous resolutions a force and stability, which, as results of mere reasoning, they could not possess.

It is, besides, no small advantage of the abstract consideration of virtue, as opposed to the miseries of vice, that, in considering these philosophically, we regard them as stripped of every thing that can blind or seduce us; and we behold them, therefore, truly as they are. It is not in the madness of intemperate enjoyment, that we see drunkenness in the goblet, and disease in the feast. Under the actual seduction of a passion, we see dimly, if we see at all, any of the evils to which it leads; and if the feelings, of which we are then conscious, were those which were for ever after to be associated with the remembrance of the passion, it would appear to us, an object, not of disgust or abhorrence, but of delight and

* Seneca, Ep. 108.

choice, and almost of a sort of moral approbation. It is of importance, then, that we should consider the passion, at other moments than these, that the images associated with it may be not of that brief and illusive pleasure, which stupifies its unfortunate victim, but of its true inherent character, of deformity, and of the contempt and hatred which it excites in others. Such is the advantage of the point of view, in which it is seen by the moral inquirer, to whom it presents itself, not under its momentary character of pleasure, but under its lasting character of pain and disgust. By habituating himself to consider the remote, as well as the immediate results of all the affections and passions, he learns to regard virtue, not merely as good in itself, at the moment in which it is called into exercise, but as an inexhaustible source of good which is continually increasing; and vice, not merely as a temporary evil in itseif, but as a source of permanent and yet deeper misery and degradation. Every generous principle, which nature has given him, is thus continually deriving new strength from the very contemplation of the good which it affords; and if, in the frailty of mortality, he should still be subject to the occasional influence of those very passions which, in cooler moments, he detests, he yet does not fall, thoroughly and hopelessly. There are lingering associations of moral beauty and happiness in his mind, which may save him still,—associations that must render it, in some degree at least, more difficult for him than for others, to yield to seductions, of which he has long known the vanity, and which perhaps even may, in some happier hour, lead him back to that virtue, of which he has never wholly forgotten the charms.

The charms of virtue, indeed, it is scarcely possible, for him who has felt them, wholly to forget. There may be eyes that can look unmoved on the external beauty which once delighted them. But who is there that has ever been alive to its better influence, who can think of moral loveliness without a feeling of more than admiration,—without a conscious enjoyment, in the possession of what is so truly admirable, or a sigh at having lost the privilege of dwelling on it with delight, and at being obliged to shrink from the very thought of what it once appeared?

" For what can strive
With virtue? Which of nature's regions vast
Can in so many forms produce to sight
Such powerful beauty?—Beauty, which the eye
Of Hatred cannot look upon secure;
Which Envy's self contemplates, and is turn'd
Ere long to tenderness, to infant smiles,
Or tears of humblest love. Is aught so fair,
In all the dewy landscapes of the Spring,
The Summer's noontide groves, the purple eve
At harvest-home, or in the frosty moon
Glittering on some smooth sea; is aught so fair
As virtuous friendship?—As the honour'd roof,
Whither, from highest heaven, immortal love,
His torch ethereal, and his golden bow,
Propitious brings, and there a temple holds,
To whose unspotted service, gladly vow'd,
The social band of parent, brother, child,
With smiles and sweet discourse, and gentle deeds,
Adore his power? What gift of richest clime
E'er drew such eager eyes, or prompted such
Deep wishes, as the zeal, that snatcheth back
From Slander's poisonous tooth a foe's renown,
Or crosseth Danger in his lion-walk,
A rival's life to rescue?"*

The study of moral science, then, we have seen, has a direct tendency to strengthen our attachment to the virtues which we habitually contemplate. Another most important advantage derived from it, relates to us in our higher character of beings capable of religion, increasing our devotion and gratitude to the Divinity, by the clearer manifestation which it gives us of his provident goodness in the constitution and government of the moral world.

The external universe, indeed, though our study were confined to the laws which regulate its phenomena, would afford, in itself, abundant proof of the power and wisdom by which it was created. But power and wisdom alone excite admiration only, not love; which, though it may be feigned in the homage that is universally paid to power, is yet, as an offering of the heart, paid to it only when it is combined with benevolence. It is the splendid benevolence, therefore, of the Supreme Being, which is the object of our grateful adoration; and, to discover this benevolence, we must look to creatures that have not existence merely, like inanimate things, but a capacity of enjoyment, and means of enjoyment. It is in man, or in beings capable of knowledge and happiness, like man, that we find the solution of the wonders of the creation; which would otherwise, with all its regularity and beauty, be but a solitary waste, like the barren magnificence of rocks and deserts. God, says Epictetus, has introduced man into the world, to be the spectator of his works, and of their divine Author; and not to be the spectator only, but to be the announcer and interpreter of the wonders which he sees and adores. Ὁ Θεὸς—τὸν ἄνθρωπον θεατὴν εἰσήγαγεν ἀυτῷ τι καὶ τῶν ἔργων τῶν αὐτοῦ· καὶ οὐ μόνον θεατὴν ἀλλὰ καὶ ἐξηγητὴν αὐτῶν.† "Hæc qui contemplatur," says another ancient Stoic, with a little of the bold extravagance of his school; "Hæc qui contemplatur, quid Deo præstat? Ne tanta ejus opera sine teste sint."—"Curiosum nobis natura ingenium dedit; et artis sibi ac pulchritudinis suae conscia, spectatores nos tantis rerum spectaculis genuit, perditura fructum sui, si tam magna, tam clara, tam subtiliter ducta, tam nidita, et non uno genere formosa solitudini ostenderet."‡

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* Akenside's Pleasures of Imagination, book ii, 328—353.

† Dissertat. ab Arrian. collect. lib. i. c. 6.—p. 53. *Edit. Upton.*

‡ Seneca de Otio Sapient. c. 32.

In the study of what might be considered as the very defects of our moral nature, how pleasing is it, to the philosophic inquirer, to discover that provident arrangement of a higher Power, which has rendered many of the most striking of the apparent evils of life subservient to the production of a general utility, that had never entered into the contemplation of its remote authors. He who has never studied the consequences of human actions, perceives, in the great concourse of mankind, only a multitude of beings consulting each his own peculiar interest, or the interest of the very small circle immediately around him, with little, if any, apparent attention to the interests of others. But he who has truly studied human actions and their consequences, sees, in the prosecution of all these separate interests, that universal interest which is their great result, and the very principle of self-regard thus contributing to social happiness, unconsciously indeed, but almost as surely as the principle of benevolence itself.

> Each individual seeks a several goal,
> But Heaven's great view is *one*, and that the whole.
> That counterworks each folly and caprice:
> That disappoints the effects of every vice;—
> All Virtue's ends from Vanity can raise;
> Which seeks no interest, no reward but praise;
> And build on wants, and on defects of mind,
> The joy, the peace, the glory of mankind.*

I have already,† when treating of the influence of just views of the extent and limits of our faculties, in fixing the proper tone of inquiry, and lessening equally the tendency to the opposite extremes of dogmatism and scepticism, stated some important moral advantages that arise from this very moderation of the tone of inquiry, particularly with respect to the temper with which it prepares us to receive dissent from our opinions without anger, or insolent disdain, or even astonishment. So much of the intercourse of human society consists in the reciprocal communication of opinions which must often be opposed to each other, that this preparation of the temper, whether for amicable and equal discussion, or for mutual silent forbearance, is not to be lightly appreciated as an element in the sum of human happiness. On this point, however, and on its relation to the still greater advantages, or still greater evils, of national and legislative tolerance or intolerance, I before offered some remarks, and therefore merely allude to it at present.

The tolerance with which we receive the opinions of others is a part, and an indispensable part, of that general refinement of manners to which we give the name of politeness. But politeness itself, in all its most important respects,—indeed in every respect, in which it is to be separated from the mere fluctuating and arbitrary forms and ceremonies of the month or year,—is nothing more than knowledge of the human mind directing general benevolence. It is the art of producing the greatest happiness, which, in the mere external courtesies of life, can be produced, by raising such ideas or other feelings in the minds of those with whom we are conversant, as will afford the most pleasure, and averting, as much as possible, every idea which may lead to pain. It implies, therefore, when perfect, a fine knowledge of the natural series of thoughts, so as to distinguish, not merely the thought which will be the immediate or near effect of what is said or done, but those which may arise still more remotely; and he is the most successful in this art of giving happiness, who sees the future at the greatest distance. It is this foresight, acquired by attentive observation of the various characters of mankind in a long intercourse with society, which is the true knowledge of the world; for the knowledge of the mere forms and ceremonies of the world, which is of far easier acquisition, is scarcely worthy of being called a part of it. The essential, and the only valuable part of politeness, then, is as truly the result of study of the human mind, as if its minutest rules had formed a regular part of our systems of intellectual and moral philosophy. It is the philosophy indeed of those, who scarcely know that they are philosophizing; because philosophy, to them, implies something which has no other ornaments than diagrams and frightful algebraic characters, laid down in systems, or taught in schools and universities, with the methodical tediousness of rules of grammar; and they are conscious, that all, or the greatest part of what they know, has been the result of their own observation, and acquired in the very midst of the amusements of life. But he, who knows the world, must have studied the mind of man, or at least—for it is only a partial view of the mind which is thus formed—must have studied it in some of its most striking aspects. He is a practical philosopher, and, therefore, a speculative one also, since he must have founded his rules of action on certain principles, the results of his own observation and reflection. These results are, indeed, usually lost to all but to the individual; and the loss is not to be considered as slight, merely because the knowledge, which thus perishes, has been usually applied by its possessor to frivolous purposes, and sometimes perhaps to purposes still more unworthy. When we read the maxims of La Rochefoucauld, which, false as they would be, if they had been intended to give us a faithful universal picture of the moral nature of man, were unfortunately too faithful a delineation of the passions and principles that immediately surrounded their author, and met his daily view, in the splendid scenes of vanity

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* Pope's Essay on Man, Ep. ii. v. 237—240, and 245—248.

† Lect. 111.

and ambitious intrigue to which his observation was confined,—it is impossible not to feel, that, acute and subtle as they are, many of these maxims must have been only the expression of principles, which were floating, without being fixed in words, in the minds of many of his fellow-courtiers; and the instruction, which might be received from those who have been long conversant with mankind, in situations favourable to observation, if, by any possibility, it could be collected and arranged, would probably furnish one of the most important additions which could be made to moral science.

How much politeness consists in knowledge of the natural succession of thoughts and feelings, and a consequent ready foresight of the series of thoughts, which it is in our power indirectly to excite or avert, must have presented itself in a very striking manner to every one, whose professional duties, or other circumstances, have led him to pay attention to the lower orders of society. The most benevolent of the poor, in situations too in which their benevolence is most strongly excited, as in the sickness of their relations or friends, and in which they exert themselves to relieve obvious pain, with an assiduity of watching and fatigue, after all the ordinary fatigues of the day, that is truly honourable to their tenderness, have yet little foresight of the mere pains of thought; and while, in the same situation, the rich and better educated, with equal, or perhaps even with less benevolence of intention, carefully avoid the introduction of any subject, which might suggest indirectly to the sufferer the melancholy images of parting life, the conversation of the poor, around the bed of their sick friend, is such as can scarcely fail to present to him every moment, not the probability merely, but almost the certainty of approaching death. It is impossible to be present, in these two situations, without remarking the benefit of a little knowledge of the human mind, without which, far from fulfilling its real wishes, benevolence itself may be the most cruel of torturers.

The same species of foresight which is essential to the refinements of social intercourse, is equally essential, in the active occupations of life, to that knowledge of times and circumstances, which is so important to success; and though this knowledge may be too often abused, to unworthy purposes, by the sordid and the servile, it is not the less necessary to those who pursue only honourable plans, and who avail themselves only of honourable means. Such is the nature of society, that the most generous and patriotic designs still require some conduct to procure for them authority; and, at least in the public situations of life, without a knowledge of the nature both of those who are to govern, and of those who are to be governed, though it may be very easy to wish well to society, the hardest of all tasks will be the task of doing it good.

May I not add, as another salutary moral effect of the science of mind, the tendency which the study of the general properties of our common nature has to lessen that undue veneration, which, in civilized society, must always attend the adventitious circumstances of fortune, and to bring this down, at least some degrees, nearer to that due respect which is indispensable for the tranquillity and good order of a state, and which no wise and patriotic moralist, therefore, would wish to see diminished. It is only in the tumultuous frenzy of a revolution, however, or in periods of great and general discontent, that the respect of the multitude for those who are elevated above them, in rank and fortune, is likely to fall beneath this salutary point. So many of the strongest principles of our nature favour the excess of it, that, in the ordinary circumstances of society, it must always pass far beyond the point of calm respect; so far beyond it, indeed, that the lesson which the people require most frequently to be taught, is, not to venerate the very guilt and folly of the rich and powerful, because they are the guilt and folly of the rich and powerful. It is to the objects of this idolatry themselves, however, that the study of a science, which considers them as stripped of every adventitious distinction, and possessing only the common virtues and talents of mankind, must be especially salutary. In the ordinary circumstances of a luxurious age, it is scarcely possible for the great to consider themselves as what they truly are; and though, if questioned as to their belief of their common origin with the rest of mankind, they would no doubt think the question an absurd one, and readily own their descent from the same original parentage; there can be as little doubt, that, in the silence of their own mind, and in those hours of vanity and ambition, which, to many of them, are almost the whole hours of life, this tie of common nature is rarely, if ever felt. It is impossible, indeed, that it should be often felt; because, in the circumstances in which they are placed, there is every thing to remind them of a superiority, of which their passions themselves are sufficiently ready to remind them, and very little to remind them of an equality, from the contemplation of which all their passions are as ready to turn away. There are, however, some circumstances which are too strong for all these passions to overcome, and which force, in spite of them, upon the mind that self-knowledge, which, in other situations, it is easy to avoid. In pain and sickness, notwithstanding all the vain magnificence which the pride of grandeur spreads around the couch, and the profusion of untasted delicacies, with which officious tenderness strives to solicit an appetite that loathes them, he who lies upon the couch within, begins to learn his own nature, and sees, through the splendour that seems to surround him, as it

were, without touching him, how truly foreign it is to that existence, of which before it seemed to form a part. The feeling that he is but a man, in the true sense of that word, as a frail and dependent being like those around him, is one of the first feelings and perhaps not one of the least painful, which arise in such a situation. The impression, however, of this common nature is, while it lasts, a most salutary one; and it is to be regretted only, that health cannot return without bringing back with it all those flattering circumstances which offer the same seductions as before to his haughty superiority.

The sight of death, or of the great home of the dead, in like manner, seldom fails to bring before us our common and equal nature. In spite of all the little distinctions which a churchyard exhibits, in mimic imitation, and almost in mockery, of the great distinctions of life, the turf, the stone, with its petty sculptures, and all the columns and images of the marble monument; as we read the inscription, or walk over the sod, we think only of what lies beneath in undistinguishable equality. There is scarcely any one on whom these two great equalizing objects, sickness and the sight of death, have not produced, for a short time at least, some salutary moral impression. But these are objects which cannot often occur, and which are accompanied with too many distressing circumstances, to render it desirable that they should be of very frequent occurrence. The study of the mind, of our common moral and intellectual nature, and of those common hopes which await us, as immortal beings, seems in some degree to afford the advantage, without the mixture of evil: for, though, in such speculative inquiries, the impression may be less striking than when accompanied with painful circumstances, it is more permanent, because, from the absence of those powerful circumstances, it is more frequently and willingly renewed. In the philosophy of mind, all those heraldic differences which have converted mere human vanity into a science are as nothing. It is man that is the object of investigation, and man with no distinctions that are adventitious. The feelings, the faculties, which we consider, are endowments of the rich and powerful indeed; but they are endowments also of the meanest of those on whom they look with disdain. It is something, then, for those whose thoughts are continually directed, by external circumstances, to that perilous elevation on which they are placed, to be led occasionally, as in such inquiries they must be, to measure themselves and others without regard to the accidental differences of the heights on which they stand, and to see what it is in which they truly differ, and what it is in which they truly agree.

In the remarks already made, on the study of the science of mind, we have considered its effects on the progress of the other sciences, and on the moral dispositions. But, though the study had no effects of this kind, moral or intellectual, is not the mind itself a part of nature, and, as a mere physical object, deserving of our profoundest and most intent investigation? Or shall it be said, that while we strive, not merely to measure the whole earth, and to follow in our thought the revolutions of those great orbs, whose majesty may almost be said to force from us this homage of admiration, but to arrange, in distinct tribes, those animalcular atoms, whose very existence we learn only from the glass through which we view them,—the observing and calculating mind itself is less an object of universal science, than the antennæ of an insect, or the filaments of a weed? Would it be no reproach to man, even though he knew all things besides, that he yet knew far less accurately than he might know, his own internal nature, like voyagers who delight in visiting every coast of the most distant country, without the slightest acquaintance, perhaps, with the interior of their own.

> Qui terræ pelagique vias, mundique per omnes
> Articulos spatiatur ovans, metasque suorum
> Herculeas audet supra posuisse laborum,
> Neglectus jacet usque sibi, dumque omnia quærit,
> Ipse sui quæsitor abest; incognita tellus
> Solus nauta latet, propiorque ignotior orbis.

Would the lines which follow these, if indeed there were any one to whom they were applicable in their full extent, convey praise less high than that which might be given to the observer of some small nerve or membrane, that had never been observed before, or the discoverer of a new species of earth in some pebble before unanalyzed?

> Tu melior Tiphys, spreto jam Phasidis auro,
> In te vela paras, animatos detegis orbes,
> Humanasque aperis ausis ingentibus oras.
> Jamque novos laxari sinus, animæque latentis
> Arcanas reserare vias, cœlosque recessus
> Fas aperire tibi, totamque secludere mentem.

To the mind, considered as a mere object of physical inquiry, there is one circumstance of interest, that is peculiar. It is the part of our mixed nature which we have especially in view as often as we think of self; that by which we began to exist, and continue to exist,—by which, in every moment of our being, we have rejoiced, and hoped, and feared, and loved; or rather, it is that which has been itself, in all our emotions, the rejoicer, the hoper, the fearer. To inquire into the history of the mind, therefore, is in truth to look back, as far as it is permitted to us to look back, on the whole history of our life. It is to think of those many pleasing emotions which delighted us when present, or of those sadder feelings, which, when considered as past, become delightful, almost like the feelings that were in themselves originally pleasing, and, in many cases, are reviewed with still greater

interest. We cannot attempt to think of the origin of our knowledge, without bringing before us scenes and persons most tenderly familiar; and though the effect of such remembrances is perhaps less powerful, when the mind is prepared for philosophical investigation, than in moments in which it is more passive, still the influence is not wholly lost. He must be a very cold philosopher indeed, who, even in intellectual analysis, can retrace the early impressions of his youth, with as little interest as that with which he looks back on the common occurrences of the past day.

But it is not any slight interest which it may receive from such peculiar remembrances, that can be said to give value to the philosophy of mind. It furnishes, in itself, the sublimest of all speculations, because it is the philosophy of the sublimest of all created things. "There is but one object," says St Augustine, "greater than the soul, and that one is its Creator." "Nihil est potentius illa creatura quæ mens dicitur rationalis, nihil est sublimius. *Quicquid supra illam est jam Creator est.*" When we consider the powers of his mind, even without reference to the wonders which he has produced on earth, what room does man afford for astonishment and admiration! His senses, his memory, his reason, the past, the present, the future, the whole universe, and, if the universe have any limits, even more than the whole universe, comprised in a single thought; and, amid all these changes of feelings that succeed each other, in rapid and endless variety, a permanent and unchangeable duration, compared with which, the duration of external things is but the existence of a moment.

> "O what a patrimony this! a being
> Of such inherent strength and majesty,
> Not worlds possest can raise it; worlds destroy'd
> Not injure;* which holds on its glorious course
> When thine, O Nature, ends!"†

Such, in dignity and grandeur, is the mind, considered even abstractly. But when, instead of considering the mind itself, we look to the wonders which it has performed—the cities, the cultivated plains, and all the varieties of that splendid scene to which the art of man has transformed the deserts, and forests, and rocks of original nature; when we behold him, not limiting the operations of his art to that earth to which he seemed confined, but bursting through the very elements, that appeared to encircle him as an insurmountable barrier—traversing the waves—struggling with the winds, and making their very opposition subservient to his course: when we look to the still greater transformations which he has wrought in the moral scene, and compare with the miseries of barbarous life, the tranquillity and security of a well-ordered state; when we see, under the influence of legislative wisdom, innumerable multitudes obeying, in opposition to their strongest passions, the restraints of a power which they scarcely perceive, and the crimes of a single individual marked and punished, at the distance of half the earth; is it possible for us to observe all these wonders, and yet not to feel some curiosity to examine the faculties by which they have been wrought, some interest in a being so noble, that leads us to speculate on the future wonders which he may yet perform, and on the final destiny which awaits him? This interest we should feel, though no common tie connected us with the object of our admiration; and we cannot surely admit that the object of our admiration is less interesting to us, or less sublime in nature, because the faculties which we admire are those which ourselves possess, and the wonders such as we are capable of achieving and surpassing.

* Can't injure. *Orig.*
† Young's Night Thoughts, VI. v. 535—539.

LECTURE V.

OF PHYSICAL INQUIRY.

THE preceding Lectures, Gentlemen, have, I trust, sufficiently convinced you of the importance of the science on which we are to enter,—if, indeed, many of the advantages which we have considered were not of themselves so obvious, as readily to have occurred to your own reflection, or at least to require less illustration, than, in my desire to interest not your attention merely, but your zealous ardour in a science which appears to me so truly to deserve it, I have thought necessary to give them. We have seen, how interesting the mind is, as an object of study, from its own intrinsic excellence, even though it were to be considered in no other light, than as a mere part of the universal system of things, necessary, therefore, to be comprehended with every other existing substance, in a system of general physics. We have seen, likewise, in how many important respects, the study of the science of mind is favourable to the growth of virtuous sentiment, and to the refinement and happiness of society; and, above all, how essential an acquaintance with it is, to the proper conduct of our inquiries; not merely in those sciences, the objects of which are kindred or analogous, but in every other science, the various objects of which, however independent, and even remote from it they may seem, must always be considered, not as they exist in them-

selves, but as they exist in relation to it; since they can be known to us only through the medium of the mental affections, or feelings, excited by them, which have laws peculiar to themselves, and analyzed and arranged only by our mental faculties, which have their own peculiar limits of extent and power.

The first great division of our course of inquiry is purely physiological. It has for its object the mind, considered as susceptible of various states or affections, and constituting, as it is thus variously affected, the whole phenomena of thought and feeling, which, though expressed by a variety of terms, of functions, or faculties, are still but the one mind, itself existing in different states. On retracing these states, which form the whole progress of our sentient, intellectual, and moral life, we have to inquire into the properties of the substance mind, according to the same laws of investigation by which we inquire into the properties of external substances; not by assuming principles, from which the phenomena may be supposed to flow, but by observing and generalizing, till we arrive at those few simple principles or laws, which, however pompous the term laws may seem, as if it denoted something different from the phenomena themselves, and paramount to them, are, in truth, nothing more than the expression of the most general circumstances, in which the phenomena themselves have been felt by us to agree. As we say of gold, that it is that which is of a certain specific weight, yellow, ductile, fusible at a certain temperature, and capable of certain combinations,—because all these properties have been observed by ourselves or others,—so we say of the mind, that it is that which perceives, remembers, compares, and is susceptible of various emotions or other feelings; because of all these we have been conscious, or have observed them indirectly in others. We are not entitled to state with confidence, any quality, as a property of gold, which we do not remember to have observed ourselves, or to have received on the faith of the observation of others, whose authority we have reason to consider as indubitable; and as little are we entitled to assert any quality, or general susceptibility, as belonging to the human mind, of which we have not been conscious ourselves in the feelings resulting from it, or for which we have not the authority of the indubitable consciousness of others. The exact coincidence, in this respect, of the physics of mind and of matter, it is important that you should have constantly before you, that you may not be led to regard the comparative indistinctness and vagueness of the mental phenomena, as a warrant for greater boldness of assertion, and looseness of reasoning with respect to them. There is, on the contrary, in such a case, still greater reason to adhere rigidly to the strict rules of philosophizing; because, the less definite the phenomena are, the greater danger is there of being misled in discriminating and classing them. The laws of inquiry, those general principles of the logic of physics, which regulate our search of truth in all things, external and internal, do not vary with the name of a science, or its objects or instruments. They are not laws of one science, but of every science, whether the objects of it be mental or material, clear or obscure, definite or indefinite; and they are thus universal, because, in truth, though applicable to many sciences, they are only laws of the one inquiring mind, founded on the weakness of its powers of discernment, in relation to the complicated phenomena on which those powers are exercised. The sort of reasoning which would be false in chymistry, would be false in astronomy, would be false in the physiology of our corporeal or intellectual and moral nature, and in all, for the same reason; because the mind is the inquirer in all alike, and is limited, by the very constitution of its faculties, to a certain order of inquiry, which it must, in this case of supposed erroneous reasoning, have transgressed.

On these general laws of inquiry, as relating alike to the investigation of the properties of matter and of mind, it is my intention to dwell, for some time, with full discussion; for, though the subject may be less pleasing, and may require more severe and unremitting attention on your part, than the greater number of the inquiries which await us, it is still more important than any of these, because it is, in truth, essential to them all. The season of your life is not that which gathers the harvest; it is that which prepares the soil, by diligent cultivation, for the fruits which are to adorn and enrich it;—or, to speak without a metaphor, you do not come here, that you may make yourselves acquainted, in a few months, with all the phenomena of the universe,—as if it were only to look on the motions of the planets in an orrery, or to learn a few names of substances and qualities,—but that you may acquire those philosophical principles, which, in the course of a long and honourable life, are to enable you to render yourselves more familiar every day with the works of nature, and with the sublime plans of its beneficent Author: and if, without the knowledge of a single word of fact, in matter or mind, it were possible for you to carry away from these walls a clear notion of the objects of inquiry, and of the plan on which alone investigation can be pursued with advantage, I should conceive, that you had profited far more, than if, with confused notions of the objects and plan of investigation, you carried with you the power of talking fluently, of observations, and experiments, and hypotheses, and systems, and of using, in their proper places, all the hardest words of science.

I must remark, however, that I should not have thought it necessary, thus to direct so much of your attention to the principles of scientific inquiry in general, if I could have taken for granted, that you had already enjoyed the benefit of the instruction of my illustrious colleague in another chair, whose lectures on natural philosophy, exemplifying that soundness of inquiry, which I can only recommend, would, in that case, have enlightened you more, as to the principles of physical investigation, than any mere rules, of which it is possible to point out to you the utility and the excellence.

All physical science, whatever may be the variety of objects, mental or material, to which it is directed, is nothing more than the comparison of phenomena, and the discovery of their agreement or disagreement, or order of succession. It is on observation, therefore, or on consciousness, which is only another name for internal observation, that the whole of science is founded; because there can be no comparison, without observation of the phenomena compared, and no discovery of agreement or disagreement, without comparison. As far, then, as man has observed the phenomena of matter or of mind, so far, and no farther, may he infer, with confidence, the properties of matter and of mind; or, in the words of the great primary aphorism of Lord Bacon, which has been so often quoted, and so often quoted in vain, "Homo, naturæ minister et interpres, tantum facit et intelligit, quantum de naturæ ordine re vel mente observaverit; nec amplius scit aut potest."*

What is it that we truly mean, however, when we say, that we are about to inquire into the nature and properties of any substance? The question is a most important one, and is far from being so simple as it may at first appear. From the mere misunderstanding of the import of this question, the brightest talents of a long succession of ages,—talents, which, with clearer views of this single point, might have anticipated all the discoveries of our own time, and introduced us, perhaps, to discoveries still more brilliant and astonishing, were wasted in inquiries as barren as the frivolous glory which attended them; that produced indeed much contention, and more pride, but produced nothing more; and, without giving any additional knowledge, took away from ignorance only its humility, and its power of being instructed.

What is it that we truly have in view, or should have in view, when we inquire into the nature of a substance?

The material universe, and all the separate substances which compose it, may be considered in two lights; either simply, as composed of parts that co-exist, and are to our feelings continuous, so as to form, of many separate and independent elements, one apparent whole; or of parts that change their relative positions, constituting, by this change of place, all the physical events of the material system of the world; and inquiry may have reference to a substance in both, or either of those points of view. What is this body? may be inquired of us, when any particular body is pointed out; and the answer which we give will be very different, according to the particular light in which we may have viewed it, though it must always relate to it in one or other of these two aspects. Let us suppose, for example, the body, concerning which the question is put, to be a piece of glass; I select intentionally a substance which is familiar to you all, and of which many of you probably have sufficient chymical knowledge to be acquainted with the composition. It may be asked of us, then, What is the substance termed glass? and our answer will vary, as I have said, with the view which we take of it. If we consider it merely as a continuous whole, our answer will be, that it is a compound of alkaline and silicious matter; meaning that particles of alkali and flint coexist, and are apparently continuous, in that mass of which we speak.

Such is one of the answers which may be given to the question; and this sort of answer is one which is very commonly given to such questions. It is, you will perceive, nothing more than the enumeration of the constituent parts of the substance, and considers the substance, simply as it exists alone, without regard to any other bodies that may exist around it, or near it, and without any allusion to change of any kind.

This sort of view, however, may be altogether reversed; and, instead of thinking of the parts that exist together in the substance, without reference to any changes, of which it is either the agent or the subject, we may think only of such changes, without reference to its constituent parts.

In this latter point of view we may say, in answer to the question, as to the nature of the substance termed glass, that it is a transparent substance, which, according to the general laws of refraction, bends the light that passes through it variously, according to the different density of the medium through which the rays have immediately passed before arriving at it, or of the medium through which they are to pass after penetrating it; that it is a substance fusible at a certain temperature, not dissolved by the common powerful acids, but soluble in a particular acid termed the fluoric acid; that, when strongly rubbed by certain other substances, it communicates, for a time, to various bodies, the power of attracting or repel-

* Nov. Org. Aph. 1.

ling other bodies; and we may add to our description, in like manner, as many other qualities as there are various substances which produce in it any change, or are in any way changed by it. In all answers of this kind, you will perceive that regard is uniformly had, not to the mere substance concerning which the question is put, but also to some other substance with which, in consequence of some motion of one or other of the bodies, at the time of the phenomenon of which we speak, it has changed its relative position; for, if all the objects in nature remained constantly at rest, it is very evident that we could have no notion of any property of matter whatever. In the enumeration of the qualities of glass, for example, when we speak of its properties, we suppose it to have changed, in every case, some relative position with the light that passes through it, the heat that melts it, the fluoric acid that dissolves it, and the various bodies that excite in it, or conduct from it, electricity; and all these bodies, therefore, we must have in view, in our enumeration, as much as the glass itself.

As there are only these two different aspects in which matter can be viewed, all physical inquiry, with respect to matter, must, as I have said, have reference to one of them; and if we think that we are inquiring further concerning it, our inquiry is truly without an object, and we know not what we seek. We may consider it, simply as it exists in space, or as it exists in time. Any substance, considered as it exists in space, is the mere name which ourselves give to the co-existence of a multitude of bodies, similar in nature, or dissimilar in apparent continuity: considered as it exists in time, it is that which is affected by the prior changes of other bodies, or which itself produces a change of some sort in other bodies. As it exists in space, therefore, we inquire into its composition, or, in other words, endeavour to discover what are the elementary bodies that co-exist in the space which it occupies, and that are all which we truly consider, when we think that we are considering the compound as one distinct body. As it exists in time, we inquire into its susceptibilities or its powers, or, in other words, endeavour to trace all the series of prior and subsequent changes, of which its presence forms an intermediate link.

This, then, is our meaning, when we speak of inquiring into the nature of a substance. We have one, or both of two objects in view, the discovery of the separate bodies that co-exist in the substance, or rather that constitute the substance, which is nothing more than these separate bodies themselves, or the discovery of that series of changes, of which the presence of this particular substance, in some new relative position with respect to other bodies, forms a part; the changes which other bodies, in consequence of this altered relative position, occasion in it, with the changes which it occasions in other bodies.

On these two different objects of physical investigation, the co-existing elements of bodies, and their successions of changes, it may be of advantage to dwell a little more fully in elucidation of the method which we have to pursue in our own department of physical research; for, though it may perhaps at first appear to you, that to treat of the principles of inquiry, in the physics of matter, is to wander from the intellectual and moral speculations which peculiarly concern us; it is in truth only as they are illustrative of the inquiries which we are to pursue in the physiology of the mind, that I am led to make these general remarks. The principles of philosophic investigation are, as I have already said, common to all the sciences. By acquiring more precise notions of the objects of any one of them, we can scarcely fail to acquire, in some degree, more precision in our notions of every other, and each science may thus be said to profit indirectly by every additional light that is thrown upon each. It is by this diffusive tendency of its spirit, almost as much as by its own sublime truths, and the important applications of these to general physics, that the study of geometry has been of such inestimable advantage to science. Those precise definitions which insure to every word the same exact signification, in the mind of every one who hears it pronounced, and that lucid progress, in the developement of truth after truth, which gives, even to ordinary powers, almost the same facility of comprehension with the highest genius, are unquestionably of the utmost benefit to the mathematical student while he is prosecuting his particular study, without any contemplation of other advantages to be reaped from them. But there can be no doubt that they are, at the same time, preparing his mind for excellence in other inquiries, of which he has then no conception; that he will ever after be less ready to employ, and be more quick-sighted than he would otherwise have been in detecting vague and indefinite phraseology, and loose and incoherent reasoning; and that a general spirit of exactness and perspicuity may thus at length be diffused in society, which will extend its influence, not to the sciences merely, but, in some faint degree, also, to works of elegant literature, and even to the still lighter graces of conversation itself. "The spirit of geometrical inquiry," says Fontenelle, "is not so exclusively attached to geometry, as to be incapable of being applied to other branches of knowledge. A work of morals, of politics, of criticism, or even of eloquence, will, if all other circumstances have been the same, be the more beautiful, for having come from the hand of a geometrician. The order, the clearness, the precision, which, for a considerable time,

have distinguished works of excellence on every subject, have most probably had their origin in that mathematical turn of thought, which is now more prevalent than ever, and which gradually communicates itself even to those who are ignorant of mathematics. It often happens that a single great man gives the tone to the whole age in which he lives; and we must not forget, that the individual who has the most legitimate claim to the glory of having introduced and established a new art of reasoning, was an excellent geometer."* The philosopher to whom this improvement of the art of reasoning is ascribed, is evidently Descartes, whose claim is certainly much less legitimate than that of our own illustrious countryman; but the works of Bacon were not very extensively studied on the continent, at the time at which Fontenelle wrote; while, especially in France, the splendid reputation of the great geometer who shook, as much with his own wild hypothesis, as with the weight of his reasoning, the almost idolatrous worship of the god of the schools, seemed to sweep before it the glory of every other reformer. The instance of Descartes, however, is a still more happy one than his ingenious countryman, who was himself a Cartesian, could have imagined it to be. It is, indeed, impossible to conceive a more striking example of that diffusive influence of the general spirit of scientific inquiry, which I wished to illustrate; since, in this instance, it survived the very system by which it was diffused; all that was sceptical in that mixed system of scepticism and dogmatism which constituted the general spirit of the philosophy of Descartes, having long continued, and even now continuing, to operate beneficially, when scarcely a doctrine of his particular philosophy retains its hold.

You will not then, I trust, take for granted, that precise notions as to the objects of inquiry, in any science, even in the department of external physics, can be absolutely without benefit to our plans of inquiry into mind, which must be pursued on the same principles, if it be pursued with any prospect of success; and I may, therefore, safely solicit your attention to a little farther elucidation of the two objects which we have in view, in general physical inquiry, whether it be relative to matter or to mind.

To inquire into the composition of a substance, is to consider as one, many substances, which have not the less an independent existence, because they are in immediate proximity to each other. What we term a body, however minute, is a multitude of bodies, or, to speak more exactly, an infinite number of bodies, which appear limited to us, indeed, but may perhaps appear, in their true character of infinity, to beings of a higher order, who may be able to distinguish as infinite, what our limited senses allow us to perceive only as finite. They are one, not in nature, but in our thought; as one thousand individuals, that in nature must always be one thousand, receive a sort of unity that is relative merely to our conception, when ranked by us a single regiment, or as many regiments become one by forming together an army. In the congeries of external matter, the innumerable separate bodies are thus regarded by us as one, when the space which divides them is not measurable by our imperfect vision, and as distinct or separate, when the space can be measured by us. The unity of the aggregate is no absolute quality of the mass, but is truly relative to the observer's power of distinguishing the component parts; the mass being one or many, as his senses are less or better able to distinguish these. This whole globe of earth, with its oceans, and rivers, and mountains, and woods, and with all the separate multitudes of its animated inhabitants, may seem, to some being of another species, only one continuous and uniform mass; as the masses, that seem to us uniform and continuous, may seem a whole world of separate and varied parts, to the insect population that swarms upon its surface. "A single leaf of a tree," to borrow an obvious illustration from a French writer, "is a little world, inhabited by invisible animals, to whose senses it appears of immense extent, who see in it mountains and abysses that are almost immeasurable, and who, from one side of the leaf to the other, hold as little communication with the opposite animalculæ, who have their dwellings there, as we do with our antipodes."*

Nothing can appear to our eyes more uniform than a piece of glass; yet we know, from its composition as a product of art, that it is a congeries of bodies, which have no similarity to each other, and which truly exist separately from each other, in the compound, as they existed separately before the composition, though the lines of space which divide them have now ceased to be visible to our weak organs; and though, instead of being composed of alkaline and silicious matter, which we know to be different in their qualities, the beautiful transparent substance, considered by us, were, as far as we knew, simple in the chymical sense of the term, it would still be as truly an aggregate of many bodies, not dissimilar, indeed, as in the former case, but each similar in qualities to the aggregate itself. The aggregate, in short, is, in every case, but a name invented by ourselves; and what we term the constituent elements, are all that truly exist. To inquire into the

* Préface aux Eloges—Œuvres, tom. v. p. 8.

* Fontenelle, Pluralité des Mondes, Conversat. 3.

composition of a body is, therefore, only to inquire what those separate bodies are which we have chosen to consider as one, or rather which are ranked by us as one, from their apparent continuity.

I have dwelt the longer on this point of the unity of an aggregate mass, as derived from the mind of the observer only, and not from its constituent bodies, which are truly separate and independent of each other, and must always be separate and independent, whatever changes they may seem to undergo, in the various processes of composition and decomposition, because this is one of the most simple, and, at the same time, one of the most convincing examples of a tendency of the mind, which we shall often have occasion to remark in the course of our intellectual analysis, the tendency to ascribe to substances without, as if existing in them like permanent physical qualities, the relations which ourselves have formed, by the mere comparison of objects with objects, and which, in themselves, as relations, are nothing more than modifications of our own minds. It is very difficult for us to believe, that, when we speak of a rock, or a mountain, or, perhaps, still more, when we speak of a single leaf or blade of grass as one, we speak of a plurality of independent substances, which may exist apart, as they now exist together, and which have no other unity than in our conception. It is the same with every other species of relation. The tallness of a tree, the lowliness of a shrub or weed, as these relative terms are used by us in opposition, do not express any real quality of the tree, or shrub, or weed, but only the fact that our mind has considered them together; all which they express, is the mere comparison that is in us, not any quality in the external objects; and yet we can scarcely bring ourselves to think, but that, independently of this comparison, there is some quality, in the tree, which corresponds with our notion of tallness, and some opposite quality in the shrub or weed, which corresponds with our notion of shortness or lowliness; so that the tree would deserve the name of tall, though it were the only object in existence, and the shrub or weed, in like manner, the epithet of lowly, though it alone existed, without a single object with which it could be compared. These instances, as I have said, are simple, but they will not be the less useful, in preparing your minds for considering the more important notions of relation in general, that imply, indeed, always some actual qualities in the objects themselves, the perception of which leads us afterwards to consider them as related, but no actual quality in either of the objects that primarily and directly corresponds with the notion of the relation itself, as there are qualities of objects that correspond directly with our sensations of warmth or colour or any other of the sensations excited immediately by external things. The relation is, in every sense of the word, mental, not merely as being a feeling of the mind, for our knowledge of the qualities of external things is, in this sense, equally mental, but, as having its cause and origin directly in the very nature of the mind itself, which cannot regard a number of objects, without forming some comparison, and investing them consequently with a number of relations. I have already spoken of the intellectual medium, through which external objects become known to us; and the metaphor is a just one. The medium, in this case, as truly as in the transmission of light, communicates something of its own to that which it conveys; and it is as impossible for us to perceive objects long or often together, without that comparison which instantly invests them with certain relations, as it would be for us to perceive objects, for a single moment, free from the tint of the coloured glass through which we view them. "Omnes perceptiones," says Lord Bacon, using a similar figure, "omnes perceptiones, tam sensûs quam mentis, sunt ex analogia hominis, non ex analogia universi; estque intellectus humanus instar speculi inæqualis ad radios rerum, qui suam naturam naturæ rerum immiscet, eamque distorquet et inficit."

But, whatever may be thought of relations, in general, there can be no question, at least, as to the nature of that unity which we ascribe to bodies. We have seen, that the substance, which, in thought, we regard as one, is in truth, not one, but many substances, to which our thought alone gives unity; and that all inquiry, therefore, with respect to the nature of a substance, as it exists in space, is an inquiry into the nature of those separate bodies, that occupy the space which we assign to the imaginary aggregate.

To dissipate this imaginary aggregate of our own creation, and to show us those separate bodies which occupy its space, and are all that nature created, is the great office of the analytic art of chymistry, which does for us only what the microscope does, that enables us to see the small objects, which are before us at all times, without our being able to distinguish them. When a chymist tells us, that glass, which appears to us one uniform substance, is composed of different substances, he tells us, what, with livelier perceptive organs, we might have known, without a single experiment; since the silicious matter and the alkali were present to us in every piece of glass, as much before he told us of their presence, as after it. The art of analysis, therefore, has its origin in the mere imperfection of our senses, and is truly *the art of the blind*, whose wants it is always striving to remedy, and always discovering sufficient proof of its inability to remedy them.

We boast, indeed, of the chymical discoveries which we have made of late, with a ra-

pidity of progress as brilliant, as it is unexampled in the history of any other science; and we boast justly, because we have found, what the generations of inquirers that have preceded us on our globe, far from detecting, had not even ventured to guess. Without alluding to the agency of the galvanic power, by which all nature seems to be assuming before us a different aspect, we have seen fixed in the products of our common fires, and in the drossy rust of metals, the purest part of that ethereal fluid which we breathe, and the air itself, which was so long considered as simple, ceasing to be an element. Yet, whatever unsuspected similarities and diversities of composition we may have been able to trace in bodies, all our discoveries have not created a single new particle of matter. They have only shown these to exist, where they always existed, as much before our analysis as after it,—unmarked indeed, but unmarked only because our senses alone were not capable of making the nice discrimination. If man had been able to perceive, with his mere organs of sense, the different particles that form together the atmospheric air—if he had at all times seen the portion of these which unites with the fuel that warms him, enter into this union, as distinctly as he sees the mass of fuel itself, which he flings into his furnace, he could not have thought it a very great intellectual achievement, to state in words so common and familiar a fact, the mere well-known change of place of a few well-known particles; and yet this is what, in the imperfect state of his perceptive organs, he so proudly terms his *Theory of Combustion*, the developement of which was hailed by a wondering world, and in these circumstances, justly hailed by it as a scientific era. To beings, capable of perceiving and distinguishing the different particles that form by their aggregation those small masses which, after the minutest mechanical division of which we are capable, appear atoms to us, the pride which we feel, in our chymical analyses, must seem as ludicrous, as to us would seem the pride of the blind, if one, who had never enjoyed the opportunity of beholding the sun, were to boast of having discovered, *by a nice comparison of the changing temperature of bodies*, that, during certain hours of the day, there passed over our earth some great source of heat. The addition of one new sense to us, who have already the inestimable advantages which vision affords, might probably, in a few hours, communicate more instruction, with respect to matter, than all which is ever to repay and consummate the physical labours of mankind; giving, perhaps, to a single glance, those slow revelations of nature which, one by one, at intervals of many centuries, are to immortalize the future sages of our race.

"All philosophy," says an acute foreign writer, "is founded on these two things,—that we have a great deal of curiosity, and very bad eyes. In astronomy, for example, if our eyes were better, we should then see distinctly, whether the stars really are, or are not, so many suns, illuminating worlds of their own; and if, on the other hand, we had less curiosity, we should then care very little about this knowledge, which would come pretty nearly to the same thing. But we wish to know more than we see, and there lies the difficulty. Even if we saw well the little which we do see, this would at least be some small knowledge gained. But we observe it different from what it is; and thus it happens that a true philosopher passes his life, in not believing what he sees, and in labouring to guess what is altogether beyond his sight. I cannot help figuring to myself," continues the same lively writer, "that nature is a great public spectacle, which resembles that of the opera. From the place at which we sit in the theatre we do not see the stage quite as it is. The scenes and machinery are arranged, so as to produce a pleasing effect at a distance; and the weights and pulleys, on which the different movements depend, are hid from us. We therefore do not trouble our heads with guessing, how this mechanical part of the performance is carried on. It is perhaps only some mechanist, concealed amid the crowd of the pit, who racks his brain about a flight through the air, which appears to him extraordinary, and who is seriously bent on discovering by what means it has been executed. This mechanist gazing, and wondering, and tormenting himself, in the pit of the opera, is in a situation very like that of the philosopher in the theatre of the world. But what augments the difficulty to the philosopher, is, that, in the machinery which nature presents, the cords are completely concealed from him,—so completely indeed, that the constant puzzle has been to guess, what that secret contrivance is, which produces the visible motions in the frame of the universe. Let us imagine all the sages collected at an opera,—the Pythagorases, Platos, Aristotles, and all those great names, which now-a-days make so much noise in our ears. Let us suppose, that they see the flight of Phaeton, as he is represented carried off by the Winds; that they cannot perceive the cords to which he is attached; and that they are quite ignorant of every thing behind the scenes. It is a secret virtue, says one of them, that carries off Phaeton. Phaeton, says another, is composed of certain numbers, which cause him to ascend. A third says, Phaeton has a certain affection for the top of the stage. He does not feel at his ease, when he is not there. Phaeton, says a fourth, is not formed to fly; but he likes better to fly, than to leave the top of the stage empty,—and a hundred other absurdities of the kind, that might have ruined the reputation of antiquity, if the reputation of antiquity for wisdom could have been ruin-

ed. At last, come Descartes, and some other moderns, who say, Phaeton ascends, because he is drawn by cords, and because a weight, more heavy than he, is descending as a counterpoise. Accordingly, we now no longer believe, that a body will stir, unless it be drawn or impelled by some other body, or that it will ascend, or descend, unless by the operation of some spring or counterpoise; and thus to see nature, such as it really is, is to see the back of the stage at the opera."*

In this exposition of the phenomena of the universe, and of those strange "follies of the wise," which have been gravely propounded in the systems of philosophers concerning them, there is much truth, as well as happy pleasantry. As far, at least, as relates to matter, considered merely as existing in space,—the first of the two lights in which it may be physically viewed,—there can be no question, that philosophy is nothing more than an endeavour to repair, by art, the badness of our eyes, that we may be able to see what is actually before us at every moment. To be fairly behind the scenes of the great spectacle of nature, however, is something more than this. It is not merely to know, at any one moment, that there are many objects existing on the stage, which are invisible where the spectators sit, but to know them as pieces of machinery, and to observe them operating in all the wonders of the drama. It is, in short, to have that second view of nature, as existing in time as well as space, to the consideration of which I am to proceed in my next Lecture.

LECTURE VI.

THE SAME SUBJECT CONTINUED.

In my last Lecture, Gentlemen, I considered, at some length, the nature of Physical Inquiry in general, and stated to you, in particular, the two lights, in which objects may be physically viewed, as existing simply in space, or as existing in time; the inquiries, with respect to the one, having regard to the composition of bodies; the inquiries, with respect to the other, having regard to the changes, of which they are either the subjects or occasions, and consequently to their susceptibilities or their powers—their susceptibilities of being affected by other substances, their powers of affecting other substances. I use the word susceptibility, you will perceive, as in this case synonimous with what Mr Locke, and some other writers, have denominated passive power, to avoid the apparent verbal contradiction, or at least the ambiguity, which may arise from annexing the term passive to a word, which is generally employed to signify, not the subject of change, but the cause or occasion of change.

Of these two points of view, then, in which an object may be regarded, when the question is put, *What is it?* we have seen, I hope, sufficiently distinctly, the nature of one. If, in answering the question, we regard the object merely as it exists in space, and say that it is a compound of certain substances, we mean nothing more, than that, in the portion of space, which we conceive to be occupied by this one imaginary aggregate, there is truly a plurality of bodies, which, though seemingly contiguous, have an existence, as separate and independent of each other, as if they were at the most remote distance; the one aggregate being nothing more than a name for these separate bodies, to which ourselves give all the unity which they have, merely by considering them as one.

The necessity of inquiring into the nature of these separate elementary bodies,—which constitutes one of the two great departments of physical investigation,—we found to arise from the imperfection of our senses, that are not sufficiently acute to discover, of themselves, the component parts of the masses, which nature everywhere presents to us. We are thus obliged to form to ourselves an art of analysis, merely that we may perceive what is constantly before our eyes, in the same manner as we are obliged to have recourse to the contrivances of the optician, to perceive stars and planets, that are incessantly shedding on us their light.

There is, indeed, something truly worthy of our astonishment, in the sort of knowledge of the qualities of matter, which, with our very imperfect senses, we are still able to attain. What we conceive ourselves to know is an aggregate of many bodies, of each of which, individually, we may be said, in the strictest sense of the term, to be absolutely ignorant; and yet the aggregate, which we know, has no real existence, but as that very multitude of bodies, of which we are ignorant. When water was regarded as a simple substance, every one, who looked upon a lake or a river, conceived that he knew as well what the liquid was which flowed in it as the chymist, who now considers it as compound; and the chymist who has learned to regard it as compound, is perhaps as ignorant of the true nature of the separate bodies that exist in it, as those who formerly regarded it as simple; since one additional discovery may prove the very elements, which he now regards as the ultimate constituents of water, to be truly compounded of other elements, still more minute, and now altogether unknown to him.

* Fontenelle, Pluralité des Mondes, Conversat. 1.

That our only knowledge of matter should be of a multitude of bodies, of the nature of each of which, individually, we are in absolute ignorance, may seem, at first sight, to justify many of the most extravagant doubts of the sceptic: and yet there is really no ground for such scepticism, since, though the co-existing bodies be separately unknown, the effect, which they produce when co-existing in the circumstances observed by us, is not the less certain and definite; and it is this joint effect of the whole, thus certain and definite, which is the true object of our knowledge; not the uncertain effect, which the minuter elements might produce, if they existed alone. The same aggregates, whatever their elementary nature may be, operate on our senses, as often as they recur, in the same manner; the unknown elements which constitute an oak, or a tower, or the ivy that clings around it, exciting in the mind those particular sensations to the external causes of which we continue to give the name of oak, or tower, or ivy; and exciting these, as precisely and uniformly as if we were acquainted with each minute element of the objects without. Our knowledge of nature must, in this way, indeed, be confined to the mixed effects of the masses which it exhibits; but it is not on that account less valuable, nor less sure; for to the certainty of this limited knowledge all which is necessary is uniformity of the mixed effects, whatever their unknown co-existing causes may be. It is with masses only, not with elements, that we are concerned, in all the important purposes of life; and the provident wisdom of the Author of Nature, therefore, has, in this as in every other case, adapted our powers to our necessities,—giving to all mankind the knowledge that is requisite for the purposes which all mankind must equally have in view, and leaving, to a few philosophic inquirers, the curiosity of discovering what the substances around us truly are in their elementary state, and the means of making continual progress in this never-ending analysis.

Such then is the nature of one of the views in which physical inquiry may be directed, to the discovery of *elements, that are existing together, at the same moment.* But is not this species of inquiry, it may be asked, peculiar to matter, or may it also be extended to mind? It is easy to conceive that, if matter always have extension, and therefore necessarily be composed of parts, an inquiry into its composition may form an important part of physical investigation; but this sort of inquiry will seem to you altogether inadmissible in the philosophy of mind, since the mind is not composed of parts that co-exist, but is simple and indivisible. If, indeed, the term composition, in this application of it, be understood strictly in the same sense as when applied to matter, it is very evident, that there can be no inquiry into the composition of thoughts and feelings, since every thought and feeling is as simple and indivisible as the mind itself; being, in truth, nothing more than the mind itself existing at a certain moment in a certain state; and yet, in consequence of some very wonderful laws which regulate the successions of our mental phenomena, the science of mind is, in all its most important respects, a science of analysis, or at least a science which exhibits to our contemplation the same results as if it were strictly analytical; and we inquire into the separate ideas or other feelings, involved in one complex thought or emotion, very nearly as we inquire into the corpuscular elements that co-exist in one seemingly continuous mass. The nature of this very wonderful application of analysis, or at least of a process which is virtually the same as analysis, to a substance, that is necessarily at all times simple and indivisible, will, however, be better understood, by you, after we have turned our attention to the other general division of physical inquiry, which is still to be considered by us. I need not, I hope, repeat, after the remarks which I made in my last Lecture, that, in leading your thoughts, for so long a time, to the subject of general science, I have had constantly in view its application to the phenomena of our own department of it, and that we are truly learning to study mind with accuracy, when we are learning what it is, which is to be studied in the great system of things. There can be no question at least, that he who has erroneous notions of the objects of physical investigation in the material universe, will be very likely also to err, or rather cannot fail to err, in his notions of the objects of physical investigation, as it relates to mind.

I proceed, then, to consider, what it is which we truly have in view, when we direct our inquiry, not to the mere composition of objects existing continuously in space, but to the succession of changes which they exhibit in time; to their susceptibility of being affected by other substances, or their power of affecting other substances. The inquiry, as you must perceive, involves the consideration of some words about which a peculiar mystery has been very generally supposed to hang—causation, power, connexion of events. But we shall perhaps find that what is supposed so peculiarly mysterious in them, is not in the very simple notions themselves, but in the misconceptions of those who have treated of them.

It is not in this case, as in the former department of physical investigation, the mere imperfection of our senses, that produces the necessity of inquiry. Matter, as existing in space, is wholly before us, and all which is necessary for perfect knowledge of it, in this respect, is greater delicacy of our perceptive organs, that we may distinguish every element of the seemingly continuous mass. To know the mere composition of a substance, is to know only what is actually present at the

very moment, which we may imagine senses of the highest perfection to be capable of instantly perceiving; but to know all the susceptibilities and powers of a substance, the various modes in which it may affect or be affected by every other substance in nature, is to know it, not merely as it exists before us in the particular circumstances of any one moment, but as it might have existed, or may exist, in all possible circumstances of combination; which our senses, that are necessarily confined to the circumstances of the present moment, never could teach us, even though they were able to distinguish every atom of the minutest mass.

If, indeed, there were any thing, in the mere appearance of a body, which could enable us to predict the changes that would take place in it, when brought into every possible variety of situation, with respect to other bodies, or the changes which it would then produce in those other bodies, the two views, into which I have divided physical inquiry, would coincide exactly; so that to know the continuous elements of any substance, would be to know, at the same time, its susceptibilities and powers. But there is nothing, in the mere sensible qualities of bodies, considered separately, that can give us even the slightest intimation of the changes, which, in new circumstances of union, they might reciprocally suffer or produce. Who could infer, from the similar appearance of a lump of sugar and a lump of calcareous spar, that the one would be soluble in water, and the other remain unmelted; or, from the different aspect of gunpowder and snow, that a spark would be extinguished, if it fell upon the one, and, if it fell upon the other, would excite an explosion that would be almost irresistible? But for experience, we should be altogether incapable of predicting any such effects, from either of the objects compared; or, if we did know, that the peculiar susceptibility belonged to one of the two, and not to the other, we might as readily suppose, that calcareous spar would melt in water as sugar, and as readily, that snow as the gunpowder would detonate, by the contact of a spark. It is experience alone, which teaches us that these effects ever take place, and that they take place, not in all substances, but only in some particular substances.

It has, indeed, been supposed by many ingenious philosophers, that, if we were acquainted with what they term the intimate structure of bodies, we should then see, not merely what corpuscular changes take place in them, but why these changes take place in them; and should thus be able to predict, before experience, the effects which they would reciprocally produce. "I doubt not," says Locke, "but if we could discover the figure, size, texture, and motion of the minute constituent parts of any two bodies, we should know without trial several of their operations one upon another, as we do now the properties of a square or a triangle. Did we know the mechanical affections of the particles of rhubarb, hemlock, opium, and a man; as a watchmaker does those of a watch, whereby it performs its operations, and of a file, which by rubbing on them will alter the figure of any of the wheels;—we should be able to tell before-hand, that rhubarb will purge, hemlock kill, and opium make a man sleep; as well as a watchmaker can, that a little piece of paper laid on the balance will keep the watch from going, till it be removed; or that, some small part of it being rubbed by a file, the machine would quite lose its motion, and the watch go no more. The dissolving of silver in aqua-fortis, and gold in aqua regia, and not *vice versa*, would be then perhaps no more difficult to know, than it is to a smith to understand why the turning of one key will open a lock, and not the turning of another. But whilst we are destitute of senses acute enough to discover the minute particles of bodies, and to give us ideas of the mechanical affections, we must be content to be ignorant of their properties and ways of operation; nor can we be assured about them any farther, than some few trials we make are able to reach. But whether they will succeed again another time, we cannot be certain. This hinders our certain knowledge of universal truths concerning natural bodies: and our reason carries us herein very little beyond particular matter of fact.

"And therefore I am apt to doubt, that how far soever human industry may advance useful and experimental philosophy in physical things, scientifical will still be out of our reach; because we want perfect and adequate ideas of those very bodies which are nearest to us, and most under our command. Those which we have ranked into classes under names, and we think ourselves best acquainted with, we have but very imperfect and incomplete ideas of. Distinct ideas of the several sorts of bodies that fall under the examination of our senses perhaps we may have; but adequate ideas, I suspect, we have not of any one amongst them. And though the former of these will serve us for common use and discourse, yet, whilst we want the latter, we are not capable of scientifical knowledge; nor shall ever be able to discover general, instructive, unquestionable truths concerning them. Certainty and demonstration are things we must not, in these matters, pretend to. By the colour, figure, taste, and smell, and other sensible qualities, we have as clear and distinct ideas of sage and hemlock, as we have of a circle and a triangle; but having no ideas of the particular primary qualities of the minute parts of either of these plants, nor of other bodies which we would apply them to, we cannot tell what effects

they will produce; nor, when we see those effects, can we so much as guess, much less know, their manner of production. Thus, having no ideas of the particular mechanical affections of the minute parts of bodies that are within our view and reach, we are ignorant of their constitutions, powers, and operations; and of bodies more remote we are yet more ignorant, not knowing so much as their very outward shapes, or the sensible and grosser parts of their constitutions." *

The fallacy of the reasoning of this very eminent philosopher consists partly, in the present case, in a sort of *petitio principii*, or, at least, a false assumption that is involved in the very phrase mechanical affections, and in all the mechanical illustrations adduced. If rhubarb purge, and hemlock kill, by qualities that can be said to be mechanical, and if these qualities be permanent, there can be no question, that to know accurately the mechanical qualities of these substances, in relation to the human body, would be to know, that rhubarb must purge, and hemlock kill, as much as to know the mechanism of a watch would be to know, that the watch must stop if a small part of it were rubbed by a file. But the inquiry is still left, whether it be thus, by the mere principles of mechanical action, that rhubarb and hemlock produce their peculiar effects on the animal system, and that silver is dissolved in aquafortis and gold in aqua regia; and, if there be no reason whatever to suppose this, we must then surely admit, that the prophecy would still be beyond our power, though we were acquainted with "the figure, size, texture, and motion, of the minute constituent parts" of the different bodies. In the same manner, as, in the mechanical division of a substance, we must still come to other substances capable of further division, so, though we could reduce all the changes that appear to be wrought in the great masses around us, to the changes wrought in their minute parts, we must still come to certain ultimate changes as inexplicable as those which we see at present. It is as difficult to predict, without experience, the motion of one atom to or from another atom, as the motion of one mass of atoms to or from another mass of atoms. That the globe of the earth should tend towards the sun, which is at so great a distance from it, and should thus be every moment arrested within that orbit, from which, if there were no such deflecting force, it would every moment have a tendency to escape by flying off in a straight line, is indeed most wonderful. But precisely the same laws which operate on the whole globe of the earth, operate on every particle of which the earth is composed, since the earth itself is only these separate particles under another name; and if it be wonderful that all of these should have a tendency to approach the sun, it must be equally wonderful, that each minute constituent particle should tend individually, though, to use Mr Locke's words, we were accurately acquainted with the "figure, size, texture, and motion of each." The same original mystery of gravitation, then, would remain, though our senses enabled us to discover every gravitating particle in the intimate structure of the gravitating mass. By knowing the intimate structure of bodies, we should, indeed, know what were their elements mutually affected, but not why these elements were mutually affected, or were affected in one way rather than in another.

The chief error of Mr Locke in this respect evidently consisted, as I have said, in his assumption of the very thing to be proved, by taking for granted that all the changes of bodies are the effects of their immediate contact and impulse, and of a kind, therefore, which may be termed strictly mechanical,—an assumption, indeed, which harmonized with the mathematical chymistry and medicine of the age in which he lived, but of the justness of which there is not the slightest evidence in the general phenomena, chymical and nervous, of which he speaks. If, instead of confining his attention to the action of bodies in apparent contact, he had turned his thought to the great distant agencies of nature in the motions of the planetary world, it is scarcely possible to conceive that he should not have discovered his mistake. In another of his works, his *Elements of Natural Philosophy*, he has stated very justly, as a consequence of the law of gravitation, that if the earth were the sole body in the universe, and at rest, and the moon were suddenly created at the same distance from the earth as at present, the earth and the moon would instantly begin to move towards one another in a straight line. What knowledge of the "figure, size, and texture" of the particles of the earth could have enabled its human inhabitants to predict this instant change? And if the particles of gold and aqua regia, and of hemlock, rhubarb, and opium, which, together with all the other particles of our globe, would, in the case supposed, instantly begin to move towards the moon,—can thus attract and be attracted, in gravitation, with tendencies that are independent of every mechanical affection,—what authority can there be for supposing, that the chymical and vital agencies of the same particles must be mechanical, or that the one set of changes could have been predicted *a priori*, if the other was confessedly beyond the power of philosophic divination?

But even with regard to the mechanical affections of matter themselves, though all the changes which take place in nature were tru-

* Essay concerning Human Understanding, book iv. c. 3. sect. 25. 26.

ly reducible to them, we should still have ultimately the same difficulty in attempting to predict, without experience, the changes that would ensue from them. The mechanical properties are indeed the most familiar to our thought, because they are those which we are constantly witnessing in the great displays of human power that are most striking to our senses. The house, the bridge, the carriage, the vessel, every implement which we use, and the whole wide surface of the cultivated earth, present to us, as it were, one universal trophy of the victories of the great mechanist, man. We cannot look back to the time when we were ignorant of the mechanical properties of matter; but still, there was a time when they first became known to us, and became known by experience of the motions that resulted from them. What can be simpler than the phenomena of impulse? That a ball in motion, when it meets another at rest, should force this to quit its place, appears now to be something which it required no skill or experience to predict; and yet, though our faculties were, in every respect, as vigorous as now,—if we could imagine this most common of all phenomena to be wholly unknown to us,—what reason should we be able to discover, in the circumstances that immediately precede the shock, for inferring the effect that truly results, rather than any other effect whatever? Were the laws of motion previously unknown, it would be in itself as presumable, that the moving ball should simply stop when it reached the other, or that it should merely rebound from it, as that the quiescent ball should be forced by it to quit its state of rest, and move forward in the same direction. We know indeed that the effect is different, but it is because we have witnessed it that we know it; not because the laws of motion, or any of the mechanical affections of matter whatever are qualities that might be inferred independently of observation.

Experience, then, is necessary in every case, for discovering the mutual tendencies of the elements of bodies, as much as for determining the reciprocal affections of the masses. But experience teaches us the past only, not the future: and the object of physical inquiry is, not the mere solitary fact of a change which has taken place, but the similar changes which will continually take place, as often as the objects are again in the same circumstances; not the phenomena only, but the powers by which the phenomena are produced.

Why is it, then, we believe that continual similarity of the future to the past, which constitutes, or at least is implied, in our notion of power? A stone tends to the earth,—a stone will always tend to the earth,—are not the same proposition; nor can the first be said to involve the second. It is not to experience, then, alone that we must have recourse for the origin of the belief, but to some other principle which converts the simple facts of experience into a general expectation, or confidence, that is afterwards to be physically the guide of all our plans and actions.

This principle, since it cannot be derived from experience itself, which relates only to the past, must be an original principle of our nature. There is a tendency in the very constitution of the mind from which the expectation arises,—a tendency that, in every thing which it adds to the mere facts of experience, may truly be termed instinctive; for though that term is commonly supposed to imply something peculiarly mysterious, there is no more real mystery in it than in any of the simplest successions of thought, which are all, in like manner, the results of a natural tendency of the mind to exist in certain states, after existing in certain other states. The belief is, a state or feeling of the mind as easily conceivable as any other state of it,—a new feeling, arising in certain circumstances as uniformly as in certain other circumstances. There arise other states or feelings of the mind, which we never consider as mysterious; those, for example, which we term the sensations of sweetness or of sound. To have our nerves of taste or hearing affected in a certain manner, is not, indeed, to taste or to hear, but it is immediately afterwards to have those particular sensations; and this merely because the mind was originally so constituted, as to exist directly in the one state after existing in the other. To observe, in like manner, a series of antecedents and consequents, is not, in the very feeling of the moment, to believe in the future similarity, but, in consequence of a similar original tendency, it is immediately afterwards to believe, that the same antecedents will invariably be followed by the same consequents. That this belief of the future is a state of mind very different from the mere perception or memory of the past, from which it flows, is indeed true; but what resemblance has sweetness, as a sensation of the mind, to the solution of a few particles of sugar on the tongue; or the harmonies of music, to the vibration of particles of air? All which we know, in both cases, is, that these successions regularly take place; and in the regular successions of nature, which could not, in one instance more than in another, have been predicted without experience, nothing is mysterious, or every thing is mysterious. It is wonderful, indeed,—for what is not wonderful?—that any belief should arise as to a future which as yet has no existence; and which, therefore, cannot, in the strict sense of the word, be an object of our knowledge. But, when we consider Who it was who formed us, it would, in truth, have been more wonderful, if the mind had been so differently constituted that the belief had not arisen; because, in that case, the phenomena

of nature, however regularly arranged, would have been arranged in vain, and that Almighty Being, who, by enabling us to foresee the physical events that are to arise, has enabled us to provide for them, would have left the creatures, for whom he has been so bounteously provident, to perish, ignorant and irresolute, amid elements that seemed waiting to obey them; and victims of confusion, in the very midst of all the harmonies of the universe.

Mr Hume, indeed, has attempted to show, that the belief of the similarity of future sequences of events is reducible to the influence of custom, without the necessity of any intuitive expectation; but he has completely failed in the reasoning with which he has endeavoured to support this opinion. Custom may account for the mere suggestion of one object by another, as a part of a train of images, but not for that belief of future reality, which is a very different state of mind, and which, perhaps, does not follow every such suggestion, however frequent and habitual. The phenomenon A, a stone has a thousand times fallen to the earth; the phenomenon B, a stone will always, in the same circumstances, fall to the earth;—are propositions that differ as much as the propositions, A, a stone has *once* fallen to the earth; B, a stone will *always* fall to the earth. At whatever link of the chain we begin, we must still meet with the same difficulty—the conversion of the past into the future. If it be absurd to make this conversion at one stage of inquiry, it is just as absurd to make it at any other stage; and, as far as our memory extends, there never was a time at which we did not make the instant conversion; no period, however early, at which we were capable of knowing that a stone had fallen, and yet believed that, in exactly the same circumstances, there was no reason to suppose that it would fall again. But on this particular error of Mr Hume, the very narrow outline, within which the present sketch is necessarily bounded, will not permit me to enlarge. I have examined it, at considerable length, in the third edition of the Inquiry which I have published on the Relation of Cause and Effect.

It is more immediately our present purpose to consider, What it truly is which is the object of inquiry, when we examine the physical successions of events, in whatever manner the belief of their similarity of sequence may have arisen? Is it the mere series of regular antecedents and consequents themselves? or, Is it any thing more mysterious, which must be supposed to intervene and connect them by some invisible bondage?

We see, in nature, one event followed by another. The fall of a spark on gunpowder, for example, followed by the deflagration of the gunpowder; and, by a peculiar tendency of our constitution, which we must take for granted, whatever be our theory of power, we believe, that, as long as all the circumstances continue the same, the sequence of events will continue the same; that the deflagration of gunpowder, for example, will be the invariable consequence of the fall of a spark on it; in other words, we believe the gunpowder to be susceptible of deflagration on the application of a spark, and a spark to have the power of deflagrating gunpowder.

There is nothing more, then, understood, in the trains of events, however regular, than the regular order of antecedents and consequents which compose the train; and between which, if any thing else existed, it would itself be a part of the train. All that we mean, when we ascribe to one substance a susceptibility of being affected by another substance, is, that a certain change will uniformly take place in it when that other is present;—all that we mean, in like manner, when we ascribe to one substance a power of affecting another substance, is, that, when it is present, a certain change will uniformly take place in that other substance. Power, in short, is significant not of any thing different from the invariable antecedent itself, but of the mere invariableness of the order of its appearance in reference to some invariable consequent,—the invariable antecedent being denominated a cause, the invariable consequent an effect. To say, that water has the power of dissolving salt, and to say, that salt will always melt when water is poured upon it, are to say precisely the same thing; there is nothing in the one proposition, which is not exactly, and to the same extent, enunciated in the other.

It would, indeed, be a very different theory of causation, if, without taking into account the important circumstance of invariableness, or the uniform certainty of being at all times followed by a particular event, we were to say, that power is mere antecedence; for there can be no question, that phenomena precede other phenomena, which we never consider as having any permanent relation to them. They are regarded as antecedents, but not invariable antecedents; and the reason of this is obvious. Innumerable events are constantly taking place together in the immense system of the universe. There must, therefore, always be innumerable co-existing series, the parts of each of which, though permanently related to each other, may have no permanent relation to the parts of the other series; and one event of one series may thus precede, not its own effect merely, which is to be its constant and uniform attendant, in all similar circumstances, but the events also of other co-existing series, which may never occur with it again at the same moment. There is no superstition in believing that an eclipse *may* be followed by a pestilence, or an unpleasant dream by some unforeseen calamity of the day, though there would be much

superstition in believing, that these antecedents and consequents had any permanent relation to each other. In ordinary and familiar cases, at least, every one knows sufficiently the distinction of what is thus casual only, and what is invariable in the order of nature. Yet it is only by losing all sight of a distinction so very obvious, and confounding invariable with casual sequences, that Dr Reid, and other eminent philosophers, have been led into much laborious argumentation, in the confidence of confuting one of the simplest and justest of metaphysical opinions. To prove that power is more than invariable antecedence, they prove that it is more than casual antecedence, and that events do not follow each other, loosely and confusedly, as if antecedents could be invariable, which had not consequents as invariable, or, as if a uniform series were not merely another name for a number of uniform antecedents and consequents. A cause is, perhaps, not that which has merely once preceded an event; but we give the name to that which has always been followed by a certain event, is followed by a certain event, and, according to our belief, will continue to be in future followed by that event, as its immediate consequent; and causation, power, or any other synonymous words which we may use, express nothing more than this permanent relation of that which has preceded to that which has followed. If this invariableness of succession, past, present, and future, be not that which constitutes one event the effect of another, Dr Reid, at least, has not pointed out any additional circumstance which we must combine with it, in our definition of an effect, though he has shown, indeed, with most abundant evidence, if any evidence at all were necessary, that the antecedents and consequents are not the same; that we use active and passive verbs, in different senses, applying, as might well be supposed, the one to the antecedent, the other to the consequent; that we speak of effects and causes as if truly different, since it is unquestionably not the same thing to follow uniformly a certain change, and to precede uniformly a certain change, and that we never think of giving those names where we do not conceive that there is some permanent relation. But, though these distinctions might be allowed to have irresistible weight, in opposition to the scepticism, if such extravagant scepticism there ever were, which affirmed the sequences of events to be altogether casual and irregular, they are surely of no weight against that simple definition of power, which affirms it to consist in the certainty of the invariable sequence of some event as its immediate consequent; since this very regularity of the sequences, which is supposed by the definition, must, of itself, have given occasion to all those distinctions of thought and language which Dr Reid has adduced.

That one event should invariably be followed by another event, is indeed, it will be allowed, as every thing in nature is, most wonderful, and can be ascribed only to the infinite source of every thing wonderful and sublime; the will of that divine Being, who gave the universe its laws, and who formed these with a most beneficent arrangement for the happiness of his creatures, who, without a belief in the uniformity of these laws, to direct their conduct, could not have known how to preserve even their animal existence. But the uniformity of succession is surely not rendered less wonderful, by a mere change of name. It is the same unaltered wonder still, when we ascribe the term power to the prior of two events as when we ascribe to it the exactly synonymous phrase invariableness of antecedence; each of these terms implying nothing more than that the one event cannot take place without being immediately followed by the other. The permanence and uniformity of the relation are the essential circumstances. To be that which cannot exist, without being instantly followed by a certain event, is to be the cause of the event, as a correlative effect. It is impossible for us to believe, that the invariable antecedent is any thing but the cause, or the cause any thing but the invariable antecedent; as it is impossible for us to believe that *homo* is the Latin synonyme of *man*, and yet that *man* is not the English synonyme of *homo*.

To know the powers of nature, is, then, nothing more than to know what antecedents are and will be invariably followed by what consequents; for this invariableness, and not any distinct existence, is all which the shorter term power, in any case, expresses; and this, and this alone is the true object of physical inquiry, in that second point of view, in which we have considered it, as directed to the successions of events.

Whenever, therefore, the question is put, as to any object, *What is it?* there are two answers, and only two answers that can be given with meaning. We may regard it as it exists in space, and state the elements that co-exist in it, or rather that constitute it; or we may regard it as it exists in time, and state, in all the series of changes, of which it forms an invariable part, the objects to which it is related as antecedent or consequent.

To combine these two views of nature, as it exists in space and time, and to know, with perfect accuracy, every element of every aggregate, and every series of changes, of which each forms, or can form, a part, would be to know every thing which can be physically known of the universe. To extend our mere physical inquiry still farther into the phenomena of nature, after this perfect knowledge, would be to suppose erroneously, that, in the compounds before us, of which we know every element, there is some element, not yet discovered, or, in the well-known successions

of events, some antecedent or consequent as yet unobserved; or it would be to inquire without any real object of inquiry,—a sort of investigation, which, for two thousand years, was almost the sole employment of the subtle and the studious, and which is far from having perished, with those venerable follies of the schools, at which we know so well how to smile, even while we are imitating them, perhaps, with similar errors of our own. I cannot but think, for example, that, on this very subject of the connexion of events, the prevalent notions and doctrines, even of very eminent philosophers, are not far advanced beyond the verbal complexity of the four causes of which Aristotle treats, the *material*, the *formal*, the *efficient*, and the *final*; or Plato's five causes, which Seneca, in one of his Epistles, briefly defines the *id ex quo*, the *id a quo*, the *id quo*, the *id ad quod*, and the *id propter quod*;* and though there were no other evidence than this one subject affords, it would still, I fear, prove sufficiently, that, with all our manifest improvements in our plans of philosophical investigation, and all the splendid discoveries to which these improvements have led, we have not wholly lost that great art, which, for so long a time, supplied the place of the whole art of philosophizing—the art of inquiring assiduously, without knowing what we are inquiring about.

It is an art, indeed, which there is too much reason to suppose, will accompany philosophy, though always, it is to be hoped, in less and less proportion, during the whole course of its progress. There will for ever be points, on which those will reason ill, who may yet reason, with perfect accuracy, in other matters. With all those sublime discoveries of modern times, which do us so much honour, and with that improved art of discovery, which is still more valuable to us than the discoveries produced by it, we must not flatter ourselves with exemption from the errors of darker ages —of ages truly worthy of the name of dark, but to which we perhaps give the name, with more readiness, because it seems to imply, that our own is an age of light. Our real comfort, in comparing ourselves with the irrefragable and subtle doctors of other times, is not that we do not sometimes reason as indefatigably ill as they, and without knowing what we are truly reasoning about, but that we do this much less frequently, and are continually lessening the number of cases, in which we reason as ill, and increasing, in proportion, the number of cases, in which we reason better, and do truly know, what objects we are seeking.

Of all the cases, however, in which it is of importance that the mind should have precise notions of its objects of inquiry, the most important are those which relate to the subject at present considered by us; because the nature of power, in the relation which it is impossible for us not to feel of events, as reciprocally effects and causes, must enter, in a great measure, into every inquiry which we are capable of making, as to the successive phenomena, either of matter or of mind. It is of so much importance, therefore, to our future inquiries, that you should know what this universal and paramount relation is, that I have dwelt on it at a length, which I fear must have already exhausted your patience; since it is a discussion, I must confess, which requires considerable effort of attention; and which has nothing, I must also confess, to recommend it, but its dry utility. I trust, however, that you are too well acquainted with the nature of science not to know, that it is its utility which is its primary recommendation, and that you are too desirous of advancing in it not to disregard the occasional ruggedness of a road, which is far from being always rugged. It may be allowed to him, who walks only for the pleasure of the moment, to turn away from every path, in which he has not flowers and verdure beneath his feet, and beauty wherever he looks around. But what should we have thought of the competitor of the Olympic course, whose object was the glory of a prize, contested by the proudest of his contemporary heroes, if, with that illustrious reward before him,—with strength and agility that might insure him the possession of it,—and with all the assembled multitudes of Greece to witness his triumph, he had turned away from the contest, and the victory, because he was not to tread on softness, and to be refreshed with fragrance, as he moved along! In that knowledge which awaits your studies, in the various sciences to which your attention may be turned, you have a much nobler prize before you; and, therefore, I shall not hesitate to call forth occasionally all the vigour of your attention, at the risk of a little temporary fatigue, as often as it shall appear to me, that, by exciting you to more than ordinary intellectual activity, I can facilitate your acquisition of a reward, which the listless exertions of the indolent never can obtain, and which is as truly the prize of strenuous effort, as the palms of the Circus or the Course.

* Epist. 65.

LECTURE VII.

ON POWER, CAUSE, AND EFFECT.

My last Lecture, Gentlemen, was chiefly employed in examining what it is, which is the real object of inquiry, when we consider the

phenomena of nature as successive; and we found, that, by an original principle of our constitution, we are led, from the mere observation of change, to believe, that, when similar circumstances recur, the changes, which we observed, will also recur in the same order; that there is hence conceived by us to be a permanent relation of one event, as invariably antecedent, to another event, as invariably consequent; and that this permanent relation is all which constitutes power. It is a word, indeed, of much seeming mystery; but all which is supposed to be mysterious and perplexing in it vanishes, when it is regarded in its true light as only a short general term, expressive of invariable antecedence, or, in other words, of that, which cannot exist in certain circumstances, without being immediately followed by a certain definite event, which we denominate an effect, in reference to the antecedent, which we denominate a cause. To express, shortly, what appears to me to be the only intelligible meaning of the three most important words in physics, immediate invariable antecedence is power; the immediate invariable antecedent, in any sequence, is a cause; the immediate invariable consequent is the correlative effect.

The object of philosophic inquiry, then, in that second department of it, which we considered, with respect to the phenomena of nature as successive, we have found not to be any thing different from the phenomena themselves, but to be those very phenomena, as preceding or following, in certain regular series. Power is not any thing that can exist separately from a substance, but is merely the substance itself, considered in relation to another substance; in the same manner, as what we denominate form, is not any thing separate from the elementary atoms of a mass, but is merely the relation of a number of atoms, as co-existing in apparent contact. The sculptor, at every stroke of his chissel, alters the form of the block of marble on which he works, not by communicating to it any new qualities, but merely by separating from it a number of the corpuscles which were formerly included by us in our conception of the continuous whole; and when he has given the last delicate touches that finish the Jupiter, or the Venus, or Apollo, the divine form which we admire, as if it had assumed a new existence beneath the artist's hand, is still in itself unaltered; the same quiescent mass, that slumbered for ages in the quarry of which it was a part.

Quale fuscæ marmor in Africæ
Solo recisum, sumere idoneum
Quoscunque vultus, seu Diana
Seu Cytheræa magis placebit:
Informis, ater, sub pedibus jacet,
Donec politus Phidiacâ manû
Formosa tandem destinatæ
Induitur lapis ora divæ.
Jam, jamque ponit duritiem placens,
Et nunc ocelli, et gratia mollium
Spirat genarum, nunc labella et
Per nivium coma sparsa collum.

The form of bodies is the relation of their elements to each other in space,—the power of bodies is their relation to each other in time; and both form and power, if considered separately from the number of elementary corpuscles, and from the changes that arise successively, are equally abstractions of the mind, and nothing more. In a former Lecture, I alluded to the influence of errors with respect to the nature of abstraction, as one of the principal causes that retard the progress of philosophy. We give a name to some common quality of many substances; and we then suppose, that there is in it something real, because we have given it a name, and strive to discover, what that is in itself, which, in itself, has no existence. The example, which I used at that time, was the very striking one, of the genera and species, and the whole classes of ascending and descending universals of the schools. I might have found an example, as striking, in those abstractions of form and power, which we are now considering,—abstractions, that have exercised an influence on philosophy, as injurious as the whole series of universals in Porphyry's memorable tree, and one of which, at least, still continues to exercise the same injurious influence, when the tree of Porphyry has been long disregarded, and almost forgotten.

In the philosophy of Aristotle, form, which all now readily allow to be a mere abstraction of the mind, when considered separately from the figured substance, was regarded as something equally real with matter itself; and, indeed, matter, which was supposed to derive from form all its qualities, was rather the less important of the two. Of substantial forms, however, long so omnipotent, we now hear, only in those works which record the errors of other ages, as a part of the history of the fallible being, man, or in those lighter works of playful ridicule, which convert our very follies into a source of amusement, and find abundant materials, therefore, in what was once the wisdom of the past. Crambé, the young companion of Martinus Scribblerus, we are told, "regretted extremely, that substantial forms, a race of harmless beings, which had lasted for many years, and afforded a comfortable subsistence to many poor philosophers, should be now hunted down like so many wolves, without the possibility of a retreat. He considered that it had gone much harder with them, than with essences, which had retired from the schools, into the apothecaries' shops, where some of them had been advanced into the degree of quintessences. He thought there should be a retreat for poor substantial forms, amongst the gentlemen ushers at court, and that there were indeed substantial forms, such as forms of

prayer and forms of government, without which the things themselves could never long subsist."*

The subject of this pleasantry is, indeed, it must be owned, so absurd in itself, as scarcely to require the aid of wit to render it ridiculous; and yet this more than poetic personification of the mere figure of a body, as itself a separate entity, which appears to us too absurd almost to be feigned as an object of philosophic belief, even to such a mind as that of Crambé, was what, for age after age, seemed to the most intelligent philosophers a complete explanation of all the wonders of the universe; and substantial forms, far from needing a retreat among gentlemen ushers, at court, had their place of highest honours amid doctors and disputants, in every school and college, where, though they certainly could not give science, they at least served the temporary purpose of rendering the want of it unfelt, and of giving all the dignity which science itself could have bestowed.

The vague and obscure notions, at present attached to the words power, cause, effect, appear to me very analogous to the notions of the Peripatetics, and, indeed, of the greater number of the ancient philosophers, with respect to form; and, I trust, that as we have now universally learned to consider form, as nothing in itself, but only as the relation of bodies co-existing immediately in space, so power will at length be as universally considered as only the relation which substances bear to each other, in time, according as their phenomena are immediately successive; the invariable antecedent being the cause, the invariable consequent the effect; and the antecedent and consequent being all that are present in any phenomenon. There are, in nature, only substances; and all the substances in nature, are every thing that truly exists in nature. There is, therefore, no additional power, separate or different from the antecedent itself, more than there is form, separate or different from the figured mass, or any other quality without a substance. In the beautiful experiment of the prismastic decomposition of light, for example, the refracting power of the prism is not any thing separate or separable from it, more than its weight or transparency. There are not a prism and transparency, but there is a prism giving passage to light. In like manner, there are not a prism and refracting power, and coloured rays, but there are a prism and rays of various colours which we have perceived to be deflected variously from their original line of direction, when they approach and quit the lens, and which we believe, will, in the same circumstances, continually exhibit the same tendency.

It is the mere regularity of the successions of events, not any additional and more mysterious circumstance, which power may be supposed to denote, that gives the whole value to our physical knowledge. It is of importance for us to know, what antecedents truly precede what consequents; since we can thus provide for that future, which we are hence enabled to foresee, and can, in a great measure, modify, and almost create, the future to ourselves, by arranging the objects over which we have command, in such a manner, as to form with them the antecedents, which we know to be invariably followed by the consequents desired by us. It is thus we are able to exercise that command over nature, which He, who is its only real Sovereign, has deigned, in the magnificence of His bounty, to confer on us, together with the still greater privilege of knowing that Omnipotence to which all our delegated empire is so humbly subordinate. It is a command which can be exercised by us, only as beings, who, according to one of the definitions that have been given of man, look both before and behind; or, in the words of Cicero, who join and connect the future with the present, seeing things, not in their progress merely, but in the circumstances that precede them, and the circumstances that follow them, and being thus enabled to provide and arrange whatever is necessary for that life of which the whole course lies open before us. "Homo autem (quod rationis est particeps, per quam consequentia cernit, causas rerum videt, earumque progressus et quasi antecessiones non ignorat, similitudines comparat, et rebus præsentibus adjungit atque annectic futuras) facile totiûs vitæ cursum videt, ad eamque degendam præparat res necessarias."*

That power is nothing more than the relation of one object or event as antecedent to another object or event, its immediate and invariable consequent, may, perhaps, from the influence of former habits of thought, or rather, of former abuse of language, at first appear to you an unwarrantable simplification; for, though you may never have clearly conceived, in power, any thing more than the immediate sequence of a certain change or event, as its uniform attendant, the mere habit of attaching to it many phrases of mystery, may, very naturally, lead you to conceive, that, in itself, independently of these phrases, there must be something peculiarly mysterious. But the longer you attend to the notion, the more clearly will you perceive, that all which you have ever understood in it, is the immediate sequence of some change with the certainty of the future recurrence of this effect, as often as the antecedent itself may recur in similar

* Mart. Scrib. c. 7.—Pope's Works, Ed. 1757, v. vii. p. 58, 59.

* Cicero de Officiis, lib. i. c. 4.

circumstances. To take an example, which I have already repeatedly employed, when a spark falls upon gunpowder, and kindles it into explosion, every one ascribes to the spark the power of kindling the inflammable mass. But let any one ask himself, what it is which he means by the term, and, without contenting himself with a few phrases that signify nothing, reflect, before he gives his answer, and he will find, that he means nothing more, than that, in all similar circumstances, the explosion of gunpowder will be the immediate and uniform consequence of the application of a spark. To take an example more immediately connected with our own science, we all know, that as soon as any one, in the usual circumstances of health and freedom, wills to move his arm, the motion of his arm follows; and we all believe, that, in the same circumstance of health, and in the same freedom from external restraint, the same will to move the arm will be constantly followed by the same motion. If we knew and believed nothing more, than that this motion of the arm would uniformly follow the will to move it, would our knowledge of this particular phenomenon be less perfect, than at present, and should we learn any thing new, by being told, that the will would not merely be invariably followed by the motion of the arm, but that the will would also have the power of moving the arm; or would not the power of moving the arm be precisely the same thing, as the invariable sequence of the motion of the arm, when the will was immediately antecedent?

This test of identity, as I have said in my Essay on the subject, appears to me to be a most accurate one. When a proposition is true, and yet communicates no additional information, it must be of exactly the same import as some other proposition formerly understood and admitted. Let us suppose ourselves, then, to know all the antecedents and consequents in nature, and to believe, not merely that they have once or repeatedly existed in succession, but that they have uniformly done so, and will continue for ever to recur in similar series, so that, but for the intervention of the Divine will, which would be itself, in that case, a new antecedent, it will be absolutely impossible for any one of the antecedents to exist again, in similar circumstances, without being instantly followed by its original consequent. If an effect be something more than what invariably follows a particular antecedent, we might, on the present supposition, know every invariable consequent of every antecedent, so as to be able to predict, in their minutest circumstances, what events would for ever follow every other event, and yet have no conception of power or causation. We might know, that the flame of a candle, if we held our hand over it, would be instantly followed by pain and burning of the hand,—that, if we ate or drank a certain quantity, our hunger and thirst would cease; —we might even build houses for shelter, sow and plant for sustenance, form legislative enactments for the prevention or punishment of vice, and bestow rewards for the encouragement of virtue; in short, we might do, as individuals and citizens, whatever we do at this moment, and with exactly the same views, and yet, (on the supposition that power is something different from that invariable antecedence which alone we are supposed to know,) we might, with all this unerring knowledge of the future, and undoubting confidence in the results which it was to present, have no knowledge of a single power in nature, or of a single cause or effect. To him who had previously kindled a fire, and placed on it a vessel full of water, with the certainty that the water, in that situation, would speedily become hot, what additional information would be given, by telling him that the fire had the power of boiling water, that it was the cause of the boiling, and the boiling its effect? And, if no additional information would in this case be given, then, according to the test of the identity of propositions, before stated, to know events as invariably antecedent and consequent, is to know them as causes and effects; and to know all the powers of every substance, therefore, would be only to know what changes or events would, in all possible circumstances, ensue, when preceded by certain other changes or events. It is only by confounding casual with uniform and invariable antecedence, that power can be conceived to be something different from antecedence. It certainly is something very different from the priority of a single moment; but it is impossible to form any conception of it whatever, except merely as that which is constantly followed by a certain effect.

Such is the simple, and, as it appears to me, the only intelligible view of power, as discoverable in the successive phenomena of nature. And yet, how different from this simple view is the common, or, I may almost say, the universal notion of the agencies which are supposed to be concerned in the phenomena that are the objects of philosophic inquiry. It is the detection of the powers of nature, to which such inquiry is supposed to lead, but not of powers, in the sense in which alone that phrase is intelligible, as signifying the objects themselves which uniformly precede certain changes. The powers which our investigation is to detect, or which, at least, in all the phenomena that come under our observation, we are to consider as the sole efficient, though invisible producers of them, are conceived by us to be something far more mysterious,—something that is no part of the antecedent, and yet is a part of it,—or that intervenes between each antecedent and consequent, without being itself any thing interme-

diate; as if it were possible that any thing could intervene in a series, without instantly becoming itself a part of the series,—a new link in the lengthened chain,—the consequent of the former antecedent, and the antecedent of the former consequent.

To me, indeed, it appears so very obvious a truth, that the substances which exist in nature,—the world, its living inhabitants, and the adorable Being who created them,—are all the real existences in nature, and that, in the various changes which occur, therefore, there can as little be any powers or susceptibilities different from the antecedents and consequents themselves, as there can be forms different from the co-existing particles which constitute them,—that to labour thus to impress this truth upon your minds, seems to me almost like an attempt to demonstrate a self-evident proposition. An illusion, however, so universal, as that which supposes the powers of nature to be something more than the mere series of antecedents themselves, is not rashly, or without very full inquiry, to be considered as an illusion; and, at any rate, in the case of a mistake, so prevalent and so important in its consequences, it cannot be uninteresting, to inquire into the circumstances that appear most probably to have led to it. Indeed the more false, and the more obviously false the illusion is, the more must it deserve our inquiry, what those circumstances have been which have so long obtained for it the assent, not of common understandings merely, but of the quick-sighted and the subtle. For a full view of my opinions on this subject, I must refer you to the work which I have published on the Relation of Cause and Effect; and the short abstract of them which I now offer, as it would be superfluous for those who have read and understood that work, is chiefly for the sake of those who may not have had an opportunity of perusing the volume itself.

One source of the general fallacy unquestionably is that influence of abstraction, to which I before alluded, as aided, and in a great measure perpetuated, by the use of language, and the common unavoidable modes of grammatical construction. We speak of the powers of a substance, of substances that have certain power—of the figure of a body, or of bodies that have a certain figure, in the same manner as we speak of the students of a university, or of a house that has a great number of lodgers; and we thus learn to consider the power, which a substance possesses, as something different from the substance itself, inherent in it, indeed, but inherent as something that may yet subsist separately. In the ancient philosophy, this error extended to the notions both of form and power. In the case of form, however, we have seen, that the illusion, though it lasted for many ages, did at length cease, and that no one now regards the figure of a body, as anything but the body itself. It is probable that the illusion, with respect to power, as something different from the substance that is said to possess it, would, in like manner, have ceased, and given place to juster views, if it had not been for the cause which I am next to consider.

This cause is the imperfection of our senses, the same cause which, in the other department of physics before examined by us, the department that relates to matter considered merely as existing in space, we find to give occasion to all our inquiries into the compositions of bodies. In this department of physics, however, which relates to the successions of phenomena in time, the imperfection of our senses operates in a different way. It is not that which gives occasion to the necessity of inquiry; for we have seen, that senses, of the utmost accuracy and delicacy, could not, of themselves, and without experience, have enabled us to predict any one event, in the innumerable series of phenomena that are constantly taking place around us. But, though senses of the nicest discrimination could not have rendered inquiry into the successions of events superfluous, they would have saved us from much idle inquiry, and have given far greater precision, if not to our rules, at least to our uniform practice, of philosophizing.

As our senses are at present constituted, they are too imperfect to enable us to distinguish all the elements that co-exist in bodies; and of elements, which are themselves unknown to us, the minute changes which take place in them, must of course be unknown. We are hence, from our incapacity of discovering these elements by our imperfect senses and imperfect analysis, incapable of distinguishing the whole series of internal changes that occur in them, the whole progressive series of antecedents and consequents, in a phenomenon that appears to our senses simple; and since it is only between immediate antecedents and consequents that we suppose any permanent and invariable relation, we are therefore constantly on the watch, to detect, in the more obvious changes, that appear to us in nature, some of those minuter elementary changes, which we suspect to intervene. These minute invisible changes, when actually intervening, are truly what connect the obvious antecedents with the obvious consequents; and the innumerable discoveries which we are constantly making of these lead us habitually to suppose, that, amid all the visible changes perceived by us, there is something latent which links them together. He who for the first time listens to the delightful sounds of a violin, if he be ignorant of the theory of sound, will very naturally suppose that the touch of the strings by the bow is the cause of the melody which he hears. He learns, however, that this primary impulse would be of little effect, were it not for the vibrations excited by it in the violin

itself; and another discovery, still more important, shows him that the vibration of the instrument would be of no effect, if it were not for the elastic medium interposed between his ear and it. It is no longer to the violin, therefore, that he looks, as the direct cause of the sensation of sound, but to the vibrating air; nor will even this be long considered by him as the cause, if he turns his attention to the structure of the organ of hearing. He will then trace effect after effect, through a long series of complex and very wonderful parts, till he arrive at the auditory nerve, and the whole mass of the brain, in some unknown state of which he is at length forced to rest, as the cause or immediate antecedent of that affection of the mind which constitutes the particular sensation. To inquire into the latent causes of events is thus to endeavour to observe changes which we suppose to be actually taking place before us unobserved, very nearly in the same manner, as to inquire into the composition of a substance is to strive to discover the bodies that are constantly before us, without our being able to distinguish them.

It is quite impossible, that this constant search, and frequent detection of causes, before unknown, thus found to intervene between all the phenomena observed by us, should not, by the influence of the common principles of our mental constitution, at length associate, almost indissolubly, with the very notion of change, as perceived by us, the notion of something intermediate, that as yet lies hid from our search, and connects the parts of the series which we at present perceive. This latent something, supposed to intervene between the observed antecedent and the observed consequent, being the more immediate antecedent of the change which we observe, is of course regarded by us as the true cause of the change, while the antecedent actually observed by us, and known, ceases, for the same reason, to be regarded as the cause, and a cause is hence supposed by us to be something very mysterious; since we give the name, in our imagination, to something of the nature of which we must be absolutely ignorant, as we are, by supposition, ignorant of its very existence. The parts of a series of changes, which we truly observe, are regarded by us as little more than signs of other intervening changes as yet undetected: and our thought is thus constantly turned from the known to the unknown, as often as we think of discovering a cause.

The expectation of discovering something intermediate and unknown between all known events, it thus appears, is very readily convertible into the common notion of power, as a secret and invisible tie. Why does it do this? or, How does it produce this effect? is the question which we are constantly disposed to put, when we are told of any change which one substance occasions in another; and the common answer, in all such cases, is nothing more than the statement of some intervening object, or event, supposed to be unknown to the asker, but as truly a mere antecedent in the sequence, as the more obvious antecedent which he is supposed to know. How is it that we see objects at a distance—a tower, for example, on the summit of a hill, or the opposite side of a river? Because rays of light are reflected from the tower to the eye. The new antecedent appears to us a very intelligible reason. And why do rays of light, that fall in confusion from every body, within our sphere of vision, on every point of the surface of the eye,—from the wood, the rock, the bridge, the river, as well as the tower,—give distinct impressions of all these different objects? Because the eye is formed of such refracting power, that the rays of light, which fall confusedly on its surface, converge within it, and form distinct images of the objects from which they come, on that part of the eye which is an expansion of the nerve of sight. Again we are told only of intervening events before unknown to us; and again we consider the mere knowledge of these new antecedents as a very intelligible explanation of the event which we knew before. This constant statement of something intermediate, that is supposed to be unknown to us, as the cause of the phenomena which we perceive, whenever we ask, how or why they take place? continuallystrengthensthe illusion, which leads us to regard the powers of objects as something different from the perceived objects themselves; and yet it is evident, that to state intervening changes is only to state other antecedents,—not any thing different from mere antecedence; and that, whatever number of these intervening changes we may discover between the antecedent and the consequent, which we at present know, we must at length come to some ultimate change, which is truly and immediately antecedent to the known effect. We may say, that an orator, when he declaims, excites the sensation of sound, because the motion of his vocal organs excites vibrations in the intervening air; that these vibrations of air are the cause of the sound, by communicating vibration to parts of the ear, and that the vibrations of these parts of the ear are the cause of the sound, by affecting in a particular manner the nerve of hearing, and the brain in general;—but, when we come to the ultimate affection of the sensorial organ, which immediately precedes the sensation of the mind, it is evident that we cannot say of it, that it is the cause of the sound, by exciting any thing intermediate, since it then could not itself be that by which the sound was immediately preceded. It is the cause, however; exactly in the same manner as all the other parts of the sequence were causes, merely by being the immediate and invariable antece-

dent of the particular effect. If, in our inability of assigning any thing intermediate, we were to say, that this last affection of the sensorial organ occasioned the sound, because it had the power of occasioning sound, we should say nothing more than if we said at once, that it occasioned the sound, or, in other words, was that which could not exist in the same circumstances without the sound as its instant attendant.

"What is there," says Malebranche, "which Aristotle cannot at once propose and resolve, by his fine words of genus, species, act, power, nature, form, faculties, qualities, *causa per se*, *causa per accidens?* His followers find it very difficult to comprehend that these words signify nothing; and that we are not more learned than we were before, when we have heard them tell us, in their best manner, that fire melts metals, because it has a solvent faculty; and that some unfortunate epicure, or glutton, digests ill, because he has a weak digestion, or because the *vis concoctrix* does not perform well its functions." *

We see only parts of the great sequences that are taking place in nature; and it is on this account we seek for the causes of what we know in the parts of the sequences that are unknown. If our senses had originally enabled us to discriminate every element of bodies, and, consequently, all the minute changes which take place in these, as clearly as the more obvious changes at present perceived by us; in short, if, between two known events, we had never *discovered* any thing intermediate and unknown, forming a new antecedent of the consequent observed before, our notion of a cause would have been very different from that mysterious unintelligible something which we now conceive it to be; and we should then, perhaps, have found as little difficulty in admitting it to be what it simply and truly is,—only another name for the immediate invariable antecedent of any event,—as we now find in admitting the form of a body, to be only another name for the relative position of the parts that constitute it.

But, I have said in my Essay, though the powers of created beings be nothing more than their relation to certain events that invariably attend them, is this definition consistent with the notion which we form of the power of the Creator? or, Is not his efficiency altogether different in nature, as well as in degree? The omnipotence of God, it must, indeed, be allowed, bears to every created power the same relation of awful superiority, which his infinite wisdom and goodness bear to the humble knowledge and virtue of his creatures. But as we know his wisdom and goodness, only by knowing what that human wisdom and goodness are, which, with all their imperfection, he has yet permitted to know and adore him,—so, it is only by knowing created power, weak and limited as it is, that we can rise to the contemplation of his omnipotence. In contemplating it, we consider only his will, as the direct antecedent of those glorious effects which the universe displays. The power of God is not any thing different from God; but is the Almighty himself, willing whatever seems to him good, and creating or altering all things by his very will to create or alter. It is enough for our devotion, to trace everywhere the characters of the Divinity,—of provident arrangement prior to this system of things; and to know, therefore, that, without that divine will as antecedent, nothing could have been. Wherever we turn our eyes; to the earth—to the heavens—to the myriads of beings that live and move around us—or to those more than myriads of worlds, which seem themselves almost like animated inhabitants of the infinity through which they range; above us, beneath us, on every side we discover, with a certainty that admits not of doubt, intelligence and design, that must have preceded the existence of every thing which exists. Yet, when we analyze those great, but obscure ideas which rise in our mind while we attempt to think of the creation of things, we feel, that it is still only a sequence of events which we are considering, though of events the magnitude of which allows us no comparison, because it has nothing in common with those earthly changes which fall beneath our view. We do not see any third circumstance existing intermediately, and binding, as it were, the will of the Omnipotent Creator to the things which are to be; we conceive only the divine will itself, as if made visible to our imagination, and all nature at the very moment rising around. It is evident, that, in the case of the divine agency, as well as in every other instance of causation, the introduction of any circumstance, as a bond of closer connexion, would only furnish a new phenomenon to be itself connected; but even though it were possible to conceive the closer connexion of such a third circumstance, as is supposed to constitute the inexplicable efficiency between the will of the Creator and the rise of the universe, it would diminish, indeed, but it certainly cannot be supposed to elevate, the majesty of the person and of the scene. Our feeling of his omnipotence is not rendered stronger by the slowness of the complicated process: it is, on the contrary, the immediate succession of the object to the desire, which impresses the force of the omnipotence on our mind; and it is to the divine agency, therefore, that the representation of instant sequence seems peculiarly suited, as if it were more emphatically powerful. Such is the great charm of the

* Recherche de la Vérité, liv. iv. c. ii.—Vol. II. p. 322.

celebrated passage of Genesis, descriptive of the creation of light. It is from stating nothing more than the antecedent and consequent, that the majestic simplicity of the description is derived. God speaks and it is done. We imagine nothing intermediate. In our highest contemplation of His power, we believe only, that, when He willed creation, a world arose; and that, in all future time, His will to create cannot exist, without being followed by the instant rise into being of whatever He may have willed; that His will to destroy any thing, will be, in like manner, followed by its non-existence; and His will to vary the course of things, by miraculous appearances. The will is the only necessary previous change; and that Being has almighty power, whose every will is immediately and invariably followed by the existence of its object.

LECTURE VIII.

ON HYPOTHESIS AND THEORY.

THE observations which I have already made on power, Gentlemen, have, I hope, shown you, both what it truly is, and the sources of that illusion which leads us to regard it as something more mysterious.

The principal source of this illusion, we found to be our incapacity of distinguishing the minute elements of bodies,—that leads us, in a manner which it is unnecessary now to recapitulate, to suspect constantly some intermediate and unobserved objects and events, between the parts of sequences, which we truly observe, and, by the influence of this habit, to transfer, at last, the notion of power, from the antecedent which we observe, to the supposed more direct antecedent, which we only imagine, and to consider the causes of events as some unknown circumstances, that exist between all the antecedents which we know, and the consequents which we know, and connect these together in mysterious union.

The same imperfection of our senses, which, from our incapacity of discovering all the minute elements, and consequently all the minute elementary changes, in bodies, leads us to form erroneous notions of power and causation, has tended, in like manner, to produce a fondness for hypotheses, which, without rendering the observed phenomena, in any respect, more intelligible, only render them more complicated, and increase the very difficulty which they are supposed to diminish.

Of this tendency of the mind, which is a very injurious one to the progress of sound philosophy, I must request your attention to a little fuller elucidation. To know well, what hypotheses truly are in themselves, and what it is which they contribute to the explanation of phenomena, is, I am convinced, the surest of all preservatives against that too ready assent, which you might otherwise be disposed to give to them; and to guard you, from the ready adoption of such loose conclusions, in the reasonings of others, and from the tendency to similar rashness of arrangement and inference in your own speculative inquiries, is to perform for you the most important office that can be performed, for the regulation, both of your present studies, and of those maturer investigations, to which, I trust, your present studies are to lead.

I have already endeavoured to point out to you, in what manner we are led to believe, that we explain the sequence of two events by stating some intermediate event. If asked, How it is that we hear a voice at a distance, or see a distant object? we immediately answer, Because the primary vibration of the organs of speech is propagated in successive vibrations through the intervening air, and because light is reflected or emitted from the distant object to the eye; and he who hears this answer, which is obviously nothing more than the statement of another effect, or series of effects, that takes place before that particular effect concerning which the question is put, is perfectly satisfied, for the time, with the acquisition which he has made, and thinks, that he now knows how it is that we hear and see. To know why a succession of events takes place, is thus at length conceived by us, to be the same thing, as to know some other changes, or series of changes, which take place between them; and, with this opinion, as to the necessary presence of some intervening and connecting link, it is very natural, that, when we can no longer state or imagine any thing which intervenes, we should feel as if the sequence itself were less intelligible; though unquestionably, when we can state some intervening circumstance, we have merely found a new antecedent in the train of physical events, so as to have now two antecedents and consequents, instead of one simple antecedent and consequent, and have thus only doubled our supposed mystery, instead of removing it.

Since it does appear to us, however, to remove the very mystery which it doubles, it is the same thing, with respect to our general practice of philosophizing, as if it did remove it. If we suppose the intervention of some unknown cause, in every phenomenon which we perceive, we must be equally desirous of discovering that unknown cause, which we suppose to be intermediate; and, when this is not easily discoverable, we must feel a strong tendency to divine what it is, and to acquiesce, more readily than we should otherwise have done, in the certainty of what we have only

imagined; always, of course, imagining the cause, which seems to have most analogy to the observed effect.

Such is the nature of that illusion, from which the love of hypothesis flows,—as seeming, by the intervention of a new antecedent, to render more intelligible the sequences of events that are obviously before us,—though all which is truly done, is to double the number of antecedents; and, therefore, to double instead of removing the difficulty that is supposed to be involved in the consideration of a simple sequence of events. A stone tends to the ground: that it should have this tendency, in consequence of the mere presence of the earth, appears to us most wonderful; and we think, that it would be much less wonderful, if we could discover the presence, though it were the mere presence, of something else. We therefore, in our mind, run over every circumstance analogous, to discover something which we may consider as present, that may represent to our imagination the cause which we seek. The effect of impulse, in producing motion, we know by constant experience; and, as the motion which it produces, in a particular direction, seems analogous to the motion of the stone in its particular direction, we conceive, that the motion of a stone, in its fall to the earth, is rendered more intelligible, by the imagined intervention of some impelling body. The circumstances which we observe, however, are manifestly inconsistent with the supposition of the impulse of any very gross matter. The analogies of gross matter are accordingly excluded from our thoughts, and we suppose the impulse to proceed from some very subtile fluid, to which we give the name of ether, or any other name, which we may choose to invent for it. The hypothesis is founded, you will observe, on the mere analogy of another species of motion, and which would account for gravitation by the impulse of some fine fluid. It is evident, that there may be, in this way, as many hypotheses to explain a single fact, as there have been circumstances analogous observed in all the various phenomena of nature. Accordingly, another set of philosophers, instead of explaining gravitation by the analogy of impulse, have had recourse to another analogy, still more intimately familiar to us—that of the phenomena of life. We are able to move our limbs by our mere volition. The mind, therefore, it is evident, can produce motion in matter; and it is hence some interposed spiritual agent, which produces all the phenomena of gravitation. Every orb, in its revolution on its axis, or in its great journey through the heavens, has, according to this system of philosophical mythology, some peculiar genius, or directing spirit, that regulates its course, in the same manner as, of old, the universe itself was considered as one enormous animal, performing its various movements by its own vital energies. It is the influence of this analogy of our own muscular motions, as obedient to our volition, together with the mistaken belief of adding greater honour to the divine Omnipotent, which has led a very large class of philosophers to ascribe every change in the universe, material or intellectual, not to the original foresight and arrangement merely, —the irresistible evidence of which even the impiety, that professes to question it, must secretly admit,—but to the direct operation of the Creator and Sovereign of the world:

> "The mighty Hand,
> That, ever busy, wheels the silent spheres,
> Works in the secret deep; shoots streaming thence
> The fair profusion that o'erspreads the spring;
> Flings from the sun direct the flaming day;
> Feeds every creature; hurls the tempest forth;
> And, as on earth this grateful change revolves,
> With transport touches all the springs of life." *

So prone is the mind to complicate every phenomenon by the insertion of imagined causes, in the simple sequences of physical events, that one hypothesis may often be said to involve in it many other hypotheses, invented for the explanation of that very phenomenon, which is adduced in explanation of another phenomenon, as simple as itself. The production of muscular motion by the will, which is the source of the hypothesis of direct spiritual agency, in every production of motion or change in the universe, has itself given occasion to innumerable speculations of this kind. Indeed, on no subject has the imagination been more fruitful of fancies, that have been strangely given to the world under the name of philosophy. Though you cannot be supposed to be acquainted with the minute nomenclature of anatomy, you yet all know that there are parts termed muscles, and other parts termed nerves, and that it is by the contraction of our muscles that our limbs are moved. The nerves, distributed to the different muscles, are evidently instrumental to their contraction; since the destruction of the nerve puts an end to the voluntary contraction of the muscle, and consequently to the apparent motion of the limb. But what is the influence that is propagated along the nerve, and in what manner is it propagated? For explaining this most familiar of all phenomena, there is scarcely any class of phenomena in nature, to the analogy of which recourse has not been had,—the vibration of musical chords,—the coiling or uncoiling of springs,—the motion of elastic fluids,—electricity, magnetism, galvanism;—and the result of so many hypotheses,—after all the labour of striving to adapt them to the phenomena, and the still greater labour of striving to prove them exactly adapted, when they

* Thomson's Hymn to the Seasons, 29—35.

were far from being so—has been the return to the simple fact, that muscular motion follows a certain state of the nerve; in the same manner, as the result of all the similar labour that has been employed to account, as it has been termed, for gravitation, has been a return to the simple fact, that, at all visible distances observed, the bodies in nature tend toward each other.

The mere sequence of one event after another event, is, however, too easily conceived, and has too little in it of that complication, which at once busies and delights us, to allow the mind to rest in it long. It must for ever have something to disentangle, and, therefore, something which is perplexed; for such is the strange nature of man, that the simplicity of truth, which might seem to be its essential charm, and which renders it doubly valuable, in relation to the weakness of his faculties, is the very circumstance that renders it least attractive to him; and though, in his analysis of every thing that is compound in matter, or involved in thought, he constantly flatters himself, that it is this very simplicity, which he loves and seeks, he yet, when he arrives at absolute simplicity, feels an equal tendency, to turn away from it, and gladly prefers to it any thing that is more mysterious, merely because it is mysterious. "I am persuaded," said one, who knew our nature well, "that, if the majority of mankind could be made to see the order of the universe, such as it is, as they would not remark in it any virtues attached to certain numbers, nor any properties inherent in certain planets, nor fatalities in certain times and revolutions of these, they would not be able to restrain themselves, on the sight of this admirable regularity and beauty, from crying out with astonishment, What! is this all?"

For the fidelity of this picture, in which Fontenelle has so justly represented one of the common weaknesses of our intellectual nature, we unfortunately need not refer to the majority of mankind alone, to whom, it may be said, almost with equal truth, that every thing is wonderful, and that nothing is wonderful. The feeling which it describes exists even in the most philosophic mind, and had certainly no inconsiderable influence even on that mind which described it so truly, when it employed all its great powers, in still striving to support the cumbrous system of the *vortices*, against the simple theory of attraction. Even Newton himself, whose transcendent intellect was so well fitted to perceive the sublimity, which simplicity adds to every thing that is truly great in itself, yet showed, by his query with respect to the agency of ether, that he was not absolutely exempt from that human infirmity of which I speak; and though philosophers may now be considered as almost unanimous with respect to gravitation, in considering it as the mere tendency of bodies towards each other, we yet, in admiring this tendency which we perceive, feel some reluctance to admit a mere fact, that presents itself so simply to our conception, and would be better pleased, if any other mode could be pointed out, by which, with some decent appearance of reason on its side, the same effect could seem to be brought about, by a natural apparatus, better suited to gratify our passion for the complicated and the wonderful. Though the theory of *vortices* can scarcely be said now to have any lingering defender left, there is a constant tendency, and a tendency which requires all our philosophy to repress it, to relapse into the supposition of a great ethereal fluid, by the immense ocean, or immense streams, of which the phenomenon now ascribed to gravitation, may be explained, and we have no objection to fill the whole boundless void of the universe with an infinite profusion of this invisible matter, merely that we may think, with more comfort, that we know how a feather falls to the ground; though the fall of the feather, after this magnificent cost of contrivance, would still be as truly inexplicable as at present; and though many other difficulties must, in that case, be admitted in addition. It is only in geometry, that we readily allow a straight line to be the shortest that can be drawn between any two points. In the physics of mind, or of matter, we are far from allowing this. We prefer to it almost any curve that is presented to us by others, and, without all doubt, any curve which we have described ourselves; and we boldly maintain, and, which is yet more, fairly believe, that we have found out a shorter road, merely because, in our philosophical peregrination, we have chosen to journey many miles about, and, in our delight of gazing on new objects, have never thought of measuring the ground which we have trod.

I am aware, indeed, that, in the consideration of the simple antecedents and consequents which nature exhibits, it is not the mere complication of these, by the introduction of new intervening substances or events, which obtains from the mind so ready an adoption of hypotheses. On the contrary, there is a sort of false simplification in the introduction of hypotheses, which itself aids the illusion oft he mystery. I term the simplification false, because it is not in the phenomena themselves, but in our mode of conceiving them. It is certainly far more simple, in nature, that bodies should have a tendency toward each other, than that there should be oceans of a subtile fluid, circulating around them, in vortices, or streams of such a fluid, projected continually on them from some unknown source, merely to produce the same exact motions, which would be the result of the reciprocal tendency in the bodies themselves. But the interposition of all this immensity of matter, to account for the fall of

a feather or rain-drop, cumbrous as the contrivance must be allowed to be, is yet, in one respect, more simple to our conception; because, instead of two classes of phenomena, those of gravitation and of impulse, we have, in referring all to impulse, only one general class. Man loves what is simple much, but he loves what is mysterious more; and a mighty ocean of ether, operating invisibly in all the visible phenomena of the universe, has thus a sort of double charm, by uniting the false simplicity, of which I have spoken, with abundance of real mystery. This mixture of the simple and the mysterious, is, in some measure, like the mixture of uniformity with diversity, that is so delightful in works of art. However pleasing objects may separately be, we are soon wearied with wandering over them, when, from their extreme irregularity, we cannot group them in any distinct assemblage, or discover some slight relation of parts to the whole; and we are still sooner, and more painfully fatigued, when every object which we see is in exact symmetry with some other object. In like manner, the mind would be perplexed and oppressed, if it were to conceive a great multitude of objects or circumstances, concurring in the production of one observed event. But it feels a sort of dissatisfaction also, when the sequences of events which it observes, are reduced to the mere antecedents and consequents of which they consist, and must have a little more complication to flatter it with the belief, that it has learned something which it is important to have learned. To know that a withered leaf falls to the ground, is to know, what the very vulgar know, as well as ourselves; but an ocean of ether whirling it downward, is something of which the vulgar have no conception, and gives a kind of mysterious magnificence to a very simple event, which makes us think, that our knowledge is greater, because we have given, in our imagination, a sort of cumbrous magnitude to the phenomenon itself.

That hypotheses, in that wide sense of the word which implies every thing conjectural, are without use in philosophy, it would be absurd to affirm, since every inquiry may, in that wide sense, be said to pre-suppose them, and must always pre-suppose them if the inquiry have any object. They are of use, however, not as superseding investigation, but as directing investigation to certain objects,—not as telling us what we are to believe, but as pointing out to us what we are to endeavour to ascertain. An hypothesis, in this view of it, is nothing more than a reason for making one experiment or observation rather than another; and it is evident, that, without some reason of this kind, as experiments and observations are almost infinite, inquiry would be altogether profitless. To make experiments at random, is not to philosophize; it becomes philosophy, only when the experiments are made with a certain view; and to make them, with any particular view, is to suppose the presence of something, the operation of which they will tend either to prove or disprove. When Torricelli, for example,—proceeding on the observation previously made, by Galileo, with respect to the limited height to which water could be made to rise in a pump,—that memorable observation, which demonstrated, at last, after so many ages of error, what ought not for a single moment to have required to be demonstrated, the absurdity of the horror of a void ascribed to nature; when, proceeding on this memorable observation, Torricelli made his equally memorable experiment with respect to the height of the column of mercury supported in an inverted tube, and found, on comparison of their specific gravities, the columns of mercury and water to be exactly equiponderant, it is evident that he was led to the experiment with the mercury by the supposition, that the rise of fluids *in vacuo* was occasioned by some counterpressure, exactly equal to the weight supported, and that the column of mercury, therefore, should be less in height than the column of water, in the exact inverse ratio of their specific gravities, by which the counterpressure was to be sustained. To conceive the air, which was then universally regarded as essentially light, to be not light but heavy, so as to press on the fluid beneath, was, at that time, to make as bold a supposition as could be made. It was, indeed, a temporary hypothesis, even when it led to that experimental demonstration of the fact, which proved it for ever after not to be hypothetical.

An hypothesis, then, in the first stage of inquiry, far from being inconsistent with sound philosophy, may be said to be essential to it. But it is essential only in this first stage, as suggesting what is afterwards to be verified or disproved; and, when the experiments or observations to which it directs us do not verify it, it is no longer to be entertained, even as an hypothesis. If we observe a phenomenon, which we never have observed before, it is absolutely impossible for us, not to think of the analogous cases which we may have seen; since they are suggested by a principle of association, which is as truly a part of our constitution, as the senses with which we perceived the phenomenon itself; and, if any of these analogies strike us as remarkably coincident, it is equally impossible for us not to imagine, that the cause, which we knew in that former instance, may also be present in this analogous instance, and that they may, therefore, both be reduced to the same class. To stop here, and, from this mere analogy, to infer positive identity of the causes, and to follow out the possible consequences, in innumerable applications, would be to do, as many great artists in systematizing have done. What a philosopher, of sounder views, how-

ever, would do, in such a case, is very different. He would assume, indeed, as possible, or perhaps as probable, the existence of the supposed cause. But he would assume it, only to direct his examination of its reality, by investigating, as far as he was able, from past experience, what the circumstances would have been, in every respect, if the cause supposed had been actually present; and, even if these were all found to be exactly coincident, though he would think the presence of the cause more probable, he would be very far from considering it as certain, and would still endeavour to lessen the chances of fallacy, by watching the circumstances, should they again recur, and varying them, by experiment, in every possible way.

This patience and caution, however, essential as they are to just philosophizing, require, it must be confessed, no slight efforts of self-denial, but of a self-denial which is as necessary to intellectual excellence, as the various moral species of self-denial are to excellence of virtue.

"Mr Locke, I think," says Dr Reid, "mentions an eminent musician, who believed that God created the world in six days, and rested the seventh, because there are but seven notes in music. I myself," he continues, "knew one of that profession, who thought that there could be only three parts in harmony, to wit, bass, tenor, and treble; because there are but three persons in the Trinity."*

The minds that could be satisfied with analogies so very slight, must, indeed, have been little acquainted with the principles of philosophic inquiry; and yet how many systems have been advanced in different ages, admired by multitudes, who knew them only by name, and still more revered by the philosophers, who gloried in adopting them, that have been founded on analogies almost as slight.

"The philosophers who form hypothetical systems of the universe, and of all its most secret laws," says Voltaire, in one of his lively similes, "are like our travellers that go to Constantinople; and think that they must tell us a great deal about the seraglio. They pretend to know every thing which passes within it; the whole secret history of the Sultan and his favourites, and they have seen nothing but its outside walls."

In one respect, however, philosophers, in their hypothetical systems, far outdo the travellers to Constantinople. They not merely tell us secrets of nature, which they have no opportunity of learning, but they believe the very tales of their own fancy. To see any unusual phenomenon, is indeed, to wonder at it, at first; but to explain it, is almost the very next step, reason serving rather to defend the explanation, when it is made, than to assist greatly in making it; and in many cases, each philosopher has his separate explanation, on which he is disposed to put as much reliance, as on the certainty of the fact itself, not abandoning the hypothesis, even though the fact should prove to have been different, but making it bend, with a happy pliability, to all the diversities discovered, so as at last, perhaps, to account for circumstances the very reverse of those which it was originally invented to explain. "I have heard," says Condillac, "of a philosopher who had the happiness of thinking that he had discovered a principle, which was to explain all the wonderful phenomena of chymistry; and who, in the ardour of his self-congratulation, hastened to communicate his discovery to a skilful chymist. The chymist had the kindness to listen to him, and then calmly told him, that there was but one unfortunate circumstance for his discovery, which was, that the chymical facts were exactly the reverse of what he had supposed. Well, then, said the philosopher, have the goodness to tell me what they are, that I may explain them by my system." † To those who know that fondness for conjecture, which may almost be said to be a sort of intellectual appetite, there is nothing in all the wonders which Swift tells us of his fabled Houynhnhms, that marks them more strongly as a different race from mankind, than the total absence of hypothesis from their systems of knowledge.

"I remember," says Gulliver, "it was with extreme difficulty that I could bring my master to understand the meaning of the word *opinion*, or how a point could be *disputable*; because reason taught us to affirm or deny *only when we are certain*; and beyond our knowledge we cannot do either. So that controversies, wranglings, disputes, and positiveness, in false or dubious propositions, are evils unknown among the Houynhnhms. In the like manner, when I used to explain to him our several systems of natural philosophy, he would laugh, that a creature, pretending to reason, should value itself upon the knowledge of other people's conjectures, and in things, where that knowledge, if it were certain, could be of no use. Wherein he agreed entirely with the sentiments of Socrates, as Plato delivers them, which I mention as the highest honour I can do to that prince of philosophers. I have often since reflected what destruction such a doctrine would make in the libraries of Europe, and how many paths to fame would then be shut up in the learned world."‡

While I wish to caution you against a fond-

* On the Powers of the Human Mind, Essay vi. Chap. viii. Vol. II. p. 334. 8vo edit.

* Traité des Systèmes, chap. xii. Vol. II. p. 372.

† Travels, Part iv. chap. 8. Swift's Works, edit. Nichols, Vol. ix. p. 300.

ness for hypotheses, by showing you, not merely that they are liable to error,—for inquiry, of every kind, must be so in some degree,—but that, in truth, they leave the real difficulty of the succession of the observed consequent to the observed antecedent as great as before, and only add, to the supposed difficulty of explaining one sequence, the necessity of explaining a sequence additional,—I must remark, at the same time, that what is commonly termed theory, in opposition to hypothesis, is far from being so different from it as is commonly represented, at least in the very wide application which is usually made of it. We are told, by those who lay down rules of philosophizing, that the object of philosophy is, to observe particulars, and, from these, to frame general laws, which may again be applied to the explanation of particulars; and the view which is thus given of the real province of philosophy is undoubtedly a just one; but there is an ambiguity in the language which may deceive you, and with respect to which, therefore, it is necessary for you to be on your guard. If, by the term general law, be meant the agreement in some common circumstances of a number of events observed, there can be no question that we proceed safely in framing it, and that what we have already found in a number of events, must be applicable to that number of events; in the same manner, as, after combining in the term *animal* the circumstances in which a dog, a horse, a sheep, agree, we cannot err in applying the term animal to a dog, a horse, a sheep. But the only particulars to which, in this case, we can, with perfect confidence, apply a general law, are the very particulars that have been before observed by us. If it be understood as more general than the circumstances observed, and, therefore, capable of being applied with perfect certainty to the explanation of new phenomena, we evidently, to the extent in which the general law is applied beyond the circumstances observed, proceed on mere supposition, as truly as in any hypothesis which we could have framed; and though the supposition may be more and more certain, in proportion to the number of cases thus generalized, and the absence of any circumstance which can be supposed, in the new case, to be inconsistent with it, it never can amount to actual certainty. Let us take, for example, one of the most striking cases of this sort. That bodies tend to each other, in all circumstances, with a force increasing directly as their quantities, and inversely as the squares of their distances, may seem in the highest degree probable indeed, from the innumerable facts observed on our own globe, and in the magnificent extent of the planetary movements; but it cannot be said to be certain at all distances, in which we have never had an opportunity of making observation, as it seems to be verified in the heights of our atmosphere, and in the distances of the planets, in their orbits, from the sun, and from each other. It is not necessary, however, to refer, for possible exceptions, to spaces that are beyond our observation; since, on the surface of our own earth, there is abundant evidence that the law does not hold universally. Every quiescent mass that is capable of greater compression, and of which the particles, therefore, before that compression, are not in absolute contact, shows sufficiently, that the principle of attraction, which, of itself, would have brought them into actual contact, must have ceased to operate, while there was still a space between the particles that would have allowed its free operation; and, in the phenomena of elasticity, and impulse in general, it has not merely ceased, but is actually reversed; the bodies which, at all visible distances, exhibited a reciprocal attraction, now exhibiting a reciprocal repulsion, in consequence of which they mutually fly off, as readily as they before approached; that is to say, the tendency of bodies to each other being converted into a tendency from each other, by a mere change of distance, so slight as to be almost inappreciable. When a ball rebounds from the earth toward which it moved rapidly before, and the gravitating tendency is thus evidently reversed, without the intervention of any foreign force, what eye, though it be aided by all the nicest apparatus of optical art, can discover the lines which separate those infinitesimal differences of proximity, at which the particles of the ball still continue to gravitate toward the earth, and are afterwards driven from it in an opposite direction; yet the phenomenon itself is a sufficient proof, that in these spaces, which seem, to our organs of sense, so completely the same, that it is absolutely impossible for us to distinguish them, the reciprocal tendencies of the particles of the ball and of the earth are as truly opposite, as if the laws of gravitation had, at the moment at which the rebound begins, been reversed through the whole system of the universe.

It is, indeed, scarcely possible to imagine a more striking proof of the danger of extending, with too great certainty, a general law, than this instant conversion of attraction into repulsion, without the addition of any new bodies, without any change in the nature of the bodies themselves, and with a change of their circumstances so very slight, as to be absolutely indistinguishable, but for the opposite motions that result from it. After observing the gravity of bodies, at all heights of our atmosphere, and extending our survey through the wide spaces of our solar system,—computing the tendency of the planets to the sun, and their disturbing forces, as they operate on each other,—and finding the resulting motions exactly to correspond with those which we had predicted by theory;—in these circum-

stances, after an examination so extensive, if we had affirmed, as a universal law of matter, that, at all distances, bodies tend toward each other, we should have considered the wideness of the induction as justifying the affirmation; and yet, even in this case, we find, on the surface of our earth, in the mutual shocks of bodies, and in their very rest, sufficient evidence, that, in making the universal affirmation, we should have reasoned falsely. There is no theory, then, which, if applied to the explanation of new phenomena, is not, to a certain degree, conjectural; because it must proceed on the supposition, that what was true in certain circumstances, is true also in circumstances that have not been observed. It admits of certainty, only when it is applied to the very substances observed—in the very circumstances observed; in which case, it may be strictly said to be nothing more than the application of a general term to the particulars, which we have before agreed to comprehend in it. Whatever is more than this is truly hypothetical; the difference being, that we commonly give the name of hypothesis to cases, in which we suppose the intervention of some substance, of the existence of which, as present in the phenomenon, we have no direct proof, or of some additional quality of a substance before unobserved; and the name of theory to cases, which do not suppose the existence of any substance that is not actually observed, or of any quality that has not been actually observed, but merely the continuance, in certain new circumstances, of tendencies observed in other circumstances. Thus, if a planet were discovered revolving in the space which separates the orbits of any two planets at present known, were we to suppose of matter, in this new situation, that it would be subject to the same exact law of gravitation, to which the other planets were known to be subject, and to predict its place in the heavens, at any time, according to this law, we should be said to form a theory of its motions; as we should not take for granted, any new quality of a substance, or the existence of any substance, which was not evidently present, but only of tendencies observed before in other circumstances; analogous indeed, but not absolutely the same. We should be said to form an hypothesis on the subject, if, making the same prediction, as to its motions, and place in the heavens, at any given time, we were to ascribe the centripetal tendency, which confines it within its orbit, to the impulse of ether, or to any other mechanical cause. The terms, however, I must confess, though the distinction which I have now stated would be, in all cases, a very convenient one, are used very loosely, not in conversation merely, but in the writings of philosophers; an hypothesis often meaning nothing more than a theory, to which we have not given our assent,—and a theory, an hypothesis which we have adopted, or still more, one which we have formed ourselves.

A theory, then, even in that best sense, to which I wish it accurately confined, as often as it ventures a single hair-breadth beyond the line of former observation, may be wrong, as an hypothesis may be wrong. But, in a theory, in this sense of it, there are both less risk of error, and less extensive evil from error, than in an hypothesis. There is less risk of error, because we speak only of the properties of bodies, that must be allowed actually to exist; and the evil of error is, for the same reason, less extensive, since it must be confined to this single point; whereas, if we were to imagine falsely the presence of some third substance, our supposition might involve as many errors, as that substance has qualities; since we should be led to suppose, and expect, some or all of the other consequences, which usually attend it when really present.

The practical conclusion to be drawn from all this very long discussion, is, that we should use hypotheses to suggest and direct inquiry, not to terminate or supersede it; and that, in theorizing,—as the chance of error, in the application of a general law, diminishes, in proportion to the number of analogous cases, in which it is observed to hold,—we should not form any general proposition, till after as wide an induction as it is possible for us to make; and, in the subsequent application of it to particulars, should never content ourselves, in any new circumstances, with the mere probability, however high, which this application of it affords; while it is possible for us to verify, or disprove it, by actual experiment.

LECTURE IX.

RECAPITULATION OF THE FOUR PRECEDING LECTURES; AND APPLICATION OF THE LAWS OF PHYSICAL INQUIRY TO THE STUDY OF MIND, COMMENCED.

For several Lectures, Gentlemen, we have been employed in considering the objects that are to be had in view, in Physical Inquiry in general, a clear conception of which seems to me as essential to the Philosophy of Mind, as to the Philosophy of Matter. I should now proceed to apply these general remarks more particularly to our own science; but, before doing this, it may be of advantage to retrace slightly our steps in the progress already made.

All inquiry, with respect to the various substances in nature, we have seen, must regard

them as they exist in space, or as they exist in time; the inquiry, in the one case, being into their composition,—the inquiry, in the other case, into the changes which they exhibit. The first of these views we found to be very simple, having, for its object, only the discovery of what is actually before us at the moment,—which, therefore, if we had been endowed with senses of greater delicacy and acuteness, we might have known, without any inquiry whatever. It is the investigation of the elements, or separate bodies, that exist together, in the substances which we considered, or rather that constitute the substances which we considered, by occupying the space which we assign to the one imaginary aggregate, and are regarded by us as one substance, —not from any absolute unity which they have in nature, since the elementary atoms, however continuous or near, have an existence as truly separate and independent as if they had been created at the distance of worlds; but from a unity, that is relative only to our incapacity of distinguishing them as separate. It is to the imperfection of our senses, then, that this first division of Physical Inquiry owes its origin; and its most complete results could enable us to discover only, what has been before our eyes from the moment of our birth.

The second division of inquiry,—that which relates to the successions of phenomena in time,—we found, however, to have a different origin; since the utmost perfection of our mere senses could show us only what is, at the moment of perception, not what has been, nor what will be; and there is nothing, in any qualities of bodies perceived by us, which, without experience, could enable us to predict the changes that are to occur in them. The foundation of all inquiry, with respect to phenomena as successive, we found to be that most important law, or original tendency, of our nature, in consequence of which, we not merely perceive the changes exhibited to us at one particular moment, but, from this perception, are led irresistibly to believe, that similar changes have constantly taken place, in all similar circumstances, and will constantly take place, as often as the future circumstances shall be exactly similar to the present. We hence consider events, not as casually antecedent and consequent, but as invariably antecedent and consequent,—or, in other words, as causes and effects; and we give the name of power to this permanent relation of the invariable antecedent to its invariable consequent. The powers of substances, then, concerning which so many vague, and confused, and mysterious notions prevail, are only another name for the substances themselves in their relation to other substances,—not any thing separate from them and intermediate,—as the form of a body, concerning which too, for many ages, notions as vague and mysterious prevailed, is not any thing different from the body, but is only the body itself, considered according to the relative position of its elements. Form is the relation of immediate proximity, which bodies bear to each other in space; power is the relation of immediate and uniform proximity, which events bear to each other in time; and the relation, far from being different, as is commonly supposed, when applied to matter and to spirit, is precisely the same in kind whether the events, of which we think, be material or mental. It is of invariable antecedence that we speak alike in both cases, and of invariable antecedence only. When we say that a magnet has the power of attracting iron, we mean only, that a magnet cannot be brought near iron, without the instant motion of the iron towards it. When we say, in treating of mental influence, that man in the ordinary circumstances of health, and when free from any foreign restraint, has the power of moving his hand, we mean only, that, in these circumstances, he cannot will to move his hand, without its consequent motion. When we speak of the omnipotence of the Supreme of Beings,—who is the fountain of all power, as he is the fountain of all existence,—we mean only, that the universe arose at his command, as its instant consequence, and that whatever he wills to exist or perish, exists, or is no more.

This simple view of power, as the mere antecedent substance itself, in its relation to its immediate and invariable consequent, without the intervention of any mysterious tie,—since there surely can be nothing in nature, but all the substances which exist in nature, —it was necessary to illustrate, at great length, in consequence of the very false notions that are generally, or, I may say, universally prevalent on the subject. The illustration, I am aware, must, to many of you, have appeared very tedious, and a sufficient exemplification of that license of exhausting occasionally your attention, and, perhaps, too, your patience, of which I claimed the right of exercise, whenever it should appear to me necessary, to make any important, but abstract, truth familiar to your mind. I shall not regret, however, any temporary feeling of weariness which I may have occasioned, by dwelling on this great fundamental subject, if I have succeeded in making familiar to your minds, the truths which I wished to impress on them, and have freed you from those false notions of occult and unintelligible agency in causes, as something different from the mere causes or antecedents themselves, which appear to me to have retarded, in a very singular degree, the progress of philosophy,—not merely, by habituating the mind to acquiesce in the use of language, to which it truly affixes no meaning, though even this evil is one of very serious injury in its general effects,—but by misdirecting its inquiries, and leading it, from the simplicity of nature, in which every glance is truth.

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and every step is progress, to bewilder itself, with the verbal mysteries of the schools, where there is no refreshment of truth to the eye, that is wearied with wandering only from shadow to shadow, and where there is all the fatigue of continual progress, without the advance of a single step.

Even those philosophers, who have had the wisdom to perceive, that man can never discover any thing in the phenomena of nature, but a succession of events, that follow each other in regular series, and who, accordingly, recommend the observation and arrangement of these regular antecedents and consequents as the only attainable objects of philosophy, yet found this very advice, on the distinction of what they have termed efficient causes, as different from the physical causes, or simple antecedents, to which they advise us to devote our whole attention. There are certain secret causes, they say, continually operating in the production of every change which we observe, and causes which alone deserve the name of efficient; but they are, at the same time, careful to tell us, that, although these causes are constantly operating before us, and are all which are truly acting before us, we must not hope that we shall ever be able to detect one of them; and, indeed, the prohibition of every attempt to discover the efficient causes of phenomena,—repeated in endless varieties of precept or reproof,—is the foundation of all their rules of philosophizing; as if the very information,—that what we are to consider exclusively, in the phenomena of nature, is far less important, than what we are studiously to omit,—were not, of itself, more powerful, in stimulating our curiosity to attempt the forbidden search, than any prohibition could be in repressing it. "Felix qui potuit rerum cognoscere causas." This will for ever be the feeling of the inquirer, while he thinks that there are any causes, more than those, which he has already investigated. Even Newton himself, that sagest of observers and reasoners, who could say, with the simplicity of pure philosophy, "*Hypotheses non fingo*," yet showed, as we have seen, by one of the most hypothetical of his Queries, that he was not exempt from the error which he wished to discourage—that inordinate love of the unknown, which must always lead those, who believe that there is something intermediate and undiscovered truly existing between events, to feel the anxious dissatisfaction of incomplete inquiry, in considering the mere antecedents and consequents which nature exhibits, and to turn, therefore, as if for comfort, to any third circumstance, which can be introduced, without obvious absurdity, as a sort of connecting link, between the pairs of events. To suppose, that the mind should not have this disposition, would, indeed, be to suppose it void of that principle of curiosity, without which there can be no inquiry of any kind. He who could believe, that, between all the visible phenomena, there are certain invisible agencies continually operating, which have as real an existence as all that he perceives, and could yet content himself with numbering the visible phenomena, and giving them names, without any endeavour to discover the intervening powers, by which he is constantly surrounded, or at least to form some slight guess, as to that universal machinery, by which he conceived all the wonders of nature to be wrought, must be a being as different from the common intellectual beings of this earth, as the perfect sage of the Stoics from the frail creatures, of mingled vice and virtue, that live and err around us. That, in considering the phenomena of nature, we should confine our attention to the mere antecedents and consequents, which succeed each other in regular series, is unquestionably the soundest advice that can be given. But it is sound advice, for this reason more than any other, that the regular series is, in truth, all that constitutes the phenomena, and that to search for any thing more, is not to have an unattainable object in view, but to have no conceivable object whatever. Then only can the inquirer be expected to content himself with observing and classing the sequences, which nature presents to us spontaneously, or in obedience to our art, when he is convinced, that all the substances which exist in the universe—God and the things which he has created—are every thing which truly exists in the universe, to which nothing can be added, which is not itself a new substance; that there can be nothing in the events of nature, therefore, but the antecedents and consequents which are present in them; and that these, accordingly, or nothing, are the very causes and effects which he is desirous of investigating.

After this examination of the notions connected with the uniform successions of events, our attention was next turned to the nature and origin of hypothetical inquiry, which we found reason to ascribe to the imperfection of our senses, that renders it impossible for us to know whether we have observed the whole train of sequences in any phenomenon, from our inability to distinguish the various elements that may be the subjects of minute changes unobserved.

We are hence eager to supply, by a little guess-work of fancy, the parts unobserved, and suppose deficiencies in our observation where there may truly have been none; till at length, by this habitual process, every phenomenon becomes, to our imagination, the sign of something intermediate as its cause, the discovery of which is to be an explanation of the phenomenon. The mere succession of one event to another appears, to us, very difficult to be conceived, because it wants that intervening something, which we have learned

to consider as a cause: but there seems to be no longer any mystery, if we can only suppose something intervening between them, and can thus succeed in doubling the difficulty, which we flatter ourselves with having removed; since, by the insertion of another link, we must now have two sequences of events instead of one simple sequence. This tendency of the imagination to form and rest in hypotheses,—or, in other words, to suppose substances present and operating, of the existence of which we have no direct proof,—we found to be one great source of error in our practice of philosophizing.

Another source of error we found to be the too great extension of what are termed general laws; which, though a less error in itself, is yet, in one respect, more dangerous than the former; because it is the error of better understandings,—of understandings that would not readily fall into the extravagant follies of hypotheses, but acknowledge the essential importance of induction, and think they are proceeding on it without the slightest deviation, almost at the very moment when they are abandoning it for conjecture. To observe the regular series of antecedents and consequents, and to class these as similar or dissimilar, are all which philosophers can do with complete certainty. But there is a constant tendency in the mind, to convert a general law into a universal law; to suppose, after a wide induction, that what is true of many substances that have a very striking analogy, is as certainly true of all that have this striking analogy; and that what is true of them in certain circumstances, is true of them in all circumstances; or, at least, in all circumstances which are not remarkably different. The widest induction which we can make, however, is still limited in its nature; and, though we may have observed substances in many situations, there may be some new situations, in which the event may be different, or even, perhaps, the very reverse of that which we should have predicted, by reasoning from the mere analogy of other circumstances. It appeared to me necessary, therefore, in consequence of the very ambiguous manner in which writers on this higher branch of logic speak of reasoning from general laws to particulars, to warn you, that the application to particulars can be made with certainty only to the very particulars before observed and generalized; and that, however analogous other particulars may seem, the application of the general law to them admits only of probability, which may, indeed, as the induction has been wider, and the circumstances of observed analogy more numerous, approach more or less to certainty, but must always be short of it, even in its nearest approximation.

Such, then, is physical inquiry, both as to its objects, and its mode of procedure, particularly as it regards the universe without; and the laws which regulate our inquiry in the internal world of thought are, in every respect, similar. The same great objects are to be had in view, and no other,—the analysis of what is complex, and the observation and arrangement of the sequences of phenomena, as respectively antecedent and consequent.

In this respect, also, I may remark, the philosophy of matter and the philosophy of mind completely agree; that, in both equally, our knowledge is confined to the phenomena which they exhibit. We give the name of matter to the unknown cause of various feelings which, by the constitution of our nature, it is impossible for us not to refer to something external as their cause. What it is, independent of our perception, we know not; but, as the subject of our perception, we regard it as that which is extended, and consequently divisible, impenetrable, mobile; and these qualities, or whatever other qualities we may think necessary to include for expressing the particular substances that affect our senses variously, constitute our whole definition of matter, because, in truth, they constitute our whole knowledge of it. To suppose us to know what it is in itself, in absolute independence of our perception, would be manifestly absurd; since it is only by our perception,—that is to say, by the feelings of our mind,—that it can be known to us at all; and these mere feelings of the mind must depend, at least, as much on the laws of the mind affected, as on the laws of the substance that affects it. Whatever knowledge we may acquire of it, therefore, is relative only, and must be relative, in all circumstances; though, instead of the few senses which connect us with it at present, we were endowed with as many senses as there are, perhaps, qualities of matter, the nature of which we are at present incapable of distinguishing; the only effect of such increased number of senses being, to render more qualities of matter known to us, not to make matter known to us in its very essence, as it exists without relation to mind.

"Tell me," says Micromegas, an inhabitant of one of the planets of the Dog Star, to the secretary of the Academy of Sciences in the planet Saturn, at which he had recently arrived in a journey through the heavens,—"Tell me, how many senses have the men on your globe?"—I quote, as perhaps the name has already informed you, from an ingenious philosophic romance of Voltaire, who, from various allusions in the work, has evidently had Fontenelle, the illustrious secretary of the French Academy of Sciences, in view, in the picture which he gives of the Saturnian secretary.—"We have seventy-two senses," answered the academician, "and we are, every day, complaining of the smallness of the number. Our imagination goes far beyond our wants. What are seventy-two senses! and

how pitiful a boundary, even for beings with such limited perceptions, to be cooped up within our ring and our five moons! In spite of our curiosity, and in spite of as many passions as can result from six dozen of senses, we find our hours hang very heavily on our hands, and can always find time enough for yawning."—"I can very well believe it," says Micromegas, "for, in our globe, we have very near one thousand senses; and yet, with all these, we feel continually a sort of listless inquietude and vague desire, which are for ever telling us that we are nothing, and that there are beings infinitely nearer perfection. I have travelled a good deal in the universe. I have seen many classes of mortals far beneath us, and many as much superior; but I have never had the good fortune to find any, who had not always more desires than real necessities to occupy their life. And, pray, how long may you Saturnians live, with your few senses?" continued the Sirian. "Ah! but a very short time, indeed!" said the little man of Saturn, with a sigh. "It is the same with us," said the traveller; "we are for ever complaining of the shortness of life. It must be an universal law of nature." Alas!" said the Saturnian, "we live only five hundred great revolutions of the sun, (which is pretty much about fifteen thousand years of our counting.) You see well, that this is to die almost the moment one is born. Our existence is a point—our duration an instant—our globe an atom. Scarcely have we begun to pick up a little knowledge, when death rushes in upon us, before we can have acquired any thing like experience. As for me, I cannot venture even to think of any project. I feel myself but like a drop of water in the ocean; and, especially now, when I look to you and to myself, I really feel quite ashamed of the ridiculous appearance which I make in the universe."

"If I did not know that you were a philosopher," replied Micromegas, "I should be afraid of distressing you, when I tell you, that our life is seven hundred times longer than yours. But what is even that? and, when we come to the last moment, to have lived a single day, and to have lived a whole eternity, amount to the very same thing. I have been in countries where they live a thousand times longer than with us; and I have always found them murmuring, just as we do ourselves. But you have seventy-two senses, and they must have told you something about your globe. How many properties has matter with you?" "If you mean essential properties," said the Saturnian, "without which our globe could not subsist, we count three hundred, extension, impenetrability, mobility, gravity, divisibility, and so forth." "That small number," replied the gigantic traveller, "may be sufficient for the views which the Creator must have had with respect to your narrow habitation. Your globe is little; its inhabitants are so too. You have few senses; your matter has few qualities. In all this, Providence has suited you most happily to each other."

"The academician was more and more astonished with every thing which the traveller told him. At length, after communicating to each other a little of what they knew, and a great deal of what they knew not, and reasoning, as well and as ill, as philosophers usually do, they resolved to set out together, on a little tour of the universe."*

That, with the one thousand senses of the Sirian, or even the seventy-two senses of the inhabitant of Saturn, our notions of matter would be very different from what they are at present, cannot be doubted; since we should assign to it qualities, corresponding with all the varieties of our six dozen or one thousand classes of sensations. But, even with all these sensations, it is evident, that we should still know as little of matter, independent of the phenomena which it exhibits in relation to us, as we know at this moment. Our definition of it would comprehend more phenomena; but it would still be a definition of its phenomena only. We might perhaps be able to fill up the Saturnian catalogue of three hundred essential properties, but these would be still only the relations of matter to our own perception. A change in the mere susceptibility of our organs of sense, or of our sentient mind, would be, relatively to us, like a change in the whole system of things, communicating, as it were, new properties to every object around us. A single sense additional, in man, might thus be to external nature, like the creation of the sun, when he first burst upon it in splendour, "like the god of the new world," and pouring everywhere his own effulgence, seemed to shed on it the very beauties which he only revealed.

If our knowledge of matter be relative only, our knowledge of mind is equally so. We know it only as susceptible of feelings that have already existed; and its susceptibilities of feelings which have not arisen, but which may, in other circumstances, arise, we know as little, as the blind can be supposed to know of colours, or as we, with all our senses, know of the qualities which matter might exhibit to us, if our own organization were different. Of the essence of mind, then, we know nothing, but in relation to the states or feelings that form, or have formed, our momentary consciousness. Our knowledge is not absolute but relative; though, I must confess, that the term relative is applied, in an unusual manner, when, as in the present instance, the relative and correlative are the same. It is

* Voltaire Œuvres, tom. xiv. p. 99—101. 4to edit. of 1771.

unquestionably the same individual mind, which, in intellectual investigation, is at once the object and the observer. But the noble endowment of memory, with which our Creator has blessed us, solves all the mystery of this singular paradox. In consequence of this one faculty, our mind, simple and indivisible as it truly is, is, as it were, multiplied and extended, expanding itself over that long series of sensations and emotions, in which it seems to live again, and to live with many lives. But for memory, there can be no question that the relation of thought to thought could not have been perceived; and that hence there could have been no philosophy whatever, intellectual or moral, physical or metaphysical. To this wonderful endowment, then, which gives us the past to compare with the present, we owe that most wonderful of relations, of which the same being is at once the object and the subject, contemplating itself, in the same manner, as it casts its view on objects that are distant from it, comparing thought with thought, emotion with emotion, approving its own moral actions, with the complacency with which it looks on the virtues of those whom it admires and loves, in the most remote nation or age, or passing sentence on itself, as if on a wretch whom it loathed, that was trembling with conscious delinquency, under the inquisition of a severe and all-knowing judge.

The past feelings of the mind, then, are, as it were, objects present to the mind itself, and acquire, thus truly, a sort of relative existence, which enables us to class the phenomena of our own spiritual being as we class the phenomena of the world without. The mind is that which we know to have been susceptible of all the variety of feelings which we remember; and it is only as it is susceptible of all these varieties of feeling, that we can have any knowledge of it. We define it, therefore, by stating its various susceptibilities, including more or fewer of these, in our definition, as we may either have observed or remembered more or less, or generalized more or less what we have observed and remembered; precisely as, in our definition of matter, we include more or fewer qualities, according to the extent of our previous observation and arrangement.

That we know matter, only as relative to our own susceptibility of being affected by it, does not lessen the value of the knowledge of it which we are able to acquire; and, indeed, it is only as it is capable of affecting us, that the knowledge of it can be of any direct and immediate utility. It would, indeed, be the very absurdity of contradiction, to suppose ourselves acquainted with qualities which cannot affect us. But, even though this were possible, how profitless would the knowledge be, compared with the knowledge of the qualities which are capable of affecting us; like the knowledge of the seasons of the planet Saturn, or of the planets that have the Dog Star for their sun, compared with the more important knowledge of the seasons of our own globe, by which we have the comfort of anticipating, in the labours of spring, the abundance of autumn, and gather in autumn the fruits, which, as products of vernal labour, are truly fruits of the spring.

To know matter, even relatively, as our limited senses allow us to know it, is to have knowledge which can scarcely be called limited. Nothing indeed can seem more narrow in extent, if we think only of the small number of our senses, by which alone the communication can be carried on. But what infinity of objects has nature presented to each! In the mere forms and colours that strike our eyes, what splendid variety! the profusion of all things, that bloom or live, the earth, the ocean, the universe, and almost God himself appearing to our very senses, in the excellence and beauty of the works which He has made!

It is the same, with respect to the mind, though we know it only by its susceptibilities of affection, in the various feelings of our momentary consciousness; and cannot hope to know it but as the permanent subject of all these separate consciousnesses; to know thus relatively only, the affections even of one single substance, is to have a field of the most boundless and inexhaustible wonders ever present and open to our inquiry! It may be said to comprehend every thing which we perceive, and remember, and imagine, and compare, and admire; all those mysterious processes of thought which, in the happy efforts of the philosopher and the poet, are concerned in the production of their noblest results, and which are not less deserving of our regard, as they are every moment exercised by all, in the humble intellectual functions of common life. In analysing and arranging the mental phenomena, then, we consider phenomena, that are diversified, indeed, in individuals, but, as species, are still common to all; for there is no power possessed by the most comprehensive intellect, which it does not share, in some proportion, with the dullest and rudest of mankind. All men perceive, remember, reason,—all, to a certain degree at least, form their little theories both physical and metaphysical, of the conduct of their fellow-men, and of the passing events of nature; and all, occasionally, enliven their social intercourse or their solitary hours, with inventions of fancy, that last but for a moment indeed, and are not worthy of lasting longer, but which are products of the same species of intellectual energy, that gave existence to those glorious works, to which ages have listened with increasing reverence, and which, immortal as the spirits that produced them, are yet to command the veneration of every future age. When we see before us, in its finished magnificence, a temple appropriated to the worship of the Su-

preme Being, and almost worthy of being filled with his presence, we scarcely think, that it is erected according to the same simple principles, and formed of the same stone and mortar, as the plain dwellings around us, adapted to the hourly and humble uses of domestic life; and by a similar illusion, when we consider the splendid works of intellectual art, we can scarcely bring ourselves to think, that genius is but a form of general tendencies of association, of which all partake; and that its magnificent conceptions, therefore, rise, according to the same simple laws which regulate the course of thought of the vulgar. In this universality of diffusion as general tendencies, that may be variously excited by varying circumstances, our intellectual powers are similar to those other principles of our nature,—our emotions, and whatever feelings more immediately connected with moral action have been usually distinguished by the name of our active powers. In the philosophy of both, we consider, not a few distinguished individuals, as if possessed of principles essentially distinct in kind, but the species, man. They are to be found wherever there is a human being; and we do not infer with more certainty, when we perceive the impression of a foot upon the sand, that man has been there, than we expect to find in him, whatever may be his state of barbarism or civilization, some form of the common powers, and passions, which, though directed perhaps to different objects, we have felt and witnessed in the society around us.

"The two-legged animal," says Dr Reid, "that eats of nature's dainties what his taste or appetite craves, and satisfies his thirst at the crystal fountain; who propagates his kind as occasion and lust prompt; repels injuries, and takes alternate labour and repose; is like a tree in the forest, purely of nature's growth.

"But this same savage has within him the seeds of the logician, the man of taste and breeding, the orator, the statesman, the man of virtue, and the saint; which seeds, though planted in his mind by nature, yet, through want of culture and exercise, must lie for ever buried, and be hardly perceivable, by himself, or by others."* Even of those passions of a prouder kind, which attract our attention only when they are on a theatre that allows their full display, some vestiges are to be traced universally; though, in different individuals, they may exist with very different degrees of influence, and though their influence, according to the degree of power possessed by the individual, may be attended with very different consequences, to the few, or the many comprehended within the wide or narrow circle, to which his power extends.

——"Not kings alone,
Each villager has his ambition too;
No sultan prouder than his fetter'd slave.
Slaves build their little Babylons of straw,
Echo the proud Assyrian in their hearts,
And cry, Behold the wonders of my might."*

It is this universal diffusion of sympathies and emotions, indeed, which gives its whole force to morality, as a universal obligation; and renders ethics truly a science.

Nature, in requiring the fruits of virtue from all, has not fixed the seeds of it only in a few breasts. "Nulli præclusa virtus est; omnibus patet, omnes admittit, omnes invitat, ingenuos, libertinos, servos, reges et exsules; non eligit domum, nec censum; nudo homine contenta est."† Virtue has no partial favours or exclusions. She is open to all, she admits all, she invites all. She asks no wealth nor ancestry; but she asks the man,—the master or the slave, the cottager and his lord, the sovereign and the exile.

Though we know mind, then, only relatively, in the series of feelings, of which we are conscious, as we know matter relatively in the series of phenomena which it exhibits to our observation, we have, in this relative knowledge, subjects worthy of the contemplation of beings permitted, in these shadowings of a higher power, to trace some faint image of the very majesty which formed them. Even of the humblest mind, as we have seen, the various affections, sensitive, intellectual, and moral, that arise in it as affections of our common nature, are truly admirable; and what an increase of sublimity do they acquire, in minds of higher powers! But still, it must be remembered, that even in minds the most sublime, as much as in the most humble, all which can be truly known is the successive phenomena which they exhibit, not the essence of the spiritual substance itself; and that, even of these successive phenomena, though we become gradually acquainted with more and more, we probably never can arrive at any bound which is to limit their number. The susceptibilities of the mind, by which, in different circumstances, it may exist in different states, are certainly as truly infinite as the space which surrounds us, or as that eternity which, in its progress, measures the successions of our feelings, and all the other changes in the universe. Every new thought, or combination of thoughts, is in truth a new state or affection, or phenomenon of the mind, and, therefore, a proof of the susceptibility of that new affection, as an original quality of the mind; and every rise in knowledge, from age to age, and from inquirer to inquirer, is thus only the developement of susceptibilities which the mind possessed before, though the circum-

* Inquiry into the Human Mind, Introd. p. 7. 8vo edit.

* Young's Night Thoughts, vii. v. 392—397.
† Seneca de Beneficiis, lib. iii c. 18.

stances which at last called them forth, never existed till the moment of the developement. What should we think of the half-naked savage of some barbarous island, if, in the pride of his ignorance, he were to conceive his own thoughts and feelings to be the noblest of which the human intellect is capable? and, perhaps, even the mind of a Newton is but the mind of such a savage, compared with what man is hereafter to become.

LECTURE X.

THE SAME SUBJECT CONTINUED.

GENTLEMEN, after laying down the general laws of physical inquiry, I had begun, in the conclusion of my last Lecture, to consider them, more particularly in their relation to the study of mind.

One very important circumstance of agreement, in the physical investigations of mind and matter, we found to be, that, of both matter and mind, the successive phenomena are all which we truly know, though, by the very constitution of our nature, it is impossible for us not to ascribe these to some permanent subject. Matter is the permanent subject of certain qualities,—extension, and its consequent divisibility, attraction, repulsion; that is to say, it is the permanent exhibiter to us of certain varying phenomena which we observe. Mind is the permanent subject of certain qualities or states or affections of a different class,—perception, memory, reason, joy, grief, love, hate; that is to say, of certain varying phenomena of which we are conscious. What matter is, independent of our perception; what mind is, independent of its temporary varieties of feeling, it is impossible for us to discover; since whatever new knowledge of matter we can suppose ourselves to acquire, must be acquired by our preception, and must, therefore, be relative to it; and whatever new knowledge we can suppose ourselves to acquire of mind, must be itself a state or affection of the mind, and, therefore, only a new mental phenomenon to be added to those with which we were before acquainted, as one of the many states in which the permanent substance mind is capable of existing.

Since it is only by their relation to our own feelings, then, that substances can be known to us, beyond these relations it would be vain for us to think of penetrating; as vain at least, as would be the attempts of the deaf to discover, by a process of reasoning, the nature of the sensations of sound, or of the blind to determine, not the lines of direction merely, in which the various coloured rays of light pass after refraction, for these they may optically determine, but the various sensations, corresponding with all the varieties of tint into which the sunbeams are broken by the drops of a falling shower. The substance matter, the substance mind, are, in this respect, to the whole race of metaphysical inquirers, what the rainbow, as a series of colours, is to opticians, who have never seen.

The absurdity of such inquiries, into anything more than the mere phenomena, if it be not sufficiently evident of itself, may, perhaps, be rendered more apparent, by a very easy supposition. Let us imagine the permanent unknown substance matter, and the permanent unknown substance mind, to be rendered, by the same divine power which made them, altogether different in their own absolute essence, as they exist independently, but to exhibit relatively, precisely the same phenomena as at present,—that spring and summer, and autumn and winter, in every appearance that can affect our organs of perception, succeed each other as now, pouring out the same profusion of foliage, and flowers, and fruits, and, after the last gladness of the vintage and the harvest, sweeping the few lingering blossoms, with those desolating blasts, which seem like the very destroyers of nature, while they are only leading in, with greater freshness, under the same benevolent eye of Heaven, the same delightful circle of beauty and abundance,—that, in mind, the same sensations are excited by the same objects, and are followed by the same remembrances, and comparisons, and hopes, and fears; in these circumstances, while all the phenomena which we observe, and all the phenomena of which we are conscious, continue exactly the same, can we believe, that we should be able to discover the essential change, which, according to this supposition, had taken place, in the permanent subjects of these unvaried phenomena! And, if, as long as the external and internal phenomena continued exactly the same, we should be incapable of discovering, or even suspecting, the slightest change, where by supposition there had been a change so great, how absurd is it to conceive that the changed or unchanged nature of the substance itself, as it exists independently of the phenomenon, ever can become known to us.

He, indeed, it may always safely be presumed, knows least of the mind, who thinks that he knows its substance best. "What is the soul?" was a question once put to Marivaux. "I know nothing of it," he answered, "but that it is spiritual and immortal." "Well," said his friend, "let us ask Fontenelle, and he will tell us what it is." "No," cried Marivaux, "ask any body but Fontenelle, for he has too much good sense to know any more about it than we do."

It is to the phenomena only, then, that our

attention is to be given, not to any vain inquiries into the absolute nature of the substances which exhibit the phenomena. This alone is legitimate philosophy,—philosophy which must for ever retain its claim to our assent, amid the rise and fall of all those spurious speculations, to which our vanity is so fond of giving the names of theory and system. Whatever that may be, in itself, which feels, and thinks, and wills,—if our feelings, and thoughts, and volitions be the same,—all which we can know, and compare, and arrange, must be the same; and, while we confine our attention to these, the general laws of their succession which we infer, and the various relations which they seem to bear to each other, may be admitted equally by those whose opinions, as to the absolute nature of the feeling and thinking principle, differ fundamentally. It requires no peculiar supposition, or belief, as to the nature of the mind, to know, that its trains of thought are influenced by former habits or casual associations; and every fact, which the immaterialist has accurately observed and arranged, with respect to the influence of habit or association, may thus, with equal reason, form a part of the intellectual and moral creed of the materialist also.

On these two systems it is not at present my intention to make any remarks; all which I wish, now, is to explain to you, how independent the real philosophy of the mind is, of any fanciful conjectures, which may be formed, with respect to its essence. It differs from these, as Mr Stewart has well observed, in the same manner, "as the inquiries of Galileo, concerning the laws of moving bodies, differ from the disputes of the ancient Sophists, concerning the existence and the nature of motion," or as the conclusions of Newton, with respect to the law of gravitation, differ from his query concerning the mode in which he supposed that gravity might possibly be produced. The hypothesis, involved in the query, you may admit or reject; the conclusions, with respect to the law of gravitation itself, as far as relates to our planetary system, are, I may say, almost beyond your power of rejecting.

The philosophy of mind, then, and the philosophy of matter, agree, in this respect, that our knowledge is, in both, confined to the mere phenomena. They agree also in the two species of inquiry which they admit. The phenomena of mind, in the same manner as we have seen in the case of matter, may be considered as complex and susceptible of analysis, or they may be considered as succesive in a certain order, and bearing, therefore, to each other the reciprocal relation of causes and effects.

That we can know the phenomena, only as far as we have attended to their sequences, and that, without experience, therefore, it would have been impossible for us to predict any of their successions, is equally true, in mind as in matter. Many of the successions, indeed, are so familiar to us, that it may appear to you, at first, very difficult to conceive that we should not have been able, at least with respect to them, to predict, originally, what antecedents would have been followed by what consequents. We may allow certainly, that we should not have been able to foresee the pleasure which we receive from the finer works of imitative art—from the successions or co-existences, in music, of sounds, that, considered separately, would scarcely be counted among the sources of delight—from the charm of versification, that depends on circumstances, so very slight, as to be altogether destroyed, and even converted into pain by the change of quantity of a single syllable. But that the remembrance of pleasure should not be attended with desire of enjoying it again, seems to us almost inconsistent with the very nature of the pleasing emotion. In like manner, we may allow, that we could not have predicted the sympathy which we feel with the distresses of others, when they arise from causes that cannot affect us, and yet make, for the time, the agony, which we merely behold, a part of our own existence. But we can scarcely think, that we require any experience, to know, that the contemplation of pain, which we may ourselves have to endure, should be the cause of that painful feeling to which we give the name of fear, or that the actual suffering should be accompanied with the desire of relief. The truth is, however, that, in all these cases, and in all of them equally, it would have been impossible, but for experience, to predict the consequent of any of the antecedents. The pleasure, which we feel, in the contemplation of a work of art, and the pain which we feel at the sight of the misery of others, are as much the natural effects of states of mind preceding them, as the fear of pain is the effect of the consideration of pain as hanging over us. Our various feelings, similar or dissimilar, kindred or discordant, are all mere states of the mind; and there is nothing, in any one state of the mind, considered in itself, which necessarily involves the succession of any other state of mind. That particular state, for example, which constitutes the mere feeling of pain, instead of being attended by that different state which constitutes the desire of being freed from pain, might have continued as one uniform feeling, or might have ceased, and been succeeded by some other state, though in the original adaptation of our mental frame by that Creator's wisdom which planned the sequences of its phenomena, the particular affection, which constitutes desire, had not been one of the innumerable varieties of affection of which the mind was for ever to be susceptible.

What susceptibilities the mind has exhibited in the ordinary circumstances in which it

has been placed, we know, and they have been limited to a certain number, corresponding with the feelings which have arisen in these circumstances. But the Almighty Power, who fixed this particular number, might have increased or lessened the number at His pleasure, in the same manner, as He might, at His pleasure, have multiplied or diminished the whole number of His animated creatures; and, where there has been no limit but the will of the limiter, it is experience only which can give us any knowledge of the actual imitation. We are always too much inclined to believe, that we know what must have been, because we know what is; and to suppose ourselves acquainted, not merely with the gracious ends which Supreme Goodness had in view, in creating us, but with the very object which each separate modification of our intellectual and moral constitution was intended to answer. I would not, indeed, go so far as Pope, in that passage of the Essay on Man, in which he seems to imply, that our ignorance of the wise and harmonious intentions of Providence, in the constitution of our mind, is like the ignorance of the inferior animals, as to the motives which influence the follies and inconsistencies of their capricious master.

"When the proud steed shall know, why man restrains
His fiery course, or drives him o'er the plains,
When the dull ox, why now he breaks the clod,
Is now a victim, and now Egypt's god,—
Then shall man's pride and dulness comprehend
His action's, passion's, being's, use and end;
Why doing, suffering, check'd, impelled; and why
This hour a slave, the next a deity."*

Our Divine Author has not left us, even now, to darkness like this. We know, in a great measure, the use and end of our actions and passions, because we know who it is who has formed us to do and to bear; and who, from His own moral excellence, cannot have given us any susceptibility, even that of suffering, which does not tend, upon the whole, to strengthen virtue, and to consecrate, as in some purifying sacrifice, the sufferer of a moment to affections more holy, and happiness more divine. Yet, though we know, in this general sense, our action's, passion's, being's use and end, as subservient to the universal plan of Infinite Goodness, we are not so well acquainted with the particular uses of each state of the mind, as to have been able to predict it, merely as a part or consequence of the plan. The knowledge of every successive modification of our thought, is still as much the result of experience, as if the gracious plan, to which all these successive modifications are instrumental, were wholly unknown to us:—Yet, such is the influence of habit, in familiarizing us to phenomena, that we think, that experience is not necessary, only in those cases, in which the power of experience has been most frequently and familiarly felt; and while, in the rarer successions of feelings, we allow, that there are phenomena of the mind, which we could not have foreknown, we find it difficult to imagine, in the recurrences of the common mental phenomena, that, even originally, it could have required any peculiar foresight to predict, what we are now conscious of predicting with a readiness that seems to us almost like the instant glance of intuition.

In the philosophy of external matter, the greater or less familiarity of events produces an illusion exactly similar. There are certain phenomena, which, we readily admit, could not, of themselves, and without experience, have indicated to us, either the changes which preceded them, or the changes which were to follow; while there are other phenomena, more familiar, which seem to us to require no experience, for informing us, both of their antecedents and consequents,—merely because they have been of such frequent occurrence, that we do not remember the time, when we were ignorant of them, or of the circumstances by which they are usually preceded and followed. That a magnetic needle should tend to the north, rather than to any other point,—and that glass, or amber, rubbed in a certain manner, should exhibit the very striking phenomena of electricity, transmitting this power through certain substances, and not transmitting it through others which have nothing peculiar in their sensible qualities, to mark them as less or better fitted for this communication, appear to us to be facts, which we could not have known till we had actually witnessed them. But that a stone, rolled from the hand, should continue to move in the same direction after quitting the hand, seems a fact, which it must have been easy for us to foresee. We are not aware, that it is only the more familiar occurrence of the one event, than of the others, which makes its sequence appear more obvious; and that, but for this greater familiarity, we might as readily have supposed, that a stone, after quitting the hand which flung it, should have remained in the air, or fallen to the ground, as that the needle, without any tendency to the north, would remain stationary, to whatever point of the compass we might turn it.

Such is the influence of early acquaintance with the more frequent and obvious events, whether in mind or in matter. We have become familiar with them, and with their causes and consequences, long before reflection; and it is not very wonderful, that we should conceive ourselves to have known always what we do not remember to have ever learned.

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* Ep. i. v. 61—68—Works, vol. III. p. 5, 6.

That to know, in the series of mental phenomena, what are the antecedents, and what their consequents, is one great branch of the philosophy of mind, I surely need not attempt to demonstrate; and it would be equally superfluous to demonstrate its importance, especially after the remarks—if even these were necessary,—which I made in a former Lecture; since it is not merely, as a very interesting branch of speculative knowledge, that it is valuable, but, as I then showed, still more valuable, as the foundation of every intellectual art, especially of those noble and almost divine arts, which have, for their immediate object, the illumination and amendment of mankind—the art of training ignorance to wisdom, and even wisdom itself to knowledge still more sublime,— of fixing youthful innocence in the voluntary practice of virtue, that is as yet little more than an instinct of which it is scarcely conscious,—of breathing that moral inspiration, which strengthens feeble goodness, when it is about to fall, tames even the wildest excesses of the wildest passions, and leads back, as if by the invisible power of some guardian spirit, even guilt itself to the happiness which it had lost, and the holier wishes which it rejoices to feel once more.

Since the phenomena of the mind, however, are obviously successive, like those of matter, the consideration of the sequences of the mental phenomena, and the arrangement of them in certain classes, may appear to you sufficiently analogous to the consideration and arrangement of the sequences of the phenomena of the material world. But that there should be any inquiries, in the philosophy of mind corresponding with the inquiries into the composition of bodies, may appear to you improbable, or almost absurd; since the mind, and consequently its affections—which I use as a short general term for expressing all the variety of the modes in which it can be affected, and which, therefore, are only the mind itself as it exists in different states,—must be always simple and indivisible. Yet, wonderful, or even absurd, as it may seem,—notwithstanding the absolute simplicity of the mind itself, and consequently of all its feelings or momentary states,—the science of mind is in its most important respects, a science of analysis, or of a process which I have said to be virtually the same as analysis: and it is only, as it is in this virtual sense analytical, that any discovery, at least that any important discovery, can be expected to be made in it.

It is, indeed, scarcely possible to advance, even a single step, in intellectual physics, without the necessity of performing some sort of analysis, by which we reduce to simpler elements, some complex feeling that seems to us virtually to involve them. In the mind of man, all is in a state of constant and ever-varying complexity, and a single sentiment may be the slow result of innumerable feelings. There is not a single pleasure, or pain, or thought, or emotion, that may not,—by the influence of that associating principle, which is afterwards to come under our consideration,—be so connected with other pleasures, or pains, or thoughts, or emotions, as to form with them, for ever after, an union the most intimate. The complex, or seemingly complex, phenomena of thought, which result from the constant operation of this principle of the mind, it is the labour of the intellectual inquirer to analyze, as it is the labour of the chymist to reduce the compound bodies, on which he operates, however close and intimate their combination may be, to their constituent elements. The process, and the instruments by which the analyses are carried on, are, indeed, as different as matter is from mind,—cumbrous as matter, in the one case,—in the other, simple and spiritual as mind itself. The aggregates of matter we analyze by the use of other matter, adding substance after substance, and varying manipulation after manipulation;—the complex mental phenomena we analyze virtually by mere reflection; the same individual mind being the subject of analysis, the instrument of analysis, and the analyzing inquirer.

When I speak, however, of the union of separate thoughts and feelings in one complex sentiment or emotion, and of the analytic power of reflection or reason, it must not be conceived that I use these words in a sense precisely the same as when they are applied to matter. A mass of matter, as we have seen, is, in truth, not one body merely, but a multitude of contiguous bodies; all of which, at the time, may be considered as having a separate existence, and as placed together more by accidental apposition, than by any essential union;—and analysis is nothing more than what its etymology denotes, a loosening of these from each other. In strictness of language, this composition and analysis cannot take place in mind. Even the most complex feeling is still only one feeling; for we cannot divide the states or affections of our mind into separate self-existing fractions, as we can divide a compound mass of matter into masses which are separate and self-existing,—nor distinguish half a joy or sorrow from a whole joy or sorrow. The conception of gold, and the conception of a mountain, may separately arise, and may be followed by the conception of a golden mountain; which may be said to be a compound of the two, in the sense in which I use that word, to express merely, that what is thus termed compound or complex is the result of certain previous feelings, to which, as if existing together, it is felt to have the virtual relation of equality, or the relation which a whole bears to the parts that are comprehended in it. But the conception of a golden mountain is still as much one state

or feeling of one simple mind, as either of the separate conceptions of gold and of a mountain which preceded it. In cases of this kind indeed, it is the very nature of the resulting feeling to seem to us thus complex; and we are led, by the very constitution of our mind itself, to consider what we term a complex idea, as equivalent to the separate ideas from which it results, or as comprehensive of them,—as being truly to our conception—though to our conception only—and, therefore, only virtually or relatively to us the inquirers—the same, as if it were composed of the separate feelings co-existing, as the elements of a body co-exist in space.

It is this feeling of the relation of certain states of mind to certain other states of mind which solves the whole mystery of mental analysis, that seemed at first so inexplicable, —the virtual decomposition, in our thought, of what is, by its very nature, indivisible. The mind, indeed, it must be allowed, is absolutely simple in all its states; every separate state or affection of it must, therefore, be absolutely simple; but in certain cases, in which a feeling is the result of other feelings preceding it, it is its very nature to appear to involve the union of those preceding feelings; and to distinguish the separate sensations, or thoughts, or emotions, of which, on reflection, it thus seems to be comprehensive, is to perform an intellectual process, which, though not a real analysis, is an analysis at least relatively to our conception. It may still, indeed, be said with truth, that the different feelings,—the states or affections of mind which we term complex,—are absolutely simple and indivisible, as much as the feelings or affections of mind which we term simple. Of this there can be no doubt. But the complexity with which alone we are concerned is not absolute but relative,—a seeming complexity, which is involved in the very feeling of relation of every sort. That we are thus impressed with certain feelings of relation of conceptions to conceptions, no one can doubt who knows, that all science has its origin in these very feelings; and equivalence, or equality, is one of those relations, which, from its very constitution, it would be as impossible for the mind, in certain circumstances, not to feel, as it would be impossible for it, in certain other circumstances, not to have those simple feelings which it compares. With perfect organs of vision, and in the full light of day, it is not possible for us to look on a tree, or a rock, without perceiving it; but it is not more possible for us to form a conception of two trees, without regarding this state of mind, simple though it truly is, when absolutely considered as virtually involving, or as equal to, two of those separate feelings, which constituted the conception of a single tree.

On this mere feeling of virtual equivalence is founded all the demonstration of those sciences which claim the glory of being peculiarly demonstrative; our equations and proportions of abstract number and quantity involving continually this analytic valuation of notions, as reciprocally proportional. Our conception of an angle of forty-five degrees is one state or affection of mind,—one state of one simple indivisible substance; such, too, is our conception of a right angle. Our notion of four or eight is as much one affection of mind as our notion of a simple unit. But, in reflecting on the separate states of mind which constitute these notions, we are impressed with certain relations which they seem, to us, reciprocally to bear, and we consider the angle of forty-five degrees as equal to half the angle of ninety degrees, and our notion of eight as involving or equal to two of four. If one state of mind, which constitutes the notion of a certain abstract number or quantity, had not been considered in this sort of virtual comprehensiveness, as bearing the relation of equality, or proportion to other states of mind, which constitute other abstract notions of the same species, mathematics would not merely have lost their certainty, but there could not, in truth, have been any such science as mathematics.

The intellectual analysis, which appears to me to constitute so important a part of the science of mind, is nothing more than the successive developement, in application to the various mental phenomena, of this feeling of equivalence, or comprehensiveness, which is not confined to the mathematical notions of number and quantity, (though, from the greater simplicity of these, their equality or proportion may be more accurately distinguished), but extends to every thought and feeling which we regard as complex, that is to say, to almost every thought and feeling of which the mind is susceptible. We compare virtue with virtue, talent with talent, not, indeed, with the same precision, but certainly in the same manner, and with the same feeling of proportion, as we compare intellectually one angle with another; and we ask, what ideas are involved in our complex notions of religion and government, with as strong a feeling that a number of ideas are virtually involved or comprehended in them, as when we ask, how often the square of two is repeated in the cube of six.

Analysis, then, in the science of mind, you will perceive, is founded wholly on the feeling of relation which one state of mind seems to us to bear to other states of mind, as comprehensive of them; but, while this seeming complexity is felt, it is the same thing to our analysis, as if the complexity, instead of being virtual and relative only, were absolute and real. It may be objected to the application of the term analysis to the science of mind, that it is a term which, its etymology shows, as I have already admitted, to be bor-

rowed from matter, and to convey, as applied to the mind, a notion in some degree different from its etymological sense. But this is an objection which may be urged, with at least equal force, against every term, or almost every term of our science. In our want of a peculiar metaphysical language, we are obliged in this, as in every other case, to borrow a metaphorical language from the material world; and we are very naturally led to speak of mental composition and analysis, since to the mind which feels the relation of equivalence or comprehensiveness, it is precisely the same thing as if our ideas and emotions, that result from former ideas and emotions, and are felt by us as if involving these in one complex whole, could be actually divided into the separate elements which appear to us thus virtually or relatively to be comprehended in them.

It is from having neglected this branch of the physical investigation of the mind,—by far the more important of the two,—and having fixed their attention solely on the successions of its phenomena, that some philosophers have been led to disparage the science as fruitless of discovery, and even to deride the pretensions or the hopes of those who do not consider it as absolutely exhausted;—I will not say now merely, in the present improved state of the science, but as not exhausted almost before philosophy began, in the rude consciousness of the rudest savage, who saw, and remembered, and compared, and hoped, and feared; and must, therefore, it is said, have known what it is to see, and remember, and compare, and hope, and fear.

If the phenomena of the mind were to be regarded merely as successive,—which is one only of the two lights in which they may be physically viewed,—it might, indeed, be said, with a little more appearance of truth, that this mere succession must be as familiar to the unreflecting mind as to the mind of the philosopher; though, even in this limited sense, the remark is far from being accurate. But the phenomena have other relations, as well as those of succession,—relations which are not involved in the mere consciousness of the moment, but are discoverable by reflection only,—and to the knowledge of which, therefore, addition after addition may be made by every new generation of reflecting inquirers. From the very instant of its first existence, the mind is constantly exhibiting phenomena more and more complex,—sensations, thoughts, emotions, all mingling together, and almost every feeling modifying, in some greater or less degree, the feelings that succeed it;—and as, in chymistry, it often happens, that the qualities of the separate ingredients of a compound body are not recognizable by us, in the apparently different qualities of the compound itself,—so, in this spontaneous chymistry of the mind, the compound sentiment that results from the association of former feelings, has, in many cases, on first consideration, so little resemblance to these constituents of it, as formerly existing in their elementary state, that it requires the most attentive reflection to separate, and evolve distinctly to others, the assemblages which even a few years may have produced. Indeed, so complex are the mental phenomena, and so difficult of analysis, even in those most common cases, which may be said to be familiar to all, that it is truly wonderful that the difficulty of this analysis, and the field of inquiry which this very difficulty opens, should not have occurred to the disparagers of intellectual discovery, and made them feel, that what they were not able to explain, could not be so well known to all mankind as to be absolutely incapable of additional illustration. The savage, they will tell us, is conscious of what he feels in loving his country, as well as the sage; but, does he know as well, or can even the sage himself inform us with precision, what the various elementary feelings have been, that have successively modified, or rather, that have constituted this local attachment? The peasant, indeed, may have the feeling of beauty, like the artist who produces it, or the speculative inquirer, who analyzes this very complex emotion—

> "Ask the swain,
> Who journeys homeward, from a summer day's
> Long labour, why, forgetful of his toils
> And due repose, he loiters to behold
> The sunshine gleaming, as through amber clouds,
> O'er all the western sky? Full soon, I ween,
> His rude expression, and untutor'd air,
> Beyond the power of language, will unfold
> The form of Beauty smiling at his heart,
> How lovely, how commanding!"*

But the mere emotion which beauty produces, is not the knowledge of the simpler feelings that have composed or modified it; and though the pleasure and admiration were to continue exactly the same, the peasant would surely have learned something, if he could be made to understand that beauty was more than the form and colour which his eye perceived. What is thus true of beauty, as differently understood by the peasant and the philosopher, is true, in like manner, of all the other complex mental phenomena. It would, indeed, be as reasonable to affirm, that because we all move our limbs, we are all equally acquainted with the physiology of muscular motion; or, to take a case still more exactly appropriate, that we know all the sublimest truths of arithmetic and geometry, because we know all the numbers and figures of the mere relations of which these are the science,—as that we are all acquainted with the physiology of the mind, and the number of ele-

* Pleasures of Imagination, Book III. v. 526—535.

ments which enter into our various feelings, because we all perceive, and remember, and love, and hate. It is, it will be allowed, chiefly, or perhaps wholly, as it is analytical, that the science of mind admits of discovery; but, as a science of analysis, in which new relations are continually felt on reflection, it presents us with a field of discovery as rich, and, I may say, almost as inexhaustible in wonders, as that of the universe without.

"It is thus," I have elsewhere remarked, "even in phenomena, which seem so simple as scarcely to have admitted combination, what wonders have been developed by scientific inquiry! Perception itself, that primary function of the mind, which was surely the same before Berkeley examined the laws of vision as at present, is now regarded by us very differently, in relation to the most important of its organs; and it would not be easy to find, amid all the brilliant discoveries of modern chymistry, and even in the whole range of the physics of matter, a proposition more completely revolting to popular belief, than that which is now the general faith of philosophers, that the sense of sight, which seems to bring the farthest hills of the most extended landscape, and the very boundlessness of space before our view, is, of itself, incapable of showing us a single line of longitudinal distance."*

If, as has been strangely affirmed, the science of mind be a science that is, by its very nature, unsusceptible of improvement by discovery, it must have been so, before the time of Berkeley as now, and it might have been a sufficient answer to all the arguments which he adduced in support of his theory of vision, that the phenomena which he boasted to have analyzed, were only the common and familiar phenomena of a sense that had been exercised by all mankind.

"The vulgar," I have said, "would gaze with astonishment, were they to perceive an electrician inflame gunpowder with an icicle; but they would not be less confounded by those dazzling subtleties with which metaphysicians would persuade them, that the very actions which they feel to be benevolent and disinterested, had their source in the same principle of selfishness which makes man a knave or a tyrant. That this particular doctrine is false, is of no consequence: the whole theory of our moral sentiments presents results which are nearly as wonderful; and indeed, the falseness of any metaphysical doctrine, if rightly considered, is itself one of the strongest proofs that the science of mind is a science which admits of discovery; for, if all men had equal knowledge of all the relations of all the phenomena of their mind, no one could advance an opinion on the subject, with real belief of it, which another could discover to be erroneous. In the different stages of the growth of a passion, what a variety of appearances does it assume; and how difficult is it often to trace, in the confusion and complication of the paroxysm, those calm and simple emotions in which, in many cases, it originated!—The love of domestic praise, and of the parental smile of approbation, which gave excellence to the first efforts of the child, may expand, with little variation, into the love of honest and honourable fame; or, in more unhappy circumstances, may shoot out from its natural direction, into all the guilt and madness of atrocious ambition; —and can it truly be maintained, or even supposed for a moment, that all this fine shadowing of feelings into feelings, is known as much to the rudest and most ignorant of mankind, as it is to the profoundest intellectual inquirer? How different is the passion of the miser, as viewed by himself, by the vulgar, and by philosophers! He is conscious himself only of the accuracy of his reasonings on the probabilities of future poverty, of a love of economy, and of temperance, and perhaps too of strict and rigid justice. To common observers, he is only a lover of money. They content themselves with the passion, in its mature state; and it would not be easy to convince them, that the most self-denying avarice involves as its essence, or at least originally involved, the love of those very pleasures and accommodations, which are now sacrificed to it without the least apparent reluctance."*

"This light and darkness in our chaos join'd,
What shall divide? The God within the mind."

There is, indeed, a chaos in the mind of man. But there is a spirit of inquiry, which is for ever moving over it, slowly separating all its mingled elements. It is only when these are separated, that the philosophy of mind can be complete, and incapable of further discovery. To say that it is now complete, because it has in it every thing which can be the subject of analysis, is as absurd, as it would be to suppose that the ancient chaos, when it contained merely the elements of things, before the spirit of God moved upon the waters of the abyss, was already that world of life, and order, and beauty, which it was afterwards to become.

The difficulty which arises in the physical investigation of the mind, from the apparent simplicity of those thoughts and feelings, which, on more attentive reflection, are felt to be as

* Inquiry into the Relation of Cause and Effect, 2d edition, p. 32, 33.

* Inquiry into the Relation of Cause and Effect, 2d edition, p. 26—30. with some alterations and exclusions.

if compounded of many other thoughts and feelings, that have previously existed together, or in immediate succession, is similar to the difficulty which we experience in the physics of matter, from the imperfection of our senses, that allows us to perceive masses only, not their elemental parts, and thus leads us to consider as simple bodies, what a single new experiment may prove to be composed of various elements.

In the intellectual world, the slow progress of discovery arises, in like manner, from the obstacle which our feeble power of discrimination presents to our mental analysis. But, in mind, as well as in matter, it must be remembered, that it is to this very feebleness of our discriminating powers, the whole analytic science owes its origin. If we could distinguish instantly and clearly, in our complex phenomena of thought, their constituent elements; if, for example, in that single and apparently simple emotion, which we feel, on the sight of beauty, as it lives before us, or in the contemplation of that ideal beauty, which is reflected from works of art, we could discover, as it were, in a single glance, all the innumerable feelings, which, perhaps, from the first moment of life, have been conspiring together, and blending in the production of it,—we should then feel as little interest in our theories of taste, as, in a case formerly supposed, we should have done in our theories of combustion, if the most minute changes that take place in combustion had been at all times distinctly visible. The mysteries of our intellect, the "altæ penetralia mentis," would then lie for ever open to us; and what was said poetically of Hobbes in the beautiful verses addressed to him on his work *De Natura Hominis*, would be applicable to all mankind, not poetically only, but in the strictness of philosophic truth.

"Quæ magna cœli mœnia, et tractus maris,
Terræque fines, siquid aut ultra est, capit,
Mens ipsa tandem capitur: Omnia hactenus
Quæ nosse potuit, nota jam primum est sibi.

"Consultor audax, et Promethei potens
Facinoris animi! quis tibi dedit deus
Hæc intueri seculis longe abdita,
Oculosque luce tinxit ambrosia tuos?
Tu mentis omnis, at tuæ nulla est capax.
Hoc laude solus fruere: divinum est opus
Animam creare; proximum huic, ostendere.

"Hic cerno levia affectuum vestigia,
Gracilesque Sensûs lineas; quibus
Vehantur alis blanduli Cupidines,
Quibusque stimulis urgeant Iræ graves,
Hic et Dolores et Voluptates suos
Produnt recessus; ipsi nec Timor latet."

LECTURE XI.

APPLICATION OF THE LAWS OF PHYSICAL INQUIRY TO THE PHILOSOPHY OF MIND CONCLUDED.—ON CONSCIOUSNESS, AND ON MENTAL IDENTITY.

In my last lecture, Gentlemen, I considered, very fully, the two species of inquiry which the philosophy of mind admits, in exact analogy to the two species of inquiry in the philosophy of matter,—the consideration of the mental phenomena, as successive, and therefore susceptible of arrangement in the order of their succession, as causes and effects, —and the consideration of them as complex, and therefore susceptible of analysis. I stated to you, that it was chiefly, if not wholly, in this latter view, as analytical, that I conceived the philosophy of mind to be a science of progressive discovery; though, as a science of analysis, it has not merely produced results, as astonishing, perhaps, in some cases, as any of those which the analysis of matter has exhibited, but presents still a field of inquiry, that may be considered as inexhaustible; since the mind cannot exist, without forming continually new combinations, that modify its subsequent affections, and vary, therefore, the products, which it is the labour of our intellectual analysis to reduce to their original elements.

What the chymist does, in matter, the intellectual analyst does in mind; the one distinguishing, by a purely mental process of reflection, the elements of his complex feelings, as the other operates on his material compounds, by processes that are themselves material. Though the term analysis, however, may be used in reference to both processes, the mental, as well as the material, since the result of the process is virtually the same in both, it has been generally employed by philosophers, in treating of the mind, without any accurate definition of the process; and I was careful, therefore, to explain to you the peculiar meaning, in which it is strictly to be understood in our science; that you might not extend to the mind and its affections, that essential divisibility, which is inconsistent with its very nature; and suppose that, when we speak of complex notions, and of thoughts and feelings, that are united by association with other thoughts and feelings, we speak of a plurality of separable things. The complex mental phenomena, as I explained to you, are complex only in relation to our mode of conceiving them. They are, strictly and truly, as simple and indivisible states of a substance, which is necessarily in all its states simple and indivisible—the results, rather than the com-

pounds, of former feelings,—to which, however, they seem to us, and from the very nature of the feelings themselves, cannot but seem to us, to bear the same species of relation, which a whole bears to the parts that compose it. The office of intellectual analysis, accordingly, in the mode in which I have explained it to you, has regard to this relation only. It is to trace the various affections or states of mind that have successively contributed to form or to modify any peculiar sentiment or emotion, and to develope the elements, to which, after tracing this succession, the resulting sentiment or emotion is felt by us to bear virtually that relation of seeming comprehensiveness of which I spoke.

If, indeed, our perspicacity were so acute that we could distinguish immediately all the relations of our thoughts and passions, there could evidently be no discovery in the science of mind; but, in like manner, what discovery could there be, in the analysis of matter, if our senses were so quick and delicate, as to distinguish immediately all the elements of every compound? It is only slowly that we discover the composition of the masses without; and we have therefore a science of chymistry:—It is only slowly that we discover the relations of complex thought to thought; and we have therefore a science of mental analysis.

It is to the imperfection of our faculties, then, as forcing us to guess and explore what is half concealed from us, that we owe our laborious experiments and reasonings, and consequently all the science which is the result of these; and the proudest discoveries which we make may thus, in one point of view, whatever dignity they may give to a few moments of our life, be considered as proofs and memorials of our general weakness. If, in its relation to matter, philosophy be founded, in a very great degree, on the mere badness of our eyes, which prevents us from distinguishing accurately the minute changes that are constantly taking place in the bodies around us; we have seen, in like manner, that, in its relation to the mind, it is founded chiefly, or perhaps wholly, on the imperfection of our power of discriminating the elementary feelings, which compose our great complexities of thought and passion; the various relations of which are felt by us only on attentive reflection, and are, therefore, in progressive discovery, slowly added to relations that have before been traced. In both cases, the analysis, necessary for this purpose, is an operation of unquestionable difficulty. But it is surely not less so, in mind, than in matter; nor, when nature exhibits all her wonders to us, in one case, in objects that are separate from us, and foreign; and, in the other, in the intimate phenomena of our own consciousness,—can we justly think, that it is of ourselves we know the most. On the contrary, strange as it may seem, it is of her distant operations that our knowledge is least imperfect: and we have far less acquaintance with the sway which she exercises in our own mind, than with that by which she guides the course of the most remote planet, in spaces beyond us, which we rather calculate than conceive. The only science, which, by its simplicity and comprehensiveness, seems to have attained a maturity that leaves little for future inquiry, is not that which relates immediately to man himself, or to the properties of the bodies on his own planet, that are ever acting on his perceptive organs, and essential to his life and enjoyment; but that which relates to the immense system of the universe, to which the very orb, that supports all the multitudes of his race, is but an atom of dust, and to which himself, as an individual, is as nothing.

"Could he, whose rules the rapid comet bind,
Describe or fix one movement of his mind?
Who saw its fires here rise, and there descend,
Explain his own beginning or his end.
Go, wondrous creature! mount where science guides,
Go, measure earth, weigh air, and state the tides;
Instruct the planets in what orbs to run,
Correct old Time, and regulate the sun;
Go, soar with Plato to th' empyreal sphere,
To the first good, first perfect, and first fair;
Go, teach eternal wisdom how to rule—
Then drop into thyself, and be a fool!"*

That man should know so much of the universe, and so very little of himself, is, indeed, one of the circumstances, which, in the language of the same poet, most strongly characterise him, as the "jest and riddle" of that world, of which he is also no less truly "the glory."

"That the intelligence of any being," to use the words of D'Alembert, "should not pass beyond certain limits—that, in one species of beings, it should be more or less circumscribed than in another,—all this is not surprising, more than that a blade of grass should be less tall than a shrub, or a shrub than an oak. But that the same being should be at once arrested by the narrow circle which nature has traced around him, and yet constantly reminded, that, beyond these limits, there are objects which he is never to attain—that he should be able to reason, till he lose himself, on the existence and nature of these objects, though condemned to be eternally ignorant of them—that he should have too little sagacity to resolve an infinity of questions, which he has yet sagacity enough to make—that the principle within us, which thinks, should ask itself in vain, what it is which constitutes its thought, and that this thought, which sees so many things, so distant, should yet not be able to see itself, which is so near—that self, which it is notwithstanding always striving to see and to know,—these are con-

* Pope's Essay on Man, Ep. ii. v. 35—39; 19—24; and 29, 30.

tradictions, which, even in the very pride of our reasoning, cannot fail to surprise and confound us."

All that remains for us, in that impossibility which nature has imposed on us of attaining a more intimate knowledge of the essence and constitution either of mind or of matter, is to attend to the phenomena which they present, analyzing whatever is complex, and tracing the order of every sequence. By attentive reflection on the phenomena themselves, and on all the circumstances which precede or follow them, we shall be able to discover the relations which they mutually bear, and to distinguish their casual coincidence, or succession, from those invariable relations which nature has established among them as causes and effects. This, humble as it may seem, is, as I have said, the true philosophy of man; because it is all of which man is capable. To inquire, as may be thought, more deeply into the essences of things, or the nature of certain supposed bonds by which they are connected, is to show, not that we have advanced far in the progress of science, but that we have gone far astray; not that we know more than philosophers of humbler views and pretensions, but that we know less; since it proves that we are unacquainted with the limits within which nature has bounded our prospect, and have not attained that prime knowledge which consists in knowing how little can be known.

If the philosophy, not of mind only, but of the universe, is to be found, as Hobbes has boldly said, within ourselves,—in the same manner as the perfect statue is to be found in the rude block of the quarry, when all the superfluous mass, that adheres to it, has been removed,—in no respect can it more justly be said to be in our own minds than in this, that it is only by knowing the true extent, and consequently the limits, of our intellectual powers, that we can form any rational system of philosophic investigation. Then, indeed, philosophy may be truly said, in his strong figurative language, to be human reason herself, hovering over all created things, and proclaiming their order, their causes, and effects. "Philosophiam noli credere eam esse, per quam fiunt lapides philosophici, neque illam quam ostendant codices metaphysici; sed Rationem Humanam naturalem per omnes res creatas sedulo volitantem, et de earum ordine, causis, et effectibus, ea quæ vera sunt renuntiantem. Mentis ergo tuæ, et totius mundi filia philosophia in te ipso est; nondum fortasse figurata, sed genitori mundo qualis erat in principio informi similes. Faciendum ergo tibi est quod faciunt statuarii, qui materiam exculpentes supervacaneam, imaginem non faciunt sed inveniunt."*

* Ad Lectorem.—A Note prefixed to the Elementa Philosophiæ. 4to. Amstelod. 1688.

After these remarks on physical inquiry in general, and its particular application to our own science, I trust that we shall now proceed to observe, and analyze, and arrange the mental phenomena, with clearer views, both of the materials on which we have to operate, and of the nature of the operations which we have to perform. We may consider the mind as now lying open before us, presenting to us all its phenomena, but presenting them in assemblages, which it is to be our labour to separate and arrange. In this separation and arrangement, there are difficulties, I confess, of no slight kind. But I trust that you have the spirit which delights in overcoming difficulties, and which, even if its most strenuous exertions should fail, delights in the very strenuousness of the endeavour. In what admits our analysis, and in what transcends it, we shall always find much that is truly wonderful in itself and deserving of our profoundest admiration; and even in the obscurest parts of the great field of mind, though we may see only dimly, and must, therefore, be cautious in inquiring, and fearful of pronouncing, we may yet, perhaps, be opening paths that are to lead to discovery, and, in the very darkness of our search, may perceive some gleams of that light, which, though now only dawning upon us, is to brighten on the inquirers of other ages.

In proceeding to examine and compare the mental phenomena, the first circumstance that strikes us, prior to any attempt to arrange them in classes, is, that the mind which exhibits these is susceptible of a variety of feelings, every new feeling being a change of its state; and, indeed, it is by such changes alone that it manifests itself, either in our own consciousness, or in the actions of our fellow-men. If it could exist only in one everlasting state,—such as now constitutes the feeling of any particular moment,—it is quite superfluous to say, that it could not reason upon this state, for this very reasoning would itself imply the change which is supposed to be impossible; and as little could this one unchanged and unchangeable feeling be an object of reasoning to others, even if there were any mode of its becoming manifest to them, which there evidently could not be. It is, perhaps, even not too extravagant an assertion of Hobbes, who supposes a mind so constituted as to perceive only one colour, and to perceive this constantly; and affirms, that, in that case, it would be absurd to say that it had any perception at all, being rather, as he expresses it, stupified than seeing. "Attonitum esse et fortasse aspectare eum, sed stupentem dicerem, *videre* non dicerem; adeo sentire semper idem, et non sentire, ad idem recidunt."

Mind, then, is capable of existing in various states; an enumeration of the leading classes of which, as I before remarked, is all

that constitutes our definition of it. It is that, we say, which perceives, remembers compares, grieves, rejoices, loves, hates; and though the terms, whatever they may be, that are used by us, in any such enumeration, may be few, we must not forget, that the terms are mere inventions of our own for the purpose of classification, and that each of them comprehends a variety of feelings, that are as truly different from each other as the classes themselves are different. Perception is but a single word; yet, when we consider the number of objects that may act upon our organs of sense, and the number of ways in which their action may be combined, so as to produce one compound effect, different from that which the same objects would produce separately, or in other forms of combination, how many are the feelings which this single word denotes!—so many, indeed, that no arithmetical computation is sufficient to measure their infinity.

Amid all this variety of feelings, with whatever rapidity the changes may succeed each other, and however opposite they may seem, we have still the most undoubting belief, that it is the same individual mind which is thus affected in various ways. The pleasure which is felt at one moment has indeed little apparent relation to the pain that was perhaps felt a few moments before; and the knowledge of a subject, which we possess, after having reflected on it fully, has equally little resemblance to our state of doubt when we began to inquire, or the total ignorance and indifference which preceded the first doubt that we felt. It is the same individual mind, however, which, in all these instances, is pleased and pained, is ignorant, doubts, reflects, knows. There is something "changed in all, and yet in all the same," which at once constitutes the thoughts and emotions of the hour, and yet outlives them,—something, which, from the temporary agitations of passion, rises unaltered and everlasting, like the pyramid, that lifts still the same point to heaven, amid the sands and whirlwinds of the desert.

The consideration of the mind, as one substance, capable of existing in a variety of states, according as it is variously affected, and constituting, in these different states, all the complex phenomena of thought and feeling, necessarily involves the consideration of consciousness, and of personal identity. To the examination of these, accordingly, I now proceed, as essential to all the inquiries and speculations in which we are afterwards to be engaged; since, whatever powers or susceptibilities we may consider as attributes of the mind, this consideration must always suppose the existence of certain phenomena, of which we are conscious, and the identity of the sentient or thinking principle, in which that consciousness resides, and to which all the varieties of those ever-changing feelings, which form the subjects of our inquiry, are collectively to be referred.

Our first inquiry, then, is into the nature of

CONSCIOUSNESS.

In the systems of philosophy, which have been most generally prevalent, especially in this part of the island, consciousness has always been classed as one of the intellectual powers of the mind, differing from its other powers, as these mutually differ from each other. It is accordingly ranked by Dr Reid, as separate and distinct, in his Catalogue of the intellectual powers; and he says of it, that "it is an operation of the understanding of its own kind, and cannot be logically defined. The objects of it are our present pains, our pleasures, our hopes, our fears, our desires, our doubts, our thoughts of every kind; in a word, all the passions, and all the actions and operations of our own minds, while they are present." And in various parts of his works, which it would be needless to quote, he alludes to its radical difference from the other powers of the mind, as if it were a point on which there could be no question. To me, however, I must confess, it appears, that this attempt to double, as it were, our various feelings, by making them not to constitute our consciousness, but to be the objects of it, as of a distinct intellectual power, is not a faithful statement of the phenomena of the mind, but is founded, partly on a confusion of thought, and still more on a confusion of language. Sensation is not the object of consciousness different from itself, but a particular sensation is the consciousness of the moment; as a particular hope, or fear, or grief, or resentment, or simple remembrance, may be the actual consciousness of the next moment. In short, if the mind of man, and all the changes which take place in it, from the first feeling with which life commenced, to the last with which it closes, could be made visible to any other thinking being, a certain series of feelings alone, that is to say, a certain number of successive states of the mind, would be distinguishable in it, forming, indeed, a variety of sensations, and thoughts, and passions, as momentary states of the mind, but all of them existing individually, and successively to each other. To suppose the mind to exist in two different states, in the same moment, is a manifest absurdity. To the whole series of states of the mind, then, whatever the individual momentary successive states may be, I give the name of our consciousness—using that term, not to express any new state additional to the whole series, (for to that, which is already the whole, nothing can be added, and the mind, as I have already said, cannot be conceived to exist

at once in two different states,) but merely as a short mode of expressing the wide variety of our feelings; in the same manner as I use any other generic word for expressing briefly the individual varieties comprehended under it. There are not sensations, thoughts, passions, and also consciousness, any more than there is quadruped or animal, as a separate being, to be added to the wolves, tigers, elephants, and other living creatures, which I include under those terms.

The fallacy of conceiving consciousness to be something different from the feeling, which is said to be its object, has arisen, in a great measure, from the use of the personal pronoun *I*, which the conviction of our identity, during the various feelings, or temporary consciousnesses of different moments, has led us to employ, as significant of our permanent self,—of that being, which is conscious, and variously conscious, and which continues, after these feelings have ceased, to be the subject of other consciousnesses, as transient as the former. *I* am *conscious* of a certain feeling, really means, however, no more than this—I feel in a certain manner, or, in other words, my mind exists in that state which constitutes a certain feeling;—the mere existence of that feeling, and not any additional and distinguishable feeling that is to be termed consciousness, being all which is essential to the state of my mind, at the particular moment of sensation; for a pleasure, or pain, of which we are not conscious, is a pleasure or pain, that, in reference to us at least, has no existence. But when we say, I am conscious of a particular feeling, in the usual paraphrastic phraseology of our language, which has no mode of expressing, in a single word, the mere existence of a feeling, we are apt, from a prejudice of grammar, to separate the sentient *I* and the feeling, as different,—not different, as they really are, merely in this respect, that the feeling is one momentary and changeable state of the permanent substance I, that is capable of existing also, at other moments, in other states,—but so radically different, as to justify our classing the feeling in the relation of an object, to that sentient principle which we call I,—and an object to it, not in retrospect only, as when the feeling is remembered, or when it is viewed in relation to other remembered feelings,—but in the very moment of the primary sensation itself; as if there could truly be two distinct states of the same mind, at that same moment, one of which states is to be termed sensation, and the other different state of the same mind to be termed consciousness.

To estimate more accurately the effect which this reference to self produces, let us imagine a human being to be born with his faculties perfect as in mature life, and let us suppose a sensation to arise for the first time in his mind. For the sake of greater simplicity, let us suppose the sensation to be of a kind as little complex as possible; such, for example, as that which the fragrance of a rose excites. If, immediately after this first sensation, we imagine the sentient principle to be extinguished, what are we to call that feeling which filled and constituted the brief moment of life? It was a simple sensation, and nothing more; and if only we say, that the sensation has existed,—whether we say, or do not say, that the mind was conscious of the sensation,—we shall convey precisely the same meaning; the consciousness of the sensation being, in that case, only a tautological expression of the sensation itself. There will be, in this first momentary state, no separation of self and the sensation,—no little proposition formed in the mind, *I feel* or *I am conscious of a feeling*,—but the feeling, and the sentient I, will, for the moment, be the same. It is this simple feeling, and this alone, which is the whole consciousness of the first moment; and no reference can be made of this to a self, which is independent of the temporary consciousness; because the knowledge of self, as distinct from the particular feeling, implies the remembrance of former feelings,—of feelings, which, together with the present, we ascribe to one thinking principle; recognising the principle, the self, the *me*, as the same, amid all its transient diversities of consciousness.

Let us now, then, instead of supposing life, as in the former case, to be extinguished immediately after the first sensation, suppose another sensation to be excited, as for instance that which is produced by the sound of a flute. The mind either will be completely absorbed in this new sensation, without any subsequent remembrance,—in which case the consciousness of the sensation,—as in the case of the fragrance that preceded it, will be only another more paraphrastic expression of the simple sensation,—or the remembrance of the former feeling will arise. If the remembrance of the former feeling arise, and the two different feelings be considered by the mind at once, it will now, by that irresistible law of our nature, which impresses us with the conviction of our identity, conceive the two sensations, which it recognises as different in themselves, to have yet belonged to the same being,—that being, to which, when it has the use of language, it gives the name of self and in relation to which it speaks, as often as it uses the pronoun *I*.—The notion of self, as the lasting subject of successive transient feelings, being now, and not till now, acquired, through the remembrance of former sensations or temporary diversities of consciousness, the mind will often again, when other new sensations may have arisen, go through a similar process, being not merely affected with the particular momentary sensation, but re-

membering other prior feelings, and identifying it with them, in the general designation of self. In these circumstances the memory of the past will often mingle with and modify the present; and, now, indeed, to form the verbal proposition, *I am conscious of a particular sensation*,—since the very word *I* implies that this remembrance and identification has taken place,—may be allowed to express something more than the mere existence of the momentary sensation, for it expresses also that the mind, which now exists in the state of this particular sensation, has formerly existed in a different state. There is a remembrance of former feelings, and a belief that the present and the past have been states of one substance. But this belief, or in other words, this remembrance of former feelings, is so far from being essential to every thought or sensation, that innumerable feelings every moment arise, without any such identification with the past. They are felt, however, for this is necessarily implied in their existence; but they exist, as transient thoughts or sensations only, and the consciousness, which we have of them, in these circumstances, is nothing more than the thoughts or sensations themselves, which could not be thoughts or sensations if they were not felt.

In the greater number of our successions of momentary feelings, then, when no reference is made to former states of the mind, the consciousness is obviously nothing more than the simple momentary feeling itself as it begins and ceases; and when there is a reference to former states of the mind, we discover on analysis only a remembrance, like all our other remembrances, and a feeling of common relation of the past and the present affection of the mind to one permanent subject. It is the belief of our continued identity which involves this particular feeling of relation of past and present feelings; and consciousness, in this sense of the term, is only a word expressive of that belief.

That the fragrance of a rose, the sound of a flute, and in general all the other objects of sense, might have excited precisely the same immediate sensations as at present, Doctor Reid admits, though the belief of our personal identity had not been impressed upon us; for he ascribes this belief to an instinctive principle only, and acknowledges, that there is nothing in our sensations themselves, from which any such inference could be drawn by reason. If, then, this instinctive belief of identity had not been, as at present, a natural law of human thought,—operating irresistibly on the remembrance of our different feelings, we should have had no notion of *self*, of *me*, the sentient and thinking being, who exists at the present moment, and who existed before the present moment:—and what, then, would have been the consciousness, accompanying, and different from, our sensations, when they merely flashed along the mind and vanished? The most zealous defender of consciousness, as a separate intellectual power, must surely admit, that, in such circumstances, it would have been nothing more than sensation itself. It is the belief of our identity only, which gives us the notion of self, as the subject of various feelings, and it is the notion of self, as the subject of various former feelings, which leads us to regard the consciousness of the moment, as different from the sensation of the moment; because it suggests to us those former feelings, which truly were different from it, or at least that subject *mind*, which unquestionably existed before the present sensation.

If it be said, that the faculty of consciousness is nothing more that this reference to the past, and consequent belief of identity, we may in that case very safely admit its existence; though the classification of it, as a peculiar intellectual power, would in that case be a most singular anomaly in arrangement, and would involve a very absurd, or at least a very awkward use of a term. To assert this signification of it, however, would be to admit every thing for which I have contended. But it certainly is not the sense which has been attached to it by philosophers; and indeed, in this sense, consciousness, instead of having for its objects, as Doctor Reid says, all "our present pains, our pleasures, our hopes, our fears, our desires, our doubts, our thoughts of every kind; in a word, all the passions, and all the actions and operations of our own minds, while they are present," would be limited to the comparatively few, of which the consideration of our personal identity forms a part. In far the greater number of our feelings, as I have already said, the sensation dies away, almost in the moment,—not, indeed, without being enjoyed or suffered, but without any reference to self, as the subject of various feelings, or remembrance of any prior state of mind, as distinct from the present. The belief of our identity is surely not the only belief that arises from an instinctive principle; and if its existence entitle us, in our systematic arrangements, to the possession of a new intellectual power, every other belief that arises instinctively from a principle of our constitution, must give us a similar title to enlarge the catalogue of our faculties. The never-failing and instant faith, by which we expect, without the slightest doubt of the similarity of the future, that events will continue to follow each other, in the same order as at present,—that bodies will fall to the ground, fire burn, food satisfy the craving of our appetite—that immediate intuitive principle of belief, on which all our foresight depends, and according to which we regulate our whole conduct in providing for the future,—should certainly, in that case, be ascribed by us to some peculiar intellectual

power, for which it would be easy to invent a name. It is not by any inference of our reason we believe that the sound of a flute which preceded the fragrance of a rose, and the fragrance of a rose which followed the sound of a flute, excited sensations that were states of the same identical mind; for there is nothing, in either of the separate sensations, or in both together, from which such an inference can be drawn; and yet, notwithstanding the impossibility of inferring it, we believe this at least as strongly as we believe any of the conclusions of our reasoning. In like manner it is not by any inference of reason we believe, that fire will warm us to-morrow, as it has warmed us to day; for there is nothing, in the fire of to-day, or in the sensation of warmth, considered as a mere sequence of it, from which the succession of a similar sensation to the fire of to-morrow can be inferred; yet we also rely on this future sequence, at least as strongly, as we believe any of the conclusions of our reasoning. In both cases the parallel is complete; and, in both, the evidence of a particular intellectual faculty must consequently be alike,—or in neither is there sufficient evidence of such a power.

There is, indeed, one other sense, in which we often talk of our consciousness of a feeling and a sense, in which it must be allowed that the consciousness is not precisely the same as the feeling itself. This is, when we speak of a feeling, not actually existing at present, but past—as when we say, that we are conscious of having seen, or heard, or done something. Such a use of the term, however, is pardonable only in the privileged looseness and inaccuracy of familiar conversation; the consciousness, in this case, being precisely synonymous with remembrance or memory, and not a power different from the remembrance. The remembrance of the feeling, and the vivid feeling itself, indeed, are different. But the remembrance, and the consciousness of the remembrance, are the same—as the consciousness of a sensation, and the sensation, are the same; and to be conscious that we have seen or spoken to any one, is only to remember that we have seen or spoken to him.

Much of this very confusion with respect to memory, however, I have no doubt, has been always involved in the assertion of consciousness as a peculiar and distinct power of the mind. When we think of feelings long past, it is impossible for us not to be aware that our mind is then truly retrospective; and memory seems to us sufficient to account for the whole. But when the retrospect is of very recent feelings—of feelings, perhaps, that existed as distinct states of the mind, the very moment before our retrospect began, the short interval is forgotten, and we think that the primary feeling, and our consideration of the feeling, are strictly simultaneous. We have a sensation;—we look instantly back on that sensation,—such is consciousness as distinguished from the feeling that is said to be its object. When it is anything more than the sensation, thought or emotion, of which we are said to be conscious, it is a brief and rapid retrospect. Its object is not a present feeling, but a past feeling, as truly as when we look back, not on the moment immediately preceding, but on some distant event or emotion of our boyhood.

After thus distinguishing all that is truly present in consciousness, from common remembrance, I surely need not undertake, at any length, to distinguish it from that peculiar species of remembrance which goes under the name of conscience; though their similar etymology may have a slight tendency to mislead. Conscience is our moral memory;—it is the memory of the heart, if I may apply to it a phrase which, in its original application, was much more happily employed, by one of the deaf and dumb pupils of the Abbé Sicard, who, on being asked what he understood by the word gratitude, wrote down immediately, "Gratitude is the memory of the heart."

The power of conscience does, indeed, what consciousness does not. It truly doubles all our feelings, when they have been such as virtue inspired; "Hoc est vivere *bis*, vita posse priore frui;" and it multiplies them in a much more fearful proportion, when they have been of an opposite kind—arresting, as it were, every moment of guilt, which, of itself, would have passed away, as fugitive as our other moments, and suspending them for ever before our eyes, in fixed and terrifying reality. "Prima et maxima peccantium est pœna," says Seneca, "*peccasse;* nec ullum scelus, licet illud fortuna exornet muneribus suis, licet tueatur ac vindicet, *impunitum* est, quoniam sceleris in scelere supplicium est."* "The first and the greatest punishment of *guilt*, is to have *been guilty*; nor can any crime, though fortune should adorn it with all her most lavish bounty, as if protecting and vindicating it, pass truly unpunished; because the punishment of the base or atrocious deed is in the very baseness or atrocity of the deed itself." But this species of memory, which we denominate conscience, and, indeed, every species of memory, which must necessarily have for its object the past, is essentially different from the consciousness which we have been considering, that, in its very definition, is limited to present feelings, and of which, if we really had such an intellectual power, our moral conscience would, in Dr Reid's sense of the term, be an object rather than a part.

Consciousness, then, I conclude, in its simplest acceptation, when it is understood as regarding the present only, is no distinct power

* Epist. 97.

of the mind, or name of a distinct class of feelings, but is only a general term for all our feelings, of whatever species these may be,—sensations, thoughts, desires;—in short, all those states or affections of mind, in which the phenomena of mind consist; and when it expresses more than this, it is only the remembrance of some former state of the mind, and a feeling of the relation of the past and the present as states of one sentient substance. The term is very conveniently used for the purpose of abbreviation, when we speak of the whole variety of our feelings, in the same manner as any other general term is used, to express briefly the multitude of individuals that agree in possessing some common property of which we speak; when the enumeration of these, by description and name, would be as wearisome to the patience, as it would be oppressive to the memory. But still, when we speak of the evidence of consciousness, we mean nothing more, than the evidence implied in the mere existence of our sensations, thoughts, desires,—which it is utterly impossible for us to believe to be and not to be; or, in other words, impossible for us to feel and not to feel at the same moment. This precise limitation of the term, I trust, you will keep constantly in mind in the course of our future speculations.

LECTURE XII.

ON CONSCIOUSNESS, CONTINUED,—ON MENTAL IDENTITY,—IDENTITY IRRECONCILABLE WITH MATERIALISM,—DIFFERENCE BETWEEN PERSONAL AND MENTAL IDENTITY,—OBJECTIONS TO MENTAL IDENTITY.

In my last Lecture, Gentlemen, I brought to a conclusion my remarks on the nature and objects of Physical Inquiry,—the clear understanding of which seemed, to me, essentially necessary before we could enter, with any prospect of success, on the physiological investigation of the mind.

We then opened our eyes, as it were, on the great field of thought and passion, and on all the infinite variety of feelings, which, in assemblages more or less complex, and in colours more or less brilliant or obscure, it is every moment presenting to our internal glance. The very attempt to arrange these transient feelings as phenomena of the mind, however, implies evidently some consideration of the nature of that varied consciousness in which they consist, and of the identity of the permanent substance, as states of which we arrange them. My last Lecture, therefore, was devoted to this primary consideration of consciousness, —which we found reason to regard, not as any separate and peculiar faculty of the mind, of which our various feelings are, to use Dr Reid's expression, objects, and which is, therefore, to be added, in every instance, to the separate pleasures, pains, perceptions, remembrances, passions, that constitute the momentary states of the mind, but merely as a short general term, expressive of all these momentary states, in reference to the permanent subject *mind*. The sensation of fragrance, for example, is the consciousness of one moment, as the remembrance of that sensation, or some other sensation, is, perhaps, the consciousness of the succeeding moment;—the mind, at every moment, existing in one precise state, which, as one state, can be accurately denoted only by one precise name, or by names that are synonymous, not by names that are significant of total diversity.

All which we know, or can be supposed to know, of the mind, indeed, is a certain series of these states or feelings that have succeeded each other, more or less rapidly, since life began; the sensation, thought, emotion, of the moment being one of those states, and the supposed consciousness of the state being only the state itself, whatever it may be, in which the mind exists at that particular moment: since it would be manifestly absurd to suppose the same indivisible mind to exist at the very same moment in two separate states, one of sensation, and one of consciousness. It is not simply because we feel, but because we remember some prior feeling, and have formed a notion of the mind, as the permanent subject of different feelings, that we conceive the proposition, "I am conscious of a sensation," to express more than the simple existence of the sensation itself; since it expresses, too, a reference of this to the same mind which had formerly been recognized as the subject of other feelings. There is a remembrance of some former feeling, and a reference of the present feeling to the same subject; and this mere remembrance, and the intuitive belief of identity which accompanies remembrance, are all that philosophers, by defective analyses, and a little confusion of language and thought, have asserted to be the result of a peculiar mental faculty, under the name of consciousness; — though consciousness, in this sense, far from embracing all the varieties of feeling, that, in the greater number of instances, begin and cease, without any accompanying thought of that permanent substance to which the transient feeling is referable, must be limited to the comparatively few in which such a reference to self is made.

Consciousness, in short, whenever it is conceived to express more than the present feeling, or present momentary state of the mind, whatever that may be, which is said to be the object of consciousness,—as if it were at once something different at every moment from the

present state or feeling of the mind, and yet the very state in which the mind is at every moment supposed to exist,—is a retrospect of some past feeling, with that belief of a common relation of the past and present feeling to one subject mind, which is involved in the very notion, or rather constitutes the very notion of personal identity,—and all which distinguishes this rapid retrospect from any of the other retrospects, which we class as remembrances, and ascribe to memory as their source, is the mere briefness of the interval between the feeling that is remembered, and the reflective glance which seems to be immediately retrospective. A feeling of some kind has arisen, and we look instantly back upon that feeling; but a remembrance is surely still the same in nature, and arises from the same principle of the mental constitution, whether the interval which precedes it be that of a moment, or of many hours, or years.

I now then proceed, after these remarks on our consciousness as momentary, to a most important inquiry, which arises necessarily from the consideration of the successions of our momentary consciousness, and must be considered as involved in all our attempts to arrange them,—the inquiry into the Identity of the Mind, as truly one and permanent, amid all the variety of its fugitive affections.

In our examination of this very wonderful coincidence of sameness and diversity, I shall confine my remarks to the phenomena which are purely mental, omitting the objections drawn from the daily waste and daily aliment of our corporeal part, the whole force of which objection may be admitted, without any scruple, by those who contend for the identity only of the thinking principle; since the individuality of this would be as little destroyed, though every particle of the body were completely changed, as the individuality of the body itself would be destroyed, by a change of the mere garments that invest it. The manner in which the mind is united to a system of particles, which are in a perpetual state of flux, is, indeed, more than we can ever hope to be able to explain; though it is really not more inexplicable than its union to such a system of particles would be though they were to continue for ever unchanged.

I may remark, however, by the way, that though the constant state of flux of the corporeal particles furnishes no argument against the identity of the principle which feels and thinks, if feeling and thought be states of a substance that is essentially distinct from these changing particles, the unity and identity of this principle, amid all the corpuscular changes, —if it can truly be proved to be identical,— furnish a very strong argument in disproof of those systems which consider thought and feeling as the result of material organization. Indeed, the attempts which have been seriously made by materialists to obviate this difficulty, involve, in every respect, as much absurdity, though certainly not so much pleasantry, at least so much intentional pleasantry, as the demonstrations, which the Society of Freethinkers communicated to Martinus Scriblerus, in their letter of greeting and invitation. The arguments, which they are represented as urging in this admirable letter, ludicrous as they may seem, are truly as strong, at least, as those of which they are a parody; and indeed, in this case, where both are so like, a very little occasional change of expression is all which is necessary to convert the grave ratiocination into the parody, and the parody into the grave ratiocination.

"The parts (say they) of an animal body," stating the objection which they profess to answer, "are perpetually changed, and the fluids which seem to be the subject of consciousness, are in a perpetual circulation, so that the same individual particles do not remain in the brain; from whence it will follow, that the idea of individual consciousness must be constantly translated from one particle of matter to another, whereby the particle A, for example, must not only be conscious, but conscious that it is the same being with the particle B that went before.

"We answer; this is only a fallacy of the imagination, and is to be understood in no other sense than that maxim of the English law, that the king never dies. This power of thinking, self-moving, and governing the whole machine, is communicated from every particle to its immediate successor, who, as soon as he is gone, immediately takes upon him the government, which still preserves the unity of the whole system.

"They make a great noise about this individuality,—how a man is conscious to himself that he is the same individual he was twenty years ago, notwithstanding the flux state of the particles of matter that compose his body. We think this is capable of a very plain answer, and may be easily illustrated by a familiar example:

"Sir John Cutler had a pair of black worsted stockings, which his maid darned so often with silk, that they became at last a pair of silk stockings. Now, supposing those stockings of Sir John's endued with some degree of consciousness at every particular darning, they would have been sensible, that they were the same individual pair of stockings both before and after the darning; and this sensation would have continued in them through all the succession of darnings; and yet after the last of all, there was not perhaps one thread left of the first pair of stockings; but they were grown to be silk stockings, as was said before.

"And whereas it is affirmed, that every animal is conscious of some individual self-moving, self-determining principle; it is answered, that, as in a House of Commons all things are determined by a majority, so it is

in every animal system. As that which determines the house is said to be the reason of the whole assembly; it is no otherwise with thinking beings, who are determined by the greater force of several particles, which, like so many unthinking members, compose one thinking system."*

The identity, which we are to consider, is, as I have already said, the identity only of the principle which feels and thinks, without regard to the changeable state of the particles of the brain, or of the body in general. This unity and permanence of the principle, which thinks, if we had still to invent a phrase, I would rather call mental identity, than personal identity, though the latter phrase may now be considered as almost fixed by the general use of philosophers. On no system can there be this absolute identity, unless as strictly mental; for, if we adopt the system of materialism, we must reject the absolute lasting identity of the thinking principle altogether; and if we do not adopt that system, it is in the mind alone that we must conceive the identity to subsist. The person, in the common and familiar meaning of the term, though involving the mind, is yet more than the mere mind; and, by those, at least, who are not conversant with the writings of philosophers on the subject, sameness of person would be understood as not mental only, but as combining, with the absolute identity of the mind, some sort of identity of the body also; though, it must be confessed, that, in its application to the body, the term identity is not used with the same strictness as in its application to the mind; the bodily identity being not absolute, but admitting of considerable, and ultimately perhaps even of total, change, provided only the change be so gradual as not to be inconsistent with apparent continuity of existence. Still, however, identity of person, at least in the popular notion of it, is something more than identity of mind.

"All mankind," says Dr Reid, "place their personality in something that cannot be divided or consist of parts. A part of a person is a manifest absurdity.

"When a man loses his estate, his health, his strength, he is still the same person, and has lost nothing of his personality. If he has a leg or an arm cut off, he is the same person he was before. The amputated member is no part of his person, otherwise it would have a right to a part of his estate, and be liable for a part of his engagements; it would be entitled to a share of his merit and demerit, which is manifestly absurd. A person is something indivisible, and is what Leibnitz calls a monad."†

That all mankind place their personality in something, which cannot be divided into two persons, or into halves or quarters of a person, is true; because the mind itself is indivisible, and the presence of this one indivisible mind is essential to personality. But though essential to personality in man, mind is not all, in the popular sense of the word at least, which this comprehends. Thus, if, according to the system of metempsychosis, we were to suppose the mind, which animates any of our friends, to be the same mind which animated Homer or Plato,—though we should have no scruple, in asserting the identity of the mind itself, in this corporeal transmigration,—there is no one, I conceive, who would think himself justifiable, in point of accuracy, in saying of Plato and his friend, that they were as exactly, in every respect, the same person, as if no metempsychosis whatever had intervened. It does not follow from this, as Dr Reid very strangely supposes, that a leg or arm, if it had any relation to our personality, would, after amputation, be liable to a part of our engagements, or be entitled to a share of our merit or demerit; for the engagement, and the moral merit or demerit, belong not to the body, but to the mind, which we believe to continue precisely the same, after the amputation, as before it. This, however, is a question merely as to the comparative propriety of a term, and as such, therefore, it is unnecessary to dwell upon it. It is of much more importance to proceed to the consideration of the actual identity of the mind, whether we term it simply mental or personal identity.

"That there is something undoubtedly which thinks," says Lord Shaftesbury, "our very doubt itself and scrupulous thought evinces. But in what subject that thought resides, and how that subject is continued one and the same, so as to answer constantly to the supposed train of thoughts or reflections, which seem to run so harmoniously through a long course of life, with the same relation still to one single and self-same person, this is not a matter so easily or hastily decided by those who are nice self-examiners, or searchers after truth and certainty.

"'Twill not, in this respect, be sufficient for us to use the seeming logic of a famous* modern, and say, '*We think; therefore we are.*' Which is a notably invented saying, after the model of that like philosophical proposition, that '*What is, is.*' Miraculously argued! If '*I am, I am.*' Nothing more certain! For the *ego* or *I* being established in the first part of the proposition, the *ergo*, no doubt, must hold it good in the latter. But the question is, 'What constitutes the

* Mart. Scrib. chap. vii.—Pope's Works, ed. 1757, v. vii. p. 82—84.

† Essays on the Intellectual Powers, Essay III. chap. iv.—v. I. p. 341. Ed. 1808.

* Monsieur Des Cartes. *Shaftesb.*

we or *I*?' And, 'Whether the I of this instant be the same with that of any instant preceding, or to come?' For we have nothing but memory to warrant us, and memory may be false. We may believe we have thought and reflected thus or thus; but we may be mistaken. We may be conscious of that, as truth, which perhaps was no more than a dream; and we may be conscious of that as a past dream, which perhaps was never before so much as dreamt of.

"This is what metaphysicians mean, when they say, 'That identity can be proved only by consciousness; but that consciousness withal may be as well false as real, in respect of what is past.' So that the same successional *we* or *I* must remain still, on this account, undecided.

"To the force of this reasoning I confess I must so far submit, as to declare that, for my own part, I take my being upon trust. Let others philosophize as they are able; I shall admire their strength, when, upon this topic, they have refuted what able metaphysicians object, and Pyrrhonists plead in their own behalf.

"Meanwhile, there is no impediment, hinderance, or suspension of action, on account of these wonderfully refined speculations. Argument and debate go on still. Conduct is settled. Rules and measures are given out, and received. Nor do we scruple to act as resolutely upon the mere supposition that *we are*, as if we had effectually proved it a thousand times, to the full satisfaction of our metaphysical or pyrrhonean antagonist."*

In stating the objections that may be urged against our mental identity, by such metaphysical or pyrrhonean antagonists, as those of whom Lord Shaftesbury speaks, I shall endeavour to exhibit the argument in as strong a light as possible, and in a manner that appears to me, in some measure, new. It is surely unnecessary for me to warn you, that the argument, however specious, is a sophistical one; and the nature of the peculiar sophistry which it involves shall be afterwards pointed out to you. But I conceive it to be most important, in teaching you to reflect for yourselves,—by far the most important lesson which you can be taught,—that you should be accustomed to consider the force of objections that may be urged, as clearly as the force of that surer evidence which they oppose,—and that even sophistry itself, when it is to be exhibited and confuted, should, therefore, always be exhibited fairly. We pay truth a very easy homage, when we content ourselves with despising her adversaries. The duty which we owe to her is of a more manly kind. It is to gird ourselves for the battle,—to fit us for overcoming those adversaries, whenever they shall dare to present themselves in array; and this we cannot do, with absolute confidence, unless we know well the sort of arms which they may use, strong or feeble as those arms may be. I can have no fear that any argument of this kind, in whatever manner it may be stated, can have the slightest influence on your conviction; because it is directly opposed by a principle of our nature, which is paramount to all reasoning. We believe our identity, as one mind, in our feelings of to-day, and our feelings of yesterday, as indubitably as we believe that the fire, which burned us yesterday, would, in the same circumstances, burn us to-day,—not from reasoning, but from a principle of instant and irresistible belief, such as gives to reasoning itself all its validity. As Lord Shaftesbury justly says, "We act as resolutely, upon the mere supposition that *we are*, as if we had effectually proved it a thousand times."

To identity, it may be said, it is necessary that the qualities be the same. That, of which the qualities are different, cannot be the same; and the only mode of discovering whether a substance have the same or different qualities, is to observe how it affects and is affected by other substances. It is recognized by us as the same, or, at least, as perfectly similar, when, in two corresponding series of changes, the same substances affect it in the same manner, and it affects, in the same manner, the same substances; and when either the same substances do not affect it in the same manner, or it does not affect, in the same manner, the same substances, we have no hesitation in considering it as different. Thus, if a white substance, resembling exactly, in every external appearance, a lump of sugar, do not melt when exposed to the action of boiling water, we do not regard it as sugar, because the water does not act on it as we have uniformly known it to act on that substance; or if the same white lump, in every other respect resembling sugar, affect our taste as bitter or acrid rather than sweet, we immediately, in like manner, cease to consider it as sugar, because it does not act upon our nerves of taste in the same manner as sugar acts upon them. The complete similarity, in other respects, is far from sufficient to make us alter our judgment; a single circumstance of manifest difference, in its mode either of acting upon other substances, or of being acted upon by them, being sufficient to destroy the effect of a thousand manifest resemblances.

Let this test of identity, then, it may be said, be applied to the mind, at different periods, if the test be allowed to be a just one; and let it be seen, whether, in the series of changes in which it acts or is acted upon, the phenomena precisely correspond in every case. If the same objects do not act upon it in the same manner, it must then be different,

* Shaftesbury's Characteristics, vol. iii. p. 172—174. Edit. 1715.

according to the very definition to which we are supposed to have assented.—You, of course, understand that I am at present only assuming the character of an objector, and that I state an argument, the principle of which you will afterwards find to be false.

When we compare the listless inactivity of the infant, slumbering, from the moment at which he takes his milky food, to the moment at which he awakes to require it again, with the restless energies of that mighty being which he is to become, in his maturer years, pouring truth after truth in rapid and dazzling profusion upon the world, or grasping in his single hand the destiny of empires, how few are the circumstances of resemblance which we can trace, of all that intelligence which is afterwards to be displayed; how little more is seen, than what serves to give feeble motion to the mere machinery of life. What prophetic eye can venture to look beyond the period of distinct utterance, and discern that variety of character by which even boyhood is marked, far less the intellectual and moral growth of the years that follow—the genius, before whose quick glance the errors and prejudices, which all the ages and nations of mankind have received as truths, are to disappear—the political wisdom, with which, in his calm and silent meditations, he is to afford more security to his country than could be given to it by a thousand armies, and which, with a single thought, is to spread protection and happiness to the most distant lands—or that ferocious ambition, with which, in unfortunate circumstances of power, he is perhaps to burst the whole frame of civil society, and to stamp, through every age, the deep and dark impression of his existence, in the same manner as he leaves on the earth which he has desolated, the track of his sanguinary footsteps. The cradle has its equality almost as the grave. Talents, imbecilities, virtues, vices, slumber in it together, undistinguished; and it is well that it is so, since, to those who are most interested in the preservation of a life that would be helpless but for their aid, it leaves those delightful illusions which more than repay their anxiety and fatigue, and allows them to hope, for a single being, every thing which it is possible for the race of man to become. If clearer presages of the future mind were then discoverable, how large a portion of human happiness would be destroyed by this single circumstance! What pleasure could the mother feel, in her most delightful of offices, if she knew that she was nursing into strength, powers, which were to be exerted for the misery of that great or narrow circle, in which they were destined to move, and which to her were to be a source, not of blessing, but of grief, and shame, and despair!

> "These shall the fury passions tear,
> The vultures of the mind,"

says Gray, on thinking of a group of happy children;

> "For see, how all around them wait,
> The ministers of human fate,
> And black misfortune's baleful train;
> Ah! show them, where in ambush stand,
> To seize their prey, the murd'rous band!
> Ah! tell them, they are men!"*

To tell them they are men, though they were capable of understanding it, even in this sense of the word, would not communicate information so melancholy or so astonishing to themselves, as, by breaking too soon that dream of expectation, which is not to last for ever, but which fulfils the benevolent purpose of nature while it lasts, it would communicate to the parent who watches over them, and who sees in them only those pure virtues, and that happiness as pure, which are perhaps more than the nature of man admits, and which, at least in the case before her, are never to be realized.

Is the mind, then, in infancy, and in mature life, precisely the same, when, in the one case, so many prominent diversities of character force themselves upon the view, and, in the other case, so little appears to distinguish the future ornament of mankind from him who is afterwards

> "To eat his glutton meal with greedy haste,
> Nor know the hand which feeds him?"†

If we apply the test of identity, do we find that the same objects, in these different periods, act upon the mind in exactly the same manner; and are its own feelings, in the successive trains, intellectual and moral, of which they form a part, attended with consequents exactly the same?

Every age,—if we may speak of many ages, in the few years of human life,—seems to be marked with a distinct character. Each has its peculiar objects, that excite lively affections; and in each, exertion is excited by affections, which, in other periods, terminate, without inducing active desire. The boy finds a world in less space than that which bounds his visible horizon; he wanders over his range of field, and exhausts his strength in pursuit of objects, which, in the years that follow, are seen only to be neglected; while, to him, the objects, that are afterwards to absorb his whole soul, are as indifferent as the objects of his present passions are destined then to appear.

In the progress of life, though we are often gratified with the prospect of benevolence increasing as its objects increase, and of powers rising over the greatness of their past attainments, this gratification is not always ours.

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* Ode III.

† Miss Baillie's Plays on the Passions.

Not slight changes of character only appear, which require our attentive investigation to trace them, but, in innumerable cases, complete and striking contrasts press, of themselves, upon our view. How many melancholy opportunities must every one have had of witnessing the progress of intellectual decay, and the coldness that steals upon the once benevolent heart! We quit our country, perhaps, at an early period of life, and, after an absence of many years, we return, with all the remembrances of past pleasure, which grow more tender as we approach their objects. We eagerly seek him, to whose paternal voice we have been accustomed to listen, with the same reverence as if its predictions had possessed oracular certainty,—who first led us into knowledge, and whose image has been constantly joined, in our mind, with all that veneration which does not forbid love. We find him sunk, perhaps in the imbecility of idiotism, unable to recognize us—ignorant alike of the past and of the future, and living only in the sensibility of animal gratification. We seek the favourite companion of our childhood, whose gentleness of heart we have often witnessed, when we have wept together over the same ballad, or in the thousand little incidents that called forth our mutual compassion, in those years when compassion requires so little to call it forth. We find him hardened into man, meeting us scarcely with the cold hypocrisy of dissembled friendship—in his general relations to the world, careless of the misery which *he* is not to feel—and, if he ever think of the happiness of others, seeking it as an instrument, not as an end. When we thus observe all that made us one, and gave an heroic interest even to our childish adventures, absorbed in the chillness of selfish enjoyment, do we truly recognize in him the same unaltered friend, from whom we were accustomed to regret our separation, and do we use only a metaphor of little meaning, when we say of him, that he is become a different person, and that his mind and character are changed? In what does the identity consist? The same objects no longer act upon him in the same manner; the same views of things are no longer followed by similar approbation or disapprobation, grief, joy, admiration, disgust; and if we affirm that substance to be, in the strictest sense of identity, the same on which, in two corresponding series of phenomena, the same objects act differently, while itself also acts differently on the same objects; in short, in which the antecedents being the same, the consequents are different, and the consequents being the same, the antecedents are different,—what definition of absolute diversity can we give, with which this affirmation of absolute identity may not be equally consistent:

"Behold the child, by nature's kindly law,
Pleas'd with a rattle, tickled with a straw:
Some livelier plaything gives his youth delight,
A little louder, but as empty quite;
Scarfs, garters, gold, amuse his riper stage;
And beads and prayer-books are the toys of age.
Pleas'd with his bauble still, as that before;
Till, tir'd, he sleeps,—and life's poor play is o'er."*

The supposed test of identity, when applied to the mind in these cases, completely fails. It neither affects, nor is affected, in the same manner, in the same circumstances. It, therefore, if the test be a just one, is not the same identical mind.

This argument against the identity of the mind, drawn from the occasional striking contrasts of character in the same individual at different periods of life, or when, by great changes of fortune, he may have been placed suddenly in circumstances remarkably different, must, in some degree, have forced itself upon every one who has been at all accustomed to reflect; and yet, in no one instance, I may safely say, can it have produced conviction even for a moment. I have stated it to you, without attempting to lessen its force by any allusion to the fallacy on which it is founded; because the nature of this fallacy is afterwards to be fully considered by us.

There is another argument that may be urged against the identity of the sentient and thinking principle, which has at least equal semblance of force, though it does not occur so readily, because it does not proceed on those general and lasting changes of character with which every one must be struck, but on the passing phenomena of the moment, which are not inconsistent with a continuance of the same general character, and which, as common to all mankind, and forming, indeed, the whole customary and familiar series of our thoughts and emotions, excite no astonishment when we look back on them in the order of their succession.

The mere diversity of our feelings at different moments, it may be said, is of itself incompatible with the strict and absolute unity which is supposed to belong to the thinking principle. If joy and sorrow, such as every one has felt, be different, that which is joyful, and that which is sorrowful, cannot be precisely the same. On the supposition of complete unity and permanence of the thinking principle, nothing is added to it, nothing is taken away from it; and, as it has no parts, no internal change of elementary composition can take place in it. But that to which nothing is added, from which nothing is taken away, and which has no parts to vary their own relative positions and affinities, is so strictly the same, it may be said, that it would surely be absurd to predicate of it any diversity whatever. Joy and sorrow imply an unquestionable diversity of some kind; and if this diversity cannot be predicated of that substance

* Pope's Essay on Man, Ep. II, v. 275—282

which is precisely the same, without addition, subtraction, or any internal change of composition whatever, that which is joyful, and that which is sorrowful, cannot have absolute identity; or if we affirm, that a diversity, so striking as to form an absolute contrast, is yet not inconsistent with complete and permanent unity and identity, we may, in like manner, affirm, that a substance which is hard, heavy, blue, transparent,—which unites with acids, not with alkalies,—and which is volatilizable at a low temperature,—is precisely the same substance as that which is soft, light, green, opaque,—which unites with alkalies, not with acids,—and which is absolutely infusible and fixed in the highest temperature to which we can expose it.

I have thus endeavoured to place, in the strongest possible light, the most imposing arguments which I can conceive to be urged against the permanent identity of the sentient and thinking principle, that, in combating even sophistry itself, you may learn, as I have said, to combat with it on equal ground, and assume no advantage but that irresistible advantage which truth must always afford to him who is the combatant of error.

The positive evidence of the identity of the mind I shall proceed to consider in my next lecture.

LECTURE XIII.

ON THE POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE EVIDENCE OF MENTAL IDENTITY.

My last Lecture, Gentlemen, was employed in considering the great question of the Identity of the Mind, as one and permanent, amid all the infinite variety of our feelings; and particularly, in stating the two most forcible objections which I can imagine to be urged against this identity; one founded on the striking contrasts, intellectual and moral, which the same mind exhibits in different periods of life, and in different circumstances of fortune,—the other, more abstract, and, therefore, less obvious, but not less forcible, founded on the mere diversity of our temporary feelings, as itself inconsistent with identity, at least with that strict and absolute identity to which, as in the case of the mind, nothing can have been added,—from which nothing can have been taken away,—and which, by its very nature, as simple and indivisible, must have been incapable of any elementary change.

Since the exposure of the fallacy, on which these objections are founded, would, however, afford only a sort of negative evidence of that great truth which they oppose, it will be of advantage, before entering on an examination of the objections themselves, to state, in the first place, the nature of that positive evidence, which does not, indeed, lead us to the belief of the unity and permanence of our spiritual being, by that slow process which is denominated reasoning, but constitutes to us, primarily and directly, an impossibility of disbelieving it. I do this the more readily, from the opportunity which it gives of making you acquainted with the paramount importance of those principles of intuitive belief, which are essential to philosophy in all its forms, as they are physically essential, indeed, to the very preservation of our animal existence; and which the rash and unphilosophic extension of them by one class of philosophers, and the equally unphilosophic misapprehension of them by other writers who controverted them, have rendered more necessary, than it would otherwise have been, to state to you with precision.

Of these first truths, as they have been termed, the subject, which we are at present considering, affords one of the most striking examples. The belief of our identity is not the result of any series of propositions, but arises immediately, in certain circumstances, from a principle of thought, as essential to the very nature of the mind as its powers of perception or memory, or as the power of reasoning itself, on the essential validity of which, and consequently on the intuitive belief of some first truth on which it is founded, every objection to the force of these very truths themselves must ultimately rest. To object is to argue; and to argue is to assert the validity of argument, and, therefore, of the primary evidence, from which the evidence of each succeeding proposition of the argument flows. To object to the authority of such primary intuitive belief, would thus be to reason against reason,—to affirm and deny at the same moment,—and to own that the very arguments which we urge are unworthy of being received and credited.

As the nature of the process of reasoning has not yet come under our review, it may not at first appear to you, how essential the truths of intuition are to those very truths which are usually opposed to them. But that they are thus essential, a very little attention will be sufficient to show you.

All belief, it is evident, must be either direct or indirect. It is direct, when a proposition, without regard to any former proposition expressed or understood, is admitted as soon as it is expressed in words, or as soon as it rises silently in the mind. Such are all the order of truths which have been denominated, on this account, first truths. The belief is indirect, when the force of the proposition, to which assent is given, is admitted only in consequence of the previous admission of some former proposition, with which it is felt to be

intimately connected; and the statement in words, or the internal developement of these relative propositions, in the order in which their relation to the primary proposition is felt, is all that constitutes reasoning. The indirect belief which attends the result of reasoning, even in the proudest demonstration, is thus only another form of some first truth, which was believed directly and independently of reasoning; and, without this primary intuitive assent, the demonstration itself, in all its beautiful precision and regularity, would be as powerless and futile as the most incoherent verbal wrangling.

Without some principles of immediate belief, then, it is manifest, that we could have no belief whatever; for we believe one proposition, because we discover its relation to some other proposition, which is itself, perhaps, related, in like manner, to some other proposition formerly admitted, but which, carried back as far as it may, through the longest series of ratiocination, must ultimately come to some primary proposition, which we admit from the evidence contained in itself, or, to speak more accurately, which we believe from the mere impossibility of disbelieving it. All reasoning, then, the most sceptical, be it remarked, as well as the most dogmatical, must proceed on some principles, which are taken for granted, not because we infer them by logical deduction, for this very inference must then itself be founded on some other principle assumed without proof; but because the admission of these first principles is a necessary part of our intellectual constitution. The ridicule, therefore, with which Dr Priestly and some other English metaphysicians, were disposed to regard the decision of philosophical questions, on certain ultimate principles of common sense, was surely, at least in its wide degree of extension, misplaced; though the phrase *common sense*, it will be admitted, was not the happiest that could have been chosen. The controversy, indeed, was truly a verbal and insignificant one, unless as far as it had reference to the unnecessary multiplication of these principles, by the philosophers of this part of the island whom Dr Priestly opposed; since, if traced to their ultimate evidence, it could have been only from some one or more of the principles of common sense, at least from those primary universal intuitions of direct belief, which were all that Dr Reid and his friends meant to denote by the term, that the very reasonings employed against them derived even the slightest semblance of force. An argument that rejects not the phrase common sense only, which is of little consequence, but also what the phrase was intended, by its authors, to imply, is an argument confessedly founded upon nothing; which, therefore, as wholly unfounded, requires no answer, and which, at any rate, it would be vain to attempt to answer, because the answer, if it proceed on any ground whatever, must begin with assuming what the argument rejects as inadmissible.

All reasoning, then, I repeat, whether sceptical or dogmatical, must take for granted, as its primary evidence, the truth of certain propositions, admitted intuitively, and independently of the reasoning, which follows, but cannot precede, the perception of their truth; and hence, as we cannot suppose that the subsequent ratiocination, though it may afford room for errors in the process, can at all add evidence to these primary truths,—which, as directly believed, are themselves the ultimate evidence of each successive proposition, down to the last result of the longest argument,—we must admit that our identity, if it be felt by us intuitively, and felt universally, immediately, irresistibly, is founded on the very same authority as the most exact logical demonstration, with this additional advantage, that it is not subject to those possibilities of error in the steps of the demonstration, from which no long series of reasoning can be exempt.

So little accustomed are we, however, to think of this primary fundamental evidence of every reasoning, while we give our whole attention to the consecutive propositions which derive from it their force, that we learn, in this manner, to consider truth and reasoning as necessarily connected; and to regard the assertion of truths that do not flow from reasoning, as the assertion of something which it would be equally unworthy of philosophy to assert or to admit; though every assertion and every admission, which the profoundest reasoner can make, must, as we have seen, involve the direct or indirect statement of some truth of this kind. Nor is it wonderful that we should thus think more of the reasoning itself, than of the foundation of the reasoning; since the first truths, which give force to reasoning, but require no reasoning to establish them, must necessarily be of a kind which all admit, and which, therefore, as always believed by us, and undisputed by others, have excited no interest in discussion, and have never seemed to add to our stock of knowledge, like the results of reasoning, which have added to it truth after truth. Yet that they are thus uninteresting to us, is the effect only of their primary, and universal, and paramount force. They are the only truths, in short, which every one admits; and they seem to us unworthy of being maintained as truths, merely because they are the only truths which are so irresistible in evidence as to preclude the possibility of a denial.

It is not as the primary evidence of all our processes of reasoning, however, that they are chiefly valuable. Every action of our lives is an exemplification of some one or other of these truths, as practically felt by us. Why do we believe, that what we remember truly

took place, and that the course of nature will be in future such as we have already observed it? Without the belief of these physical truths, we could not exist a day, and yet there is no reasoning from which they can be inferred.

These principles of intuitive belief, so necessary for our very existence, and too important, therefore, to be left to the casual discovery of reason, are, as it were, an internal never-ceasing voice from the Creator and Preserver of our being. The reasonings of men, admitted by some, and denied by others, have over us but a feeble power, which resembles the general frailty of man himself. These internal revelations from on high, however, are omnipotent like their Author. It is impossible for us to doubt them, because to disbelieve them would be to deny what our very constitution was formed to admit. Even the Atheist himself, therefore,—if, indeed, there be one who truly rejects a Creator and Ruler of the universe,—is thus every moment in which he adapts his conduct implicitly, and without reasoning, to these directions of the Wisdom that formed him, obeying, with most exact subserviency, that very voice which he is professing to question or to deride.

That the assertion of principles of intuitive belief, independent of reasoning, may be carried to an extravagant and ridiculous length, —as, indeed, seems to me to have been the case in the works of Dr Reid, and some other Scotch philosophers, his contemporaries and friends,—no one can deny; nor that the unnecessary multiplication of these would be in the highest degree injurious to sound philosophy,—both as leading us to form false views of the nature of the mind, in ascribing to it principles which are no part of its constitution, and, still more, as checking the general vigour of our philosophic inquiry, by seducing us into the habit of acquiescing, too soon, in the easy and indolent faith, that it is unnecessary for us to proceed farther, as if we had already advanced as far as our faculties permit. It is the more unfortunate, because our very avidity for knowledge, which is only another name for that philosophic curiosity in which inquiry originates, is itself favourable to this too easy acquiescence; tending, consequently, by a sort of double influence, to repress the very speculation to which it gave rise. This it does, by rendering the suspense of ungratified curiosity so painful to us, as to resemble, in a very great degree, the uneasiness which we feel from the ungratified cravings of bodily appetite. We more readily, therefore, yield to the illusion which seems to remove this suspense; and are happy to think, however falsely, that we have now completed our inquiry, and that, without attempting any more elementary analysis, we may content ourselves with simply classing the results which we have already obtained. Though there is no human being who must not have felt doubts on some point or other, it is not every one who knows how to doubt. To the perfection of a doubt, indeed, it is essential,—if I may apply to it what rhetoricians say of an epic or dramatic narrative,—that it should have a beginning, a middle, and in many cases, too, though not in all, an end. The middle is a very easy matter; the great difficulty relates to the beginning and the end, and to the end not less than the beginning. We err equally, when the doubt ceases too soon, and when it does not cease where it ought to cease. There is a scepticism as different from the true spirit of philosophy, as the most contented ignorance, that has never questioned a single prejudice; a scepticism, which, instead of seeking to distinguish truth from falsehood, professes to deny altogether the competency of our faculties as to making such a distinction in any case, and to which any proposition, therefore, is as likely as its opposite. With this wild half-reasoning extravagance, which is ignorant whether it affirms or denies, and which does not even know certainly that it has any uncertainty at all, it would be manifestly absurd to reason; and we may even truly say of it, notwithstanding the high character of perfect doubting which it affects, that it does not know how to doubt, more than the all-credulous imbecility which it despises and derides; because it does not know in what circumstances doubt is legitimate, and in what circumstances it should cease. But, at the same time, he also, it may be said, does not know how to doubt, who is completely satisfied with the result of an inquiry which he is capable of prosecuting still further,—even though it were only by the addition of a single step to the thousand which he may already have made. Truth is the last link of many long chains; the first links of all of which, Nature has placed in our hands. When we have fairly arrived at the last, and feel completely that there is no link beyond, it would be manifestly absurd to suppose that we can still proceed further;—but if we stop before we have arrived at the last, maintaining, without stretching out our hand to make the experiment, that there cannot be yet another link after that which we have reached, it matters not how far we may have advanced. Truth is still beyond us—to be grasped only by an arm more vigorous and persevering.

If, instead of maintaining boldly, that we have reached the last link of the chain, we content ourselves with affirming, that we have reached the last which human effort can reach, we must beware that we do not measure the incapacity of the whole race of mankind by our own individual inability, or, which is far from improbable, that we do not mistake for inability, even in ourselves, what is only the irksomeness of long-continued exertion. Our power is often much greater

than we are willing to believe; and in many cases, as La Rochefoucault very justly says, it is only to excuse to ourselves our own indolence that we talk of things as impossible. "Non putant fieri," says Seneca, speaking of persons of this character, "quicquid facere non possunt. Ex infirmitate sua ferunt sententiam."—"Scis quare non possumus ista? Quia nos posse non credimus."—"Magno animo de rebus magnis judicandum est; alioqui videbitur illarum vitium esse quod nostrum est."

Much evil, then, it must be admitted, would arise in the Philosophy of Mind from a disposition to acquiesce too soon in instinctive principles of belief. But though these may be, and have been, multiplied unnecessarily, and beyond the truth of nature, it is not less certain, that of our mental nature such principles are truly a part. We should, indeed, draw monsters not men, if we were to represent the human head and trunk with a double proportion of arms and legs; but we should also give an unfaithful portraiture of the human figure, and should draw monsters, not men, if we were to represent them with but one arm and leg, or with no arm or leg at all. In like manner, to suppose the mind endowed with more principles of intuition than belong to it, would be to imagine a species of mental monster. But it would not less be a mental monster, if we were to attempt to strip it of the principles which it truly possesses.

In contending, then, for the authority of certain first principles of belief, such as that on which I conceive the conviction of our identity to be founded, I am sufficiently aware, in how many instances a reference to these has been rashly made by philosophers; when a deeper and more minute analysis would have shown, that the supposed first principles were not elementary laws of thought, but were resolvable into others more simple. It is not to be inferred, however, from the rash attempts to establish principles of intuitive belief which do not exist, that there are no such principles in our mental constitution, any more than it is to be inferred, from the general prevalence of bad reasoning, that it is impossible for a human being to reason accurately. I trust, at any rate, that I have already sufficiently warned you, against the danger of acquiescing too soon in any proposition, as a law of thought, precluding all further inquiry, from its own primary and independent evidence; and that I have impressed you, not merely with the necessity of admitting some principles of this sort, as essential to every reasoning, but with the necessity, also, of admitting them, only after the most cautious examination.

The difficulty of ascertaining precisely, whether it be truth which we have attained, is, in many cases, much greater than the difficulty of the actual attainment. Philosophy has in this respect been compared, by a very happy illustration,—which, therefore, homely and familiar as it is, I make no scruple to quote,—to "a game at which children play, in which one of them, with his eyes bandaged, runs after the others. If he catch any one, he is obliged to tell his name; and if he fail to name him, he is obliged to let him go, and to begin his running once more. It is the same," says Fontenelle, the author from whom I borrow this image, "in our seeking after truth. Though we have our eyes bandaged, we do sometimes catch it.—But then we cannot maintain with certainty that it is truth which we have caught;—and in that moment it escapes from us."

If there be, as it has been already shown that there must be, intuitive truths; and, if we are not to reject, but only to weigh cautiously, the belief which seems to us intuitive, it will be difficult to find any, which has a better claim to this distinction, than the faith which we have, in our identity, as one continued sentient and thinking being, or rather, to speak more accurately, as one permanent being, capable of many varieties of sensation and thought.

There is to be found in it, every circumstance which can be required to substantiate it as a law of intuitive belief. It is universal, irresistible, immediate. Indeed, so truly prior and paramount is it to mere reasoning, that the very notion of reasoning necessarily involves the belief of our identity as admitted. To reason, is to draw a conclusion from some former proposition;—and how can one truth be inferred from another truth, unless the mind, which admits the one, be the mind which admitted the other? In its order, as much as in its importance, it may be truly considered as the first of those truths which do not depend on reasoning, and is itself necessarily implied, perhaps in all, certainly in the greater number, of our other intuitions. I believe, for example, without, being able to infer it, or even to discover the greater probability of it, by any process of reasoning, that the course of nature in future will resemble the past; and, since all mankind have the same irresistible tendency, I have no scruple in referring it to an original principle of our nature. In taking for granted this similarity, however, in the order of succession of two distinct sets of phenomena, I must previously have believed, that *I*, the same sentient being, who expect a certain order in the future phenomena of nature, have already observed a certain order in the past.

Since, then, the belief of our identity is intuitive and irresistible, the only inquiry which remains is as to the circumstances in which the belief arises. Identity is a relative term. It implies, of course, in every instance, a double observation of some sort. The identity of our mind is its continuance, as the subject of various feelings, or at least as that

which is susceptible of various feelings. The belief of it, therefore, can arise only on the consideration of its successive phenomena; and is indeed involved in the mere consideration of these as successive.

The knowledge of our mind as a substance, and the belief of our identity during successive feelings, may be considered as the same notion, expressed in different words. Our identity is the unity and sameness of that which thinks and feels,—itself substantially unchanged amid the endless variety of its thoughts and feelings,—capable of existing separately in all these different states; not ceasing therefore when they cease, but independent of their transient changes. The knowledge of mind, then, as a substance, implying the belief of identity during changes of state, cannot be involved in any one of these separate states; and, if our feelings merely succeeded each other, in the same manner as the moving bodies of a long procession are reflected from a mirror, without any vestige of them as past, or, consequently, any remembrance of their successions, we should be as incapable of forming a notion of the sentient substance mind, abstracted from the momentary sensation, as the mirror itself; though we should indeed differ from the mirror, in having what mind only can have, the sensations themselves, thus rapidly existing and perishing.

But, if it be only on the consideration of some past feeling, that the belief of the permanent substance mind can arise, it is to the principle which recals to us past feelings, that the belief is ultimately to be traced. We remember;—and in that remembrance is involved the belief, the source of which we seek. It is not merely a past feeling that arises to us, in what is commonly termed memory, but a feeling that is recognized by us as ours, in that past time of which we think,—a feeling, therefore, of that mind which now remembers what it before saw, perhaps, or heard, or enjoyed, or suffered. We are told by writers on this subject, that it is from a comparison of our present with our past consciousness, that the belief of our identity in these states arises; and this use of the term comparison, which is commonly applied to a process of a different kind, may perhaps mislead you as to this simpler process. It is true, indeed, that the belief arises from a feeling of the past, that is remembered, together with the consciousness of our remembrance as a present feeling,—a contemplation, as it were, of two successive states of the mind. But the comparison is nothing more than this.—It is not to be supposed that we discover in the two feelings some common quality or proportion, as when, in arithmetic or geometry, we compare two numbers, or two regular figures; for the two feelings may have nothing common except that very belief of identity which is involved in the remembrance itself. We remember the past,—we feel the present,—we believe, and cannot but believe, that the rememberer of the past existed in that past which he remembers. The process itself is sufficiently simple, however truly wonderful one of the feelings may be which forms the most important part of the process;—for we are not to forget, that the remembrance itself, the revealer of the past, is not a past, but a present feeling. It is the mind existing for the present moment in a particular state, as much as any primary and immediate sensation is the mind existing in a particular state. That this state of remembrance, itself a present feeling, should be representative to us of some former feeling, so as to impress us irresistibly with the belief of that former state of the mind, is indeed most wonderful; but that it does impress us with this belief, is as undeniable as the belief itself is irresistible.

Our faith in our identity, then, as being only another form of the faith which we put in memory, can be questioned only by those who deny all memory, and with memory all reasoning of every kind,—who believe only the existence of the present moment, and who, with respect to everything else, are as incapable of opposing or questioning as they are of believing. If our memory be unworthy of the faith which we intuitively give to it, as that is founded on memory, and therefore demonstration itself, must equally deceive us. We cannot admit the most rigid demonstration, or expect it to be admitted, without having already admitted, intuitively, that identity, which in words only we profess to question, and to question which, even in words, is to assert the reality of that which we deny.

The belief of the identity of self, then, as the one permanent subject of the transient feelings remembered by us, arises from a law of thought, which is essential to the very constitution of the mind. It has accordingly all the qualities, which I can imagine to be required by the most rigid scrutinizer of our principles of intuitive assent. It is universal, and immediate, and irresistible. I do not believe, with more confidence, that the half of thirty-two is equal to the square of four, than I believe, that *I*, who computed the square of four, am the same with that mind, which computes the half of thirty-two, and asserts the equality of the two numbers.

This consideration is of itself decisive of the question of identity; since, if it be manifest, that there is an universal, immediate, and irresistible impression of our identity,—an impression, which cannot be traced to any law of thought more simple,—its truth is established by a species of evidence, which must be allowed to be valid, before the very objections can be put, in which it is professedly denied;—every objection, however sceptical, involving, as we have seen, and neces-

sarily involving, the assertion of some such intuitive proposition, from which alone its authority, if it have any authority, is derived. In endeavouring to move the whole world of truth with his lever, there must still be some little spot at least, on which the sceptic must be content to rest his foot as firmly as others. Δὸς ποῦ στῶ, he must still be condemned to say with Archimedes; and if we allow no resting-place to his foot,—or, even allowing him this, if we allow no fulcrum for the instrument which he uses, he may contract or lengthen his lever at pleasure; but all the efforts, which, in such circumstances, he can make, will exhibit nothing so striking to those by whom the efforts are witnessed, as the laborious impotence of him who employs them. To deny any first principles of intuitive belief, that are not themselves to stand in need of a demonstration,—which, as a demonstration, or series of consecutive propositions, can be founded, in its primary evidence, only on some principle of the same kind,—is indeed for such a sceptical mechanic to set his foot upon air, rather than on the ground, on which all around him are standing, and to throw away the single fulcrum on which his lever rests, and from which alone all its power is derived.

The belief of our mental identity, then, we may safely conclude, is founded on an essential principle of our constitution, in consequence of which, it is impossible for us to consider our successive feelings, without regarding them as truly our successive feelings, states, or affections of one thinking substance. But though the belief of the identity of the substance which thinks, is thus established on the firmest of all grounds, the very ground, as we have seen, on which demonstration itself is founded,—even though no particular fallacy could be traced in the objections brought against it, which I detailed in my last Lecture,—it is still an interesting inquiry, in what the fallacy of the objections consists; and the inquiry is the more interesting, as it will lead us to some remarks and distinctions, which, I flatter myself, will throw some light on the philosophy of all the changes, material as well as mental, that are every moment taking place in the universe.

The objections brought against the identity of the mind, from a supposed incompatibility of its diversities of state with sameness of substance, appear to me to depend on the assumption of a test of identity, transferred, without sufficient reason, from the obvious appearances of matter to mind, and which, if *matter* be accurately considered, is equally false, too, as applied to *it*. The cause of the transference, however, from the obvious material appearances, is a very natural one,—the same, which has included so many analogies, from external things, in the language which we employ to express the intellectual functions. It is with the changes of the material substances around us that all our operations, which leave any fixed and permanent marks of our agency, are immediately concerned. It is indeed only through them, that our communication with other minds can be at all carried on; and it is not wonderful, therefore, that, in considering the nature of change, of every kind, our philosophy should be strongly tainted with prejudices, derived from the material world, the scene of all the immediate and lasting changes which it is in our power to produce. How much the mere materialism of our language has itself operated in darkening our conceptions of the nature of the mind, and of its various phenomena, is a question which is obviously beyond our power to solve; since the solution of it would imply, that the mind of the solver was itself free from the influence which he traced and described. But of this at least, we may be sure, that it is almost impossible for us to estimate the influence too highly; for we must not think, that its effect has been confined to the works of philosophers. It has acted, much more powerfully, in the familiar discourse and silent reflections of multitudes, that have never had the vanity to rank themselves as philosophers,—thus incorporating itself, as it were, with the very essence of human thought. In that rude state of social life, in which languages had their origin, the inventor of a word probably thought of little more than the temporary facility which it might give to himself and his companions, in communicating their mutual wants and concerting their mutual schemes of co-operation. He was not aware, that with this faint and perishing sound, which a slight difference of breathing produced, he was creating that which was afterwards to constitute one of the most imperishable of things, and to form, in the minds of millions, during every future age, a part of the complex lesson of their intellectual existence,—giving rise to lasting systems of opinions, which, perhaps, but for the invention of this single word, never could have prevailed for a moment, and modifying sciences, the very elements of which had not then begun to exist. The inventor of the most barbarous term may thus have had an influence on mankind, more important than all which the most illustrious conqueror could effect by a long life of fatigue, and anxiety, and peril, and guilt. Of the generalship of Alexander, and the valour of his armies,—of all which he suffered, and planned, and executed, what permanent vestiges remain, but in the writings of historians.

In a very few years, after the termination of his dazzling career, every thing on the earth was almost as if he had never been. A few phrases of Aristotle achieved a much more extensive and lasting conquest; and are, perhaps even at this moment, exercising no small sway on the very minds which smile at them

with scorn; and which, in tracing the extent of their melancholy influence on the progress of science, in centuries that are past, are unconscious that they are describing and lamenting prejudices, of which they are themselves still, in a great measure, the slaves. How many truths are there, of which we are ignorant, merely because one man lived!

To return, however, to the objections which we are to consider. Diversity of any kind, it is said, is inconsistent with absolute identity, in any case; and in the mind, which is by supposition indivisible, nothing can be added to it or taken away, and no internal change can take place, in the relative positions and affinities of parts which it has not. Joy and sorrow are different in themselves; that which is joyful, therefore, and that which is sorrowful, cannot be precisely the same, or diversity of any kind might be consistent with absolute identity. That the joyful and sorrowful mind are precisely the same, is not asserted, if the sameness be meant to imply sameness of state; for it is admitted, that the state of the mind is different in joy and sorrow; and the only question is, whether this difference, to which we give the name of difference of state, be incompatible with complete and absolute sameness of substance.

The true key to the sophistry is, as I have already said, that it assumes a false test of identity, borrowed, indeed, from the obvious appearances of the material world, but from these obvious appearances only. Because diversity of any kind seems, in these familiar cases, to be inconsistent with absolute identity, we draw hastily the universal conclusion, that it is inconsistent with absolute identity in any case. Paradoxical as the assertion may appear, however, we may yet safely assert, that, not in mind only, but, as we shall find, in matter also, some sort of diversity is so far from being inconsistent with absolute identity, that there is scarcely a single moment, if, indeed, there be a single moment, in which every atom in the universe is not constantly changing the tendencies that form its physical character, without the slightest alteration of its own absolute identity; so that the variety of states or tendencies of the same identical mind, in joy and sorrow, ignorance and knowledge, instead of being opposed, as you might think, by the general analogy of nature, is in exact harmony with that general analogy. It is from our view of matter, unquestionably, as implying, in all its visible changes of state, some loss of identity, some addition or subtraction of particles, or change of their form of combination, that the objection, with respect to the identity of the mind, during its momentary or lasting changes of state, is derived; and yet we shall find, that it is only when we consider even matter itself superficially and slightly, that we ascribe the changes which take place in it, to circumstances that affect its identity. To view it more profoundly and accurately, is to observe, even in matter, constant changes of state, where the identity has continued entire, and changes as opposite as those of the mind itself when, at different periods, it presents itself in different aspects, as sad and cheerful, ignorant and wise, cruel and benevolent.

The apparent mystery of the continued identity of one simple and indivisible mind, in all the variety of states of which it is susceptible, is thus, in a great measure, solved, when we find this union of variety and sameness to be the result of a law that is not limited to our spiritual being, but extends to the whole universe, or at least to every thing which we know in the universe. It can no longer appear to us peculiarly wonderful, that the mind should exist at different moments in opposite states, and yet be the same in its own absolute nature, when we shall find that this compatibility is true of every atom around us, as much as of the mind itself.

LECTURE XIV.

CONTINUATION OF THE NEGATIVE EVIDENCE OF MENTAL IDENTITY.

My Lecture yesterday was, in a great measure, employed in illustrating the primary evidence of those principles of intuitive assent, to which we traced our belief of the identity of the mind as one and permanent, in all the variety of its ever-changing affections. I explained to you, particularly with a view to that vague and not very luminous controversy, in which Dr Priestly was engaged with some philosophers of this part of the island, in what manner the truth of these intuitive propositions must be assumed or admitted by all who reason, even by the wildest sceptic who professes to question them; pointing out to you, at the same time, the danger to which two of the strongest principles of our constitution, our indolence and our love of knowledge, alike expose us,—the danger of believing too soon that we have arrived at truths which are unsusceptible of any minuter analysis. In conformity, therefore, with the caution which this danger renders necessary, we examined the belief of our continued identity; and we found it to possess the distinguishing marks, which I ventured to lay down as the three great characters of intuition, that it is universal, immediate, and irresistible; —so universal, that even the very maniac, who conceives that he was yesterday emperor of the moon, believes that he is to-day the very person who had yesterday that empire;—so immediate, that we cannot con-

sider any two feelings of our mind as successive, without instantly considering them as feelings of our mind, that is to say, as states of one permanent substance;—and so irresistible, that even to doubt of our identity, if it were possible for us truly to doubt of it, would be to believe, that our mind, which doubts, is that very mind which has reflected and reasoned on the subject.

Having thus stated the positive ground of belief in our spiritual identity, I proceeded to consider the negative evidence which might arise from the confutation of the objections urged against it,—objections drawn from the supposed incompatibility of the changes of our mental affections, with that strict absolute identity of substance, to which nothing can have been added, and from which nothing can have been taken away. The test of identity, which this supposed incompatibility implies, I stated to be a very false one, transferred from matter to mind, and borrowed, not from a philosophical, but from a very superficial view even of matter itself. If it appear, on a closer inquiry, that matter itself, without the slightest loss of identity, exists at different moments, in states which are not merely different but opposite, and exists in an almost infinite variety of such states, it cannot surely seem wonderful, that the mind also should, without the slightest loss of its identity, exist, at different moments, in states that are different and opposite.

That a superficial view of matter, as it presents itself to our mere organs of sense, should lead us to form a different opinion, is, however, what might readily be supposed, because the analogies which that superficial view presents, are of a kind that seem to mark a loss of identity wherever the state itself is altered.

In experimental philosophy, and in the obvious natural phenomena of the material world, whenever a body changes its state, some addition or separation has previously taken place. Thus, water becomes steam by the addition, and it becomes ice by the loss of a portion of that matter of heat which is termed by chymists caloric; which loss and addition are, of course, inconsistent with the notion of absolute numerical identity of the corpuscles, in the three states of water as a solid, a liquid, and a gaseous vapour. Perception, by which the mind is metaphorically said to acquire knowledge, and forgetfulness, by which it is metaphorically said to lose knowledge, have, it must be confessed, a very striking analogy to these processes of corpuscular loss and gain; and, since absolute identity seems to be inconsistent with a change of state in the one set of phenomena, with which we are constantly familiar, we find difficulty in persuading ourselves that it is not inconsistent with a change of state in the other set also. It is a difficulty of the same kind as that which every one must have felt, when he learned, for the first time, the simple physical law, that matter is indifferent as to the states of motion and rest, and that it requires, therefore, as much force to destroy completely the motion of a body, as to give it that motion when at rest. We have not been accustomed to take into account the effects of friction, and of atmospherical resistance, in gradually destroying, without the interference of any visible force, the motion of a ball, which we are conscious of effort in rolling from our hand; and we think, therefore, that rest is the natural state of a body, and that it is the very nature of motion to cease spontaneously. "Dediscit animus sero, quod didicit diu." It is a very just saying of a French writer, that "it is not easy to persuade men to put their reason in the place of their eyes; and that when, for example, after a thousand proofs, they are reasonable enough to do their best to believe that the planets are so many opaque, solid, habitable orbs, like our earth, they do not believe it in the same manner as they would have done, if they had never looked upon them in another light. There still comes back upon their belief something of the first notion which they had, that clings to them with an obstinacy which it requires a continual effort to shake off."*

It is, then, because some substantial loss or gain does truly take place in the changing phenomena of the bodies immediately around us, to which we are accustomed to pay our principal attention, that we learn to regard a change of state in matter as significant of loss of identity, and to feel, therefore, some hesitation in admitting the mental changes of state to be consistent with absolute sameness of substance. Had our observation of the material phenomena been different, there would have been a correspondent difference in our view of the changes of the phenomena of the mind.

If, for example, instead of previously gaining or losing caloric,—as in the constitution of things of which we have our present experience,—the particles of the water had suddenly assumed the state of vapour on the sounding of a trumpet at a distance, and the state of ice immediately on the rising of the sun,—in short, if the different changes of state in bodies, by which their physical character for the time seems, in many cases, to be wholly altered, had occurred without any apparent loss or gain of substance, we should then no longer have found the same difficulty in admitting the changes of state in mind as consistent with its identity; and the sentient substance, which previously existed in a different state, might then, on the sounding of a trumpet,

* Fontenelle, Pluralité des Mondes, Conversat. 6me.

have been conceived by us to begin to exist, in the state which constitutes that particular sensation of hearing, or, on the rising of the sun, to exist in that different state which constitutes the sensation of colour, as readily as the material substance, previously existing in the form of water, to begin at the same moment, without any essential or numerical change, and consequently with perfect identity, to exist in the new state of steam, or in the state of a crystalline mass, as solid as the rock from which it hangs as an icicle, or that glitters with its gemmy covering.

But it may be said, that the very supposition which we now make is an absurd one; that the mere presence of the sun in the firmanent, at a distance from the water, cannot be supposed to convert it into ice, unless the water gain or lose something, and consequently cease to have absolute identity; and that the case, therefore, is of no value, as illustrating the compatibility of change of state in our various sensations, with unaltered identity of the sentient mind. To this I might answer, that although the presence of the sun certainly does not operate in the manner supposed, —as the sequences of events are now arranged in the great system of nature,—it is only by experience, and not by intuition or reasoning, we know, that the presence of the sun has not the very effect which the separation of caloric now produces, and that there is nothing absolutely more wonderful in the one case than in the other. If our experience had been the reverse of this,—if the change of place of a few particles of caloric had not, as now, converted the liquid water into that solid congeries of crystals which we call ice,—we should then have found as little difficulty in conceiving that it should not have this effect, as we now find in adapting our belief to the particular series of events which constitute our present experience.

It is not necessary, however, to have recourse to suppositions of this kind; since the system of nature, even according to our present experience of it, furnishes sufficient proof of changes as wonderful in the state of bodies produced obviously at a distance, and, therefore, without any loss or addition which can affect their identity. For sufficient evidence of this, I need appeal only to the agency of the celestial gravitation; that gigantic energy of nature which fills the universe, like the immediate presence of the Deity himself,—to which, in the immensity of its influence, the distances, not from planets to planets merely, but from suns to suns, are like those invisible spaces between the elements of the bodies around us, that seem actual contact to our eyes, —and in comparison with which, the powers that play their feeble part in the physical changes on the surface of our earth, are as inconsiderable as the atoms, on which they exercise their little dominion, are to the massy orbs which it wields and directs at will,—

> "Those bright millions of the heavens,
> Of which the least full Godhead had proclaim'd,
> And thrown the gazer on his knee."—"Admire
> The tumult untumultuous. All on wing,
> In motion all; yet what profound repose,
> What fervid action, yet no noise!—as aw'd
> To silence by the presence of their Lord."*

The action of these great planetary bodies on each other, it surely cannot be denied, leaves their separate identities precisely as before; and it is a species of agency, so essential to the magnificent harmony of the system, that we cannot conceive it to have been interrupted for a single moment since the universe itself was formed. An action, therefore, has been constantly taking place on all the bodies in the universe, and consequently a difference of some sort produced, which yet leaves their identities unaffected. But, though the identity of the substance of the separate orbs is not affected by their mutual attractions, the state, or temporary physical character, of these orbs, considered individually as one great whole, must be affected,—or it would be absurd to speak of their mutual agency at all; for action implies the sequence of a change of some sort, and there can be no action, therefore, where the substances continue precisely the same, and their state also precisely the same, as before the action. Accordingly, we find, on our own globe, that great changes of state, such as form the most striking of its regular visible phenomena, are produced by this distant operation. The waters of our ocean, for example, rise and fall, and, therefore, must have altered states, or physical tendencies, in consequence of which they rise and fall, as there is no correspondent addition or subtraction of matter, at regular intervals, which it is in our power to predict with infallible accuracy,—not because we can divine any loss of identity in the fluid mass,—any internal change in its elementary composition, or the nature and varieties of the winds which are to sweep along its surface; but because we know well, at what hours, and in what relative situation, a certain great body, at the distance of some hundreds of thousands of miles, is to be passing along the heavens.

If, then, the mere position of a distant heavenly body can cause the particles of our ocean to arrange themselves in a different configuration from that in which they would otherwise have existed, and, therefore, must have produced in the particles that change of state, which forces them, as it were, into this altered form, without addition to them of any thing, or subtraction of any thing,—in short,

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* Young's Night Thoughts, Night 9.

leaving in them the same absolute numerical or corpuscular identity as before,—there surely can be no greater difficulty, in supposing, as in the case before imagined, that a certain position of the sun might have immediately caused the particles of a distant liquid to arrange themselves in the particular configuration that constitutes the solid ice, —which, though perhaps a more striking change of state, would not have been more truly a change of state, than that which it now unquestionably produces, in modifying the rise or fall of our tides. And, if a distant body can produce in matter a change of state, without affecting its identity, by any addition or subtraction, we may surely admit, that the presence of an external body, as in perception, may, in mind also, produce a change of state, without affecting its identity; unless, indeed, (which is not impossible, because nothing is impossible to human folly,) we should be inclined to reverse our prejudices, and maintain, that matter may be easily conceived to change the affinities or tendencies that form its physical character, in the particular circumstances observed, without any addition or subtraction of substance, but that some positive addition or subtraction of substance is, notwithstanding, essential to the simple changes or affections of the mind.

If the moon were suddenly annihilated, our earth would still be the same identical planet, without the loss or gain of a single particle of substance. But the state of this planet, as a whole, and of every atom of this planet, would be instantly altered, in many most important respects,—so completely altered, indeed, that not an atom of the mass would tend to the other atoms of the mass, in the same manner as before. In like manner, if the light, which now, operating on one of my organs of sense, causes my mind to exist in the state that constitutes the sensation of a particular colour, were suddenly to vanish, the state of my mind would be instantly changed, though my mind itself, considered as a substance, would still continue unaltered. In both cases,—the spiritual, and the material,—and in both cases alike,—absolute identity, in the strictest sense of the term, is consistent with innumerable diversities.

In the discussion of this supposed difficulty, I have chosen, for illustration, in the first place, to consider the planetary attractions, in preference to those which occur in the minuter changes that are simply terrestrial; because, in the case of operations at a distance, it is impossible for us not to perceive, that, even in matter, a change of state is not inconsistent with complete permanence of absolute corpuscular identity; while, in the compositions or decompositions, that occur spontaneously, or by artificial experiment, in the physical changes on the surface of our earth, the additions or subtractions of matter, that appear to us to constitute these phenomena, truly destroy the corpuscular identity of the substances in which the change takes place; and the change of state is thus considered by us as implying a positive substantial change. But, when we examine even these phenomena a little more deeply, we shall find, that, like the great operations of gravitation on the masses of the universe, the change, in these also, is not a positive change of substance, but is simply a change of state in a congeries of independent substances, which we term one substance, merely because the spaces, that are really between them, are imperceptible to our very imperfect organs; the addition or subtraction of matter being not that which constitutes the new states or tendencies of the particles which continue present, but merely that which gives occasion to those changes of state or tendency;—as the positions of the heavenly bodies do not constitute the phenomena of our tides, but merely give occasion to that difference of state in the particles of the ocean, in consequence of which they assume of themselves a different configuration. Man is placed, as it has been truly said, on a point, between two infinities,—the infinitely great, and the infinitely little. It may be an extravagant speculation, to which I have before alluded,—but it is not absolutely absurd, to suppose, that, in the unbounded system of nature, there may be beings, to whose vision the whole planetary attendants of each separate sun, which to us appear to revolve at distances so immense, may yet seem but one small cohesive mass; in the same manner, as, to those animalculae, whose existence and successive generations had been altogether unknown to man, till the microscope created them, as it were, to his feeble sight, and which, perhaps, are mighty animals compared with races of beings still more minute, that are constantly living in our very presence, and yet destined never to be known to us,—those bodies, which to us seem one small cohesive mass, may appear separated by distances, relatively as great as to us are those of the planets. That light, itself a body, should pass freely through a mass of solid crystal, is regarded by us as a sort of physical wonder; and yet it is far from impossible, that, between the atoms which compose this apparently solid mass, whole nations of living beings may be dwelling, and exercising their mutual works of peace or hostility; while perhaps, if philosophy can be exercised, in brains of such infinitesimal dimensions, in the same manner as in our coarser organs, the nature of the atoms, or distant worlds around them, may be dividing, with endless absurdities, the Ptolemies and Aristotles of the little republics. We have all so much of the nature of the inhabitants of Brobdignag, that a supposition of this kind,—which is perhaps

truly in itself not a very probable one,—yet appears to us much more improbable than it really is. We smile, as recognizing our own nature, when the sovereign of that country of giants is represented by the most unfortunate, or rather the most fortunate of all voyagers, as "turning to his first minister, who waited behind him with a white staff, near as tall as the mainmast of the Royal Sovereign, and observing how contemptible a thing was human grandeur, which could be mimicked by such diminutive insects. And yet," said he, "I dare engage, those creatures have their titles and distinctions of honour; they contrive their nests and burrows, that they call houses and cities; they make a figure in dress and equipage; they love, they fight, they dispute, they cheat, they betray." And we fully enter into the difficulty which the *savans* of the country, who had all agreed that the new-discovered animal could not have been produced according to the regular laws of nature, must have found in giving him a name. "One of them seemed to think that I might be an embryo, or abortive birth. But this opinion was rejected by the other two, who observed my limbs to be perfect and finished; and that I had lived several years, as it was manifest from my beard, the stumps whereof they plainly discovered through a magnifying-glass. They would not allow me to be a dwarf, because my littleness was beyond all degrees of comparison; for the queen's favourite dwarf, the smallest ever known in that kingdom, was near thirty feet high. After much debate, they concluded unanimously, that I was only *relplum scalcath*, which is interpreted literally *lusus naturæ*; a determination exactly agreeable to the modern philosophy of Europe, whose professors, disdaining the old evasion of occult causes, whereby the followers of Aristotle endeavoured in vain to disguise their ignorance, have invented this wonderful solution of all difficulties, to the unspeakable advancement of human knowledge."*

Whatever may be thought of speculations of this kind, however, with respect to the relative distance of the atoms of bodies, it is not the less certain, that these atoms are separate substances, independent of the other similar or different substances that apparently adhere to them in continuity,—that they are, in truth, the only material substances which really exist, since the bodies which we term masses are only those very atoms under another name,—that they remain, and cannot but remain, identical, amid all the changes of chymical composition or decomposition,—and that the change which they suffer, therefore, however strikingly their physical character may be altered for the time, is a change not of substance, but of state only. In the case of the formation of ice, for example, the elementary atoms themselves, which are all that truly exist in nature, are not, and cannot be, changed; but particles, which were formerly easily separable from adjacent particles, now resist this separation by a considerable force. There is a change in their state, therefore, since they now exist with a different degree of tendency toward each other,—a change, to which the separation of a quantity of caloric may, indeed, have given occasion; but which is to be distinguished from that momentary separation itself, since the solidity, which is only another name for the corpuscular resistance, continues after the separation is complete, and would continue for ever, unless a change of temperature were again to restore that former state or tendency of the particles, in which they were easily separable. To him who has learned to consider bodies as, what they truly are, a multitude of separate and independent corpuscles, there is no change of identity, and cannot be any change of identity, in all the phenomena or changes of the universe. The atoms, which alone existed, continue as before; and all which constitutes the phenomenon, or varieties of successive phenomena, is a change of their place or tendency.

This corpuscular view of the material universe,—which, of course, admits an infinite variety of applications, corresponding with the infinite variety of its phenomena,—has many most striking analogies in that moral universe with the phenomena of which we are chiefly concerned. Indeed, when we consider any of the masses before us, as deriving all its apparent magnitude from a number of separate bodies, of which it is composed,—any one of which, individually, would be too minute to be distinguishable by us,—it is scarcely possible not to think of the similarity which it presents to the multitudes of human beings that are, as it were, massed together in the great nations of the earth; and in which any single individual, if he could be supposed to have exercised his powers separately, would have been truly as insignificant as a single atom separated from the mass of which it is a part. What we call the greatness of a nation is nothing more than the union of a number of little interests and little passions joined in one common object; to which insignificant elements, so wonderful when combined, if we could distinctly reduce, by analysis, the most unrivalled power that has ever commanded the admiration and envy of the world, it would, at first view, run some little risk of appearing contemptible. The advantages of this social union of mankind, as silently felt at every moment, are unquestionably so infinite in comparison, as almost to sink into nothing the occasional evils to which the aggregation and massing of so many powers, when

* Gulliver's Travels, part ii. chap. 3.

ill directed, may give rise,—though these terrific evils, when they occur, may dwell more permanently in the mind;—like the visitations of storms and earthquakes, which we remember for ever, while, with a sort of thankless forgetfulness, we scarcely think of the calm beauty and regularity with which season after season passes over us. The rock which, descending from the top of a mountain, lays waste whatever it meets in its progress, and to attempt to stop which, while its short career lasts, would be almost like instant annihilation, derives this overwhelming force from an infinite number of independent corpuscles, any one of which, if it had fallen singly, would have been far less destructive than the flutter of an insect's wing; and that tyrannical power of a single man, before which, in unhappy ages of successful oppression, the earth has so often trembled,—as before some power of darkness, endowed with more than human sway,—has derived its irresistible might, not from powers included in itself,—which, in reference to the objects achieved by it, would have been feeble indeed,—but from the united powers of beings still feebler, who were trembling while they executed commands to which themselves alone gave omnipotence.

To this corpuscular view, however, though it is unquestionably the sort of view to which, in our ultimate physical inquiries into the phenomena of matter, we must come, you may, perhaps, not be sufficiently accustomed, to enter fully into the reasoning on the subject. It will probably be less difficult for you, if we take rather, as an illustration, the simpler case of impulse; in which the bodies affecting each other are not, as in chymistry, indistinguishable corpuscles, but masses, clearly defined, and easily perceptible.

I need not, of course, repeat the arguments formerly stated, to prove that attraction, however general it may be as a law of matter at all visible distances, does not continue, but gives place to an opposite tendency at those smaller distances which we are unable to perceive with our weak organs, and which we learn to estimate only by effects that are inconsistent with absolute contact;—for example, by the well-known fact of the compressibility of bodies, which could not take place if their particles were already in contact, and which, by the continually increasing resistance to the compressing force that would bring the corpuscles nearer, shows, that there is, at different degrees of nearness, a tendency continuing to operate which is the very reverse of attraction. There is, therefore, every reason to believe,—since repulsion, as the fact of forcible compression shows, takes place while the particles of bodies are still at a certain distance,—that the motion produced in one body by another, and ascribed to immediate impulse, is produced, without actual contact, by this mutual repulsion, as it is called, of the bodies when brought within a certain invisible degree of vicinity to each other; or, in other words,—for repulsion means nothing more mysterious than this simple fact,—the tendency which bodies, in certain relative positions of apparent but not actual contact, have to fly off from each other with certain degrees of velocity, as, in certain other relative positions, of distinguishable distance, they have a tendency to approach each other. This repulsion, or tendency from each other at one point of nearness, is of itself as easy to be conceived, as that attraction, or tendency toward each other at other points of distance to which we give the name of gravitation; and it is only from our greater familiarity with the one, as operating at distances which are visible, while the other,—except in a few cases, such as those of magnetism and electricity,—operates only at distances which are imperceptible to us, that we feel a little more difficulty in admitting the repulsion than the attraction of matter. There is, then,—however universal gravitation may seem, when we think only of perceptible distances,—a certain point of near approach, before actual contact, at which gravitation ceases; and, beyond this point, the tendency of bodies toward each other is converted, as the force necessary to compress them evidently shows, into a tendency from each other; both tendencies, indeed, being inexplicable, but the one in no respect more so than the other.

For this apparent digression, on a point of general physics, I make no apology, as it is absolutely necessary for illustrating the particular case to which I am to proceed. The consideration of it requires, what the whole of this discussion, indeed, has already required from you, no small exercise of patient attention; but I trust that I sufficiently prepared you for this, in a former Lecture, when I stated the importance of such attention, not merely in relation to the subject considered at the time, but as a part of your mental discipline, and the advantage which might thus be derived to your intellectual character, from the very difficulties which the subject presents. It is in philosophy, as in many a fairy tale. The obstacles which the hero encounters, are not progressively greater and greater; but his most difficult achievements are often at the very commencement of his career. He begins, perhaps, with attacking the castle of some enchanter, and has to force his way, unassisted, through the griffins and dragons that oppose his entrance. He finishes the adventure with the death of the magician, and strips him of some ring, or other talisman, which renders his subsequent adventures comparatively easy and secure. I cannot venture to say, indeed, that a perfect acquaintance with the difficulties of the present question, and of some of the late questions which have engaged us, will be such a talisman to you, in

your future career of intellectual science. But I may safely say, that the habit of attentive thought, which the consideration of subjects so abstract, necessarily produces, in those who are not too indolent to give attention to them, or too indifferent to feel interest in them, is more truly valuable than any talisman of which accident or force might deprive you. The magic with which this endows you, is not attached to a ring, or a gem, or any thing external; it lives, and lives for ever, in the very essence of your minds.

When a billiard-ball, on being struck, approaches another, which is at rest, it soon arrives at the point of seeming, but not actual contact, at which their mutual attraction ceases, and the force which it has acquired still carrying it on, it passes this bounding point and arrives at a point at which repulsion has already begun. Accordingly the body, formerly at rest, now flies off on a principle precisely similar (though the mere direction be opposite,) to that by which the same ball, if dropped from a hand that supported it, would, without the actual impulse of any body, have quitted its state of rest, as in the present case, and have gravitated, or, which is the same thing, have moved of itself toward the earth.

Before the first ball, which you will, perhaps, more easily remember by the name, A, arrived so very near to the second ball B, as to have come within the sphere of their mutual repulsion, this second ball was at rest, that is to say, it had no tendency to move in any direction. This state of rest, however, is only one of the many states in which a body may exist; and if, which must surely be allowed, a body having a tendency to continued motion, be in a different state from one which has no such tendency, this change of state implying, it must be remarked, not even the slightest loss of identity, has been produced in the body B, by the mere vicinity of the body A. For the sake of illustration, let us now suppose this body A to be hot or luminous. It will still, as before, produce the new state of tendency to motion, in B, when it arrives within the limits of their sphere of repulsion. Is it less conceivable, then, that the mere presence of this hot or luminous body should produce the new sensation of warmth, or of colour, which are different states of the sentient mind, without affecting in the slightest degree the identity of the mind itself, than that it should produce, without any loss of absolute identity, in the body B, an immediate tendency, in that body, to move along with a certain velocity, a state as different from that in which it remains at rest, as the sensation of warmth, which is one state of the mind, is different from the sensation of colour, which is another state of the mind? Nor does the parallel end here; for, since a body at rest, acquiring a tendency to begin motion in one particular direction, as, for example, to move north, must be in a different state from that in which it would have been, if it had acquired an instant tendency to move east, or in any other direction; and the direction once begun, being the same, since a body having a tendency to move with one velocity, must, at every moment of its progress, be in a different state from that in which it has a tendency to move with a different velocity,—it is evident, that the mere presence of a body may produce, in a second body, according to the difference of their positions and relative magnitudes, a variety of states, that, when all the varieties of direction and all the varieties of velocity are estimated together, may be considered as infinite—equal, at least in number, to the different states of which the mind is susceptible, in its almost infinite variety of feelings; and all this without any essential change that can affect the identity of the quiescent or moving body, or any essential change that can affect the identity of the mind.

I am aware, that, when you consider, for the first time, this assertion of an infinite variety of states, corresponding with all the innumerable varieties of direction and velocity, in the tendencies of a simple billiard-ball, which, in the various circumstances supposed, appears to us precisely the same, in all its sensible qualities, you may be apt to conceive, that the assertion must be founded on a mistake, and, from the influence of former prejudice, may be inclined to think, that, when it exhibits a tendency to begin to move east at one time, and, at another time, a beginning tendency to move north, this does not arise from any difference of state in itself, but from its being merely carried along by the first ball, which was itself previously moving in one or other of these particular lines of direction. When the elastic billiard-ball, however, bounds away from the ball which strikes it, this supposition is manifestly inapplicable;—and, in all cases, it is the influence only of former prejudice which can lead you to this opinion,—the influence of that prejudice, by which you may have been accustomed to consider impulse, not as inducing a tendency to motion at some little distance, but as involving the necessity of actual contact. To destroy this prejudice, a very little reflection on the phenomena of elastic bodies, in their shocks and mutual retrocessions, is surely all that can be requisite; and if the motion of B, and consequently its tendency to motion, have begun, without contact of A, as it afterwards continues while A, the elastic body which struck it, is moving back in an opposite direction, it could not be by mechanical trusion, as carried along by A, which is still at some points of distance from it when its motion begins, and at still greater distance the longer the motion continues, that B has assumed any one of its variety of states,—that, for ex-

ample, in which, in one case, it tends to move east, in another case to move north ; in one case to move rapidly, in another slowly. To say that the body acquires this new tendency because it is impelled, is only to say that it is impelled because it is impelled. It is an equally idle use of language, to affirm,—as if a word could obviate the difficulty instead of merely stating it,—that A, in communicating a different tendency to B, which was before at rest, does this by a principle or power of repulsion ; for this, as I have said, is merely to state, in a single word, the regularity, in certain circumstances, of the very fact asserted. The different tendencies of B, and consequently the different states in which B exists—are not the less different, in whatever manner the difference may have been produced, or by whatever word, or combination of words, the difference may be expressed. There is no magic in the phrase, *principle of repulsion* or *power of repulsion*, which can render the same, states or tendencies that are in themselves opposite ;—for, as far as we understand the phrase, it expresses nothing more than the invariableness of the simple fact, that, in certain circumstances of relative position, bodies have a tendency to fly off from each other, as, in certain other circumstances of relative position, which constitute the phenomena of gravitation, they have a tendency to approach. Whatever term we may employ to denote it, it is still a physical fact, that, at a certain point of near and seemingly close approach of another mass, a body, which was before in a state of rest, acquires immediately a tendency to fly off in different directions, and with different velocities at different times, and consequently, that, if the tendency to begin or to continue motion in one direction, and with one velocity, be a state different from that which constitutes the tendency to begin or to continue motion in another direction, and with another velocity, the ball B, in these different circumstances, however identical it may be in substance, exists in two different states ; or all states, however different, may be said to be the same.

It may be admitted, then, that the feeling of rapture is a state of mind completely different from that which constitutes the feeling of agony ; that the sensation of the fragrance of a rose has no resemblance to our conception of a sphere or of an equilateral triangle ; and that, in general, all those thoughts and emotions, which,—more truly than the mere union of the immortal spirit within us with the body which it animates,—may be said to constitute life,

" Love, Hope, and Joy, fair Pleasure's smiling train,—
Hate, Fear, and Grief, the family of Pain ;"

these, as they prevail, in different hours, render the same individual mind more unlike to itself, if its states or tendencies alone, and not its substantial identity, be considered, than the minds perhaps of any two human beings, at the same moment. But still, as we have seen, even from the analogy of the material world, which was supposed to furnish a powerful objection, it is no argument against the absolute identity of the mind, that it exists in different states, however opposite, any more than it is an argument against the absolute identity of a body, that it, at one moment, has a tendency to one particular motion, —at another moment a tendency to a different motion,—and at another moment, no tendency whatever to motion of any kind ; since, in all these cases, as much as in the varying affections of the mind, there is a change of state, with absolute identity of substance.

LECTURE XV.

THE NEGATIVE EVIDENCE OF MENTAL IDENTITY CONTINUED ; OPINION OF MR LOCKE RESPECTING IDENTITY ; SOURCE OF HIS PARADOX ON THIS SUBJECT ; AND REFLECTIONS SUGGESTED BY IT.

My last Lecture, Gentlemen, was employed in considering the general objection to the identity of the mind, drawn from the contrasts of its momentary feelings,—an objection founded on the supposed incompatibility of diversity of any kind with strict and absolute identity. After the very full examination which it received, it is unnecessary to dwell at any length on the other objection, drawn from changes of general character, in the same individual, at different periods of life, or in different circumstances of fortune ; since precisely the same arguments, from the general analogy of nature, which disprove the supposed incompatibility in the one case, disprove it also in the other. Even matter itself, we have seen, may, without the slightest alteration of its identity, exist in an almost infinite variety of states ; having, in some of these states, qualities precisely the reverse of those which it exhibited in other states, attracting what it repelled, repelling what it attracted ; and it surely is not more wonderful, therefore, that the same identical mind, also, should, in relation to the same objects, in different circumstances, be susceptible of an almost infinite variety of affections,—approving, disapproving, choosing, repenting. If we knew nothing more of the relations of two billiard-balls to each other, than the phenomena which they exhibit in the moment of their mutual percussion, when they have been forced, within a certain degree of close vicinity, by the im-

pelling stroke, we should regard them, from their instant reciprocal repulsion, as having a natural tendency to fly off from each other; and, in the state in which they then exist, there is no question that such is their tendency—a tendency, which, in these circumstances, may be regarded as their genuine physical character. Yet we have only to imagine the two balls placed at a distance from each other like that of the remotest planet from the sun; and in traversing the whole wide void that intervenes, what a different physical character would they exhibit, in their accelerating tendency toward each other, as if their very nature were lastingly changed? If there are, then, such opposite tendencies in the same bodies, without any loss of identity, why may not the same minds also have *their* opposite tendencies, when, in like manner, removed, as it were, into circumstances that are different, loving, perhaps, what they hated before, and hating what they loved? If the change of state be not temporary, but permanent, the resulting affections may well be supposed to be permanently different; and, indeed, if they be different at all, cannot but be permanently different, like the altered state. It is as little wonderful, therefore, when any lasting change of circumstances is taken into account, that the same individual should no longer exhibit the same intellectual and moral appearances, as that matter, in its different states, should no longer exhibit the same obvious phenomena; attracting, perhaps, the very bodies which it before repelled, and repelling the very bodies which it before attracted, and attracting and repelling with differences of force, and consequent differences of velocity in the bodies around, the varieties of which it would require all the powers of our arithmetic to compute.

When we observe, then, in a mind, which we have long known and valued, any marks of altered character,—when for example, in one, who, by the favour, or rather by the cruelty, of Fortune, has been raised, from a situation comparatively humble, to sudden distinctions of power and opulence, we see the neglect of all those virtues, the wider opportunity of exercising which seemed to him formerly the chief, or even the only advantage that rendered such distinctions desirable,—the same frivolous vanity which before appeared to him ridiculous in others, and the same contemptuous insolence of pride which before appeared to him contemptible,—a craving and impatient desire of greater wealth, merely because he has no longer any use to make of it, unless, indeed, that it has become more necessary to his avarice than it ever was before to his want,—and a gay and scornful indifference to miseries, that are still sometimes able to force themselves upon his view, the relief of which, that once seemed to him so glorious a privilege, would now not require of him even the scanty merit of sacrificing a single superfluity:—When we perceive this contrast and almost say within ourselves, Is this the same being? we should remember that the influence of fortune is not confined to the mere trapping, which it gives or takes away—that it operates within as much as without—and that, accordingly, in the case now imagined by us, the new external circumstances have been gradually modifying the mind, in the same manner as new external circumstances of a different kind modify the bodies which happen to be placed in them,—not affecting their identity, but altering their state; and that, if we could distinguish, as accurately, the series of changes which take place in mind, as we can distinguish those which take place in matter, we should not be more astonished, that, in circumstances of rare and unhappy occurrence, a disposition once apparently generous is generous no more, than we are to observe a body, attracted to another body, at one distance, and afterwards repelled from it, in consequence merely of a change of their mutual position,—a change so very slight as to be altogether undistinguishable by our senses.

I have dwelt on this question at much greater length than I should otherwise have done, however interesting it truly is as a question of metaphysics, because I was anxious to obviate a prejudice which is very closely connected with this point, and which, most unfortunately for the progress of the Philosophy of Mind, has given a wrong bias to the speculations of many very enlightened men. No one, I am aware, can be so sincerely sceptical as to doubt, even for a moment, his own identity, as one continued sentient being, whatever ingenious sophistry he may urge in support of the paradox which he professes to hold. But still, while the compatibility of diversity with absolute identity, as now explained to you, was but obscurely felt,—a compatibility which, to the best of my remembrance, no writer, with whom I am acquainted, has attempted to illustrate,—the difficulty of reconciling the growth or decay of knowledge, and all the successive contrasts or changes of feeling, which our sensations, thoughts, emotions, exhibit, with the permanent indivisible unity of the same sentient principle, has been sufficient, in many cases, to produce a vague and almost unconscious tendency to materialism, in minds that would not otherwise have been easily led away by a system so illusive; and, where it has not produced this full effect, it has at least produced a tendency, in many cases, to encumber the simple theory of the mental phenomena with false and unnecessary hypotheses, very much akin to those of absolute materialism. Without this absolute materialism, mind must still be left, indeed, as the ultimate subject of sensation, and the difficulty truly remains the same; but it is contrived to

complicate, as much as possible, the corporeal part of the process, which precedes this ultimate mental part, by the introduction of phantasms, or other shadowy films, animal spirits, vibratiuncles, or other sensorial motions, that a wider room may thus be left for a play of changes, and the difficulty of accounting for the diversity of sensations be less felt, when it is to be divided among so many substances in almost constant motion; while the attention is, at the same time, led away from the immediate mental change, in which alone the supposed difficulty consists, to the mere corpuscular changes, in which there is no supposed difficulty.

It is a general law of our internal, as well as of our external perceptions, that we distinguish most readily what is least complicated. In a chorus of many voices, a single discordant voice may escape even a nice discriminator of musical sounds, who would have detected instantly the slightest deviation from the melody of a simple air. A juggler, when he wishes to withdraw a single card, is careful to present to us many; and, though the card which he withdraws is truly before our eyes at the very moment at which he separates it from the pack, we do not discover the quick motion which separates it, however suspiciously watchful we may be, because our vigilance of attention is distracted by the number of cards which he suffers to remain. It is not because the card which he removes is not before us, then, that we do not observe the removal of it, but because it is only one of many that are before us. It is precisely the same in those complicated material processes, with which some theorists encumber the simple phenomena of the mind. The difficulty which seems, to them, to attend any diversity whatever in a substance that is identical, simple, indivisible, and incapable of addition or subtraction, remains, indeed, ultimately in all its force, and would strike us equally, if this supposed difficulty were to be considered alone. But many hypothetical vibrations, or other motions, are given to our consideration at the same moment, that glance upon our mental view like the rapid movements of the juggler's hand. We, therefore, do not feel so painfully as before, a difficulty which occupies our attention only in part; and, in our feeble estimation of things, to render a difficulty less visible to us, is almost like a diminution of the difficulty itself.

For obviating this tendency to materialism, or to what may be considered almost as a species of semi-materialism in the physiology of the mind, it is of no small consequence to have accurate views of the nature of our mental identity. Above all, it is of importance, that we should be sufficiently impressed with the conviction, that absolute identity, far from excluding every sort of diversity, is perfectly compatible, as we have seen, with diversities that are almost infinite. When we have once obtained a clear view of this compatibility, as independent of any additions or subtractions of substance, we shall no longer be led to convert our simple mental operations into long continued processes, of which the last links only are mental and the preceding imaginary links corporeal; as if the introduction of all this play of hypotheses were necessary for saving that identity of mind, which we are perhaps unwilling to abandon altogether; for it will then appear to us not more wonderful, that the mind, without the slightest loss of identity, should at one moment begin to exist in the state which constitutes the sensation of the fragrance of a rose, and at another moment should begin to exist in the state which constitutes the sensation of the sound of a flute, or in the opposite states of love and hate, rapture and agony,—than that the same body, without the slightest change of its identity, should exist, at one moment, in the state which constitutes the tendency to approach another body, and at another moment in the opposite state which constitutes the tendency to fly from it, or that, with the same absolute identity, it should exist, at different moments, in the different states which constitute the tendencies to begin motion in directions that are at right angles to each other, so as to begin to move in the one case north, in the other east, and to continue this motion, at one time with one velocity, at other times with other velocities, and consequently, with other tendencies to motion that are infinite, or almost infinite.

With these remarks, I conclude what appears to me to be the most accurate view of the question of our personal, or, as I have rather chosen to term it, our mental identity. We have seen, that the belief of this arises, not from any inference of reasoning, but from a principle of intuitive assent, operating universally, immediately, irresistibly, and therefore justly to be regarded as essential to our constitution,—a principle exactly of the same kind as those to which reasoning itself must ultimately be traced, and from which alone its consecutive series of propositions can derive any authority. We have seen that this belief, though intuitive, is not involved in any one of our separate feelings, which, considered merely as present, might succeed each other, in endless variety, without affording any notion of a sentient being, more permanent than the sensation itself; but that it arises, on the consideration of our feelings as successive, in the same manner as our belief of proportion, or relation in general, arises, not from the conception of one of the related objects or ideas, but only after the previous conception of both the relative and the correlative; or rather, that the belief of identity does not arise as subsequent, but is involved in the very remembrance which allows us to

consider our feelings as successive; since it is impossible for us to regard them as successive without regarding them as feelings of our sentient self;—not flowing, therefore, from experience or reasoning, but essential to these, and necessarily implied in them,—since there can be no result of experience, but to the mind which remembers that it has previously observed, and no reasoning but to the mind which remembers that it has felt the truth of some proposition, from which the truth of its present conclusion is derived. In addition to this positive evidence of our identity, we have seen that the strongest objections which we could imagine to be urged against it, are, as might have been expected, sophistical, in the false test of identity which they assume,—that the contrasts of momentary feeling, and even the more permanent alterations of general character, in the same individual, afford no valid argument against it; since, not in mind only, but in matter also,—(from a superficial and partial view of the phenomena of which the supposed objections are derived,)—the most complete identity of substance, without addition of anything, or subtraction of any thing, is compatible with an infinite diversity of states.

I cannot quit the subject of identity, however,—though, from my belief of its importance, I may already, perhaps, have dwelt upon it too long,—without giving you some slight account of the very strange opinions of Mr Locke on the subject. I do this, both because some notice is due to the paradoxes,—even though they be erroneous,—of so illustrious a man, and because I conceive it to be of great advantage, to point out to you occasionally the illusions which have been able to obscure the discernment of those bright spirits which nature sometimes, though sparingly, grants, to adorn at least that intellectual gloom, which even they cannot irradiate; that, in their path of glory, seem to move along the heavens by their own independent light, as if almost unconscious of the darkness below, but cannot exist there for a moment, without shedding, on the feeble and doubtful throngs beneath, some faint beams of their own incommunicable lustre. It is chiefly, as connected with these eminent names, that fallacy itself becomes instructive, when simply exhibited,—if this only be done, not from any wish to disparage merits that are far above the impotence of such attempts, but with all the veneration which is due to human excellence, united as it must ever be to human imperfection. "Even the errors of great men," it has been said, "are fruitful of truths;" and though they were to be attended with no other advantage, this one at least they must always have, that they teach us how very possible it is for man to err; thus lessening at once our tendency to slavish acquiescence in the unexamined opinions of others, and,—which is much harder to be done—lessening also, as much as it is possible for any thing to lessen, the strong conviction, which we feel, that we are ourselves unerring.—The first, and most instructive lesson, which man can receive, when he is capable of reflection, is to think for himself; the second, without which the first would be comparatively of little value, is to reject, in himself, that infallibility which he rejects in others.

The opinion of Locke, with respect to personal identity, is, that it consists in consciousness alone; by which term, in its reference to the past, he can mean nothing more than perfect memory. As far back as we are conscious, or remember; so far, and no farther, he says, are we the same persons. In short, what we do not remember, we, as persons, strictly speaking, never did. The identity of that which remembers, and which is surely independent of the remembrance itself, is thus made to consist in the remembrance, that is confessedly fugitive; and, as if that every possible inconsistency might be crowded together in this single doctrine, the same philosopher, who holds, that our personal identity consists in consciousness, is one of the most strenuous opponents of the doctrine, that the soul always thinks, or is conscious; so that, in this interval of thought, from consciousness to consciousness,—since that which is essential to identity is, by supposition, suspended, the same identical soul, as far as individual personality is concerned, is not the same identical soul, but exists when it does not exist.

"There is another consequence of this doctrine," says Dr Reid, "which follows no less necessarily, though Mr Locke probably did not see it. It is that a man may be, and at the same time not be, the person that did a particular action.

"Suppose a brave Officer to have been flogged when a boy at school, for robbing an orchard, to have taken a standard from the enemy in his first campaign, and to have been made a General in advanced life: Suppose also, which must be admitted to be possible, that when he took the standard, he was conscious of his having been flogged at school; and that, when made a General, he was conscious of his taking the standard, but had absolutely lost the consciousness of his flogging

These things being supposed, it follows from Mr Locke's doctrine, that he who was flogged at school is the same person who took the standard; and that he who took the standard is the same person who was made a General. Whence it follows, if there be any truth in logic, that the General is the same person with him who was flogged at school. But the General's consciousness does not reach so far back as his flogging; therefore, according to Mr Locke's doctrine, he is not the person who was flogged. Therefore the General is, and at the same time is not, the

same person with him who was flogged at school."*

But it is needless to deduce consequences from this very strange paradox; since its author himself has done this, most freely and fully, and often with an air of pleasantry, that but for the place in which we find it, as forming a part of a grave methodical essay on the understanding, would almost lead us to think, that he was himself smiling, in secret, at his own doctrine, and propounding it with the same mock solemnity with which the discoverer of Laputa has revealed to us all the secrets of the philosophy of that island of philosophers.

He allows it to follow, from his doctrine, that, if we remembered at night, and never but at night, one set of the events of our life; as, for instance, those which happened five years ago; and never, but in the day time, that different set of events which happened six years ago: this "day and night man," to use his own phrase, would be two as distinct persons as Socrates and Plato; and, in short, that we are truly as many persons as we have, or can be supposed to have at different times, separate and distinct remembrances of different series of events. In this case, indeed, he makes a distinction of the visible man, who is the same, and of the person who is different.

"But yet possibly, it will still be objected," he says, "suppose I wholly lose the memory of some parts of my life, beyond a possibility of retrieving them, so that perhaps I shall never be conscious of them again; yet am I not the same person that did those actions, had those thoughts that I once was conscious of, though I have now forgot them? To which I answer, that we must here take notice what the word *I* is applied to; which, in this case, is the man only. And the same man being presumed to be the same person, *I* is easily here supposed to stand also for the same person. But if it be possible for the same man to have distinct incommunicable consciousness at different times, it is past doubt the same man would at different times make different persons; which, we see, is the sense of mankind in the solemnest declaration of their opinions; human laws not punishing the mad man for the sober man's actions, nor the sober man for what the mad man did, thereby making them two persons: which is somewhat explained by our way of speaking in English, when we say such an one is not himself, or is beside himself; in which phrases it is insinuated, as if those who now, or at least first used them, thought that self was changed, the self-same person was no longer in that man."†

Such is the doctrine of a philosopher, whose intellectual excellence was unquestionably of the highest rank, and whose powers might be considered as entitling him to exemption, at least, from those gross errors which far weaker understandings are capable of discovering, if even this humble relative privilege had not been too great for man. He contends, that our remembrance of having done a certain action, is not merely to us, the rememberers, the evidence by which we believe that we were the persons who did it, but is the very circumstance that makes us personally to have done it,—a doctrine, which, if the word person were to be understood in the slightest degree in its common acceptation, would involve, as has been justly said, an absurdity as great as if it had been affirmed, that our belief of the creation of the world actually made it to have been created.

If we could suppose Mr Locke to have never thought on the subject of personal identity, till this strange doctrine, and its consequences, were stated to him by another, it may almost be taken for granted, that he would not have failed instantly to discover its absurdity, as a mere verbal paradox; and, yet, after much reflection on the subject, he does not perceive that very absurdity, which he would have discovered, but for reflection. Such is the strange nature of our intellectual constitution. The very functions, that, in their daily and hourly exercise, save us from innumerable errors, sometimes lead us into errors, which, but for them, we might have avoided. The philosopher is like a well armed and practised warrior, who, in his helmet and coat of mail, goes to the combat with surer means of victory than the ill-disciplined and defenceless mob around him, but who may yet sometimes fall where others would have stood, unable to rise and extricate himself, from the incumbrance of that very armour to which he has owed the conquests of many other fields.

What, then, may we conceive to have been the nature of the illusion which could lead a mind like that of Mr Locke to admit, after reflection, an absurd paradox, and all its absurd consequences, which, before reflection, he would have rejected?

It is to be traced chiefly, I conceive, to a source which is certainly the most abundant source of error in the writings and silent reflections of philosophers, especially of those who are gifted with originality of thought,—the ambiguity of the language which they use, when they retain a word with one meaning, which is generally understood in a different sense; the common meaning, in the course of their speculations, often mingling insensibly with their own, and thus producing a sort of confusion, which incapacitates them for perceiving the precise consequences of either of the two. Mr Locke gives his own definition of

* Reid's Essays on the Intellectual Powers, Essay III. chap. vi.

† Essay concerning Human Understanding, b. ii. c. xxvii. sect. 20.

the word person, as comprised in the very consciousness which he supposes to be all that is essential to personal identity; or at least he speaks of consciousness so vaguely and indefinitely as to allow this meaning of his definition to be present to his own mind, as often as he thought of personality. "To find," he says, "wherein personal identity consists, we must consider what *person* stands for; which, I think, is a thinking intelligent being, that has reason and reflection, and can consider itself as itself, the same thinking thing, in different times and places, which it does only by that consciousness which is inseparable from thinking."*

Having once given this definition of a person, there can be no question that personal identity, in his sense, is wherever consciousness is, and only where consciousness is. But this is true of a person, only as defined by him; and, if strictly analyzed, means nothing more, than that consciousness is wherever consciousness is,—a doctrine on which, perhaps, he could not have thought it worth his while to give any very long commentary. It appears more important, however, even to himself, and worthy of the long commentary which he has given it, because, in truth, he cannot refrain from still keeping, in his own mind, some obscure impression of the more common meaning of the term, and extending to a person, as thus commonly understood, what is true only of a person as defined by him. It is as if some whimsical naturalist should give a definition of the word *animal*, exclusive of every winged creature, and should then think that he was propounding a very notable and subtle paradox, in affirming that no animal is capable of rising for a few minutes above the surface of the earth. It would be a paradox, only inasmuch as it might suggest, to those who heard it, a meaning different from that of the definition; and, but for this misconception, which the author of it himself might share, would be so insignificant a truism as not to deserve even the humblest of all praise, that of amusing absurdity.

When, in such cases as this, we discover that singular inconsistency, which is to be found even in the very excellence of every thing that is human,—the perspicacity which sees, at an immeasurable distance, in the field of inquiry, what no other eye has seen, and which yet, in the very objects which it has grasped, is unable to distinguish what is visible to common eyes, are we to lament the imperfection of our mental constitution which leaves us liable to such error? Or, as in other instances, in which, from our incapacity of judging rightly, we are tempted at first to regret the present arrangement of things, are we not rather to rejoice that we are so constituted by nature? If man had not been formed to err, in the same manner as he is formed to reason and to know, that perfect system of faculties, which excluded error, must have rendered his discernment too quick, not to seize instantly innumerable truths, the gradual discovery of which, by the exercise of his present more limited faculties, has been sufficient to give glory and happiness to whole ages of philosophical inquiry. If, indeed, the field had been absolutely boundless, he might still have continued to advance, as at present, though with more gigantic step, and more searching vision, and found no termination to his unlimited career. But the truths which relate to us physically, on this bounded scene of things in which we are placed, numerous as they are, are still in some measure finite, like that scene itself; and the too rapid discoveries, therefore, of a few generations, as to the most important properties of things, would have left little more for the generations which were to follow, than the dull and spiritless task of learning what others had previously learned, or of teaching what themselves had been taught.

Philosophy is not the mere passive possession of knowledge; it is, in a much more important respect, the active exercise of acquiring it. We may truly apply to it what Pascal says of the conduct of life in general. "We think," says he, "that we are seeking repose, and all which we are seeking is agitation." In like manner, we think that it is truth itself which we seek, when the happiness which we are to feel most strongly, is in the mere search; and all that would be necessary, in many cases, to make the object of it appear indifferent, would be to put it fairly within our grasp.

> "Our hopes, like towering falcons, aim
> At objects in an airy height;
> But all the pleasure of the game
> Is afar off to view the flight."

What little value do we set on discoveries that have been long familiar to us, though their own essential value must still continue the same. Even on the whole mass of knowledge, that has been gradually and slowly transmitted to us, we reflect with little interest, unless as it may lead to something yet unknown; and the result of a single new experiment, which bears no proportion to the mass to which it is added, will yet be sufficient to rouse and delight every philosopher in Europe. It is a very shrewd remark of a French writer, in reference to the torpor which the most zealous inquirer feels as to every thing which he knows, and his insatiable avidity for every thing which he does not know, that "if Truth were fairly to show herself as she is, all

* Essay concerning Human Understanding, b. ii. c. xxvii. sect. 9.

would be ruined; but it is plain, that she knows very well of how great importance it is that she should keep herself out of sight."

If we were to acquire, by an unhappy foresight, the knowledge which is not yet ours, it is very evident that we must soon regard it in the same manner as the knowledge which we have already acquired. The charm of novelty, the delights of gratified curiosity, would not be for us. The prey would be at our feet; and it would be vain, therefore, to expect that ardour of soul which is kindled amid the hopes and the fears, the tumults and the competition of the chase.

"If man were omnipotent, without being God," says Rousseau, "he would be a miserable creature: he would be deprived of the pleasure of desiring; and what privation would be so difficult to be borne!" It may be said, at least with equal truth, that if man were omniscient, without the other perfections of the Divinity, he would be far less happy than at present. To infinite benevolence, indeed, accompanied with infinite power, a corresponding infinity of knowledge must afford the highest of all imaginable gratifications, by its subservience to those gracious plans of good which are manifested in the universe, and which, in making known to us the existence of the Supreme Being, have made him known to us, as the object of grateful love and adoration. But if, in other respects, we were to continue as at present,—with our erring passions, and moral weaknesses of every sort,—to be doomed to have nothing to learn, would be a punishment, not a blessing, In such circumstances, if they were to continue for ever, the annihilation of our intellectual being would not be an evil so great as the mere extinction of our curiosity, and of all the delights and consolations which it affords, not merely when we gratify it, but when we are merely seeking to gratify it.

> "Else wherefore burns,
> In mortal bosoms, this unquenched hope,
> That breathes from day to day sublimer things,
> And mocks possession? Wherefore darts the mind,
> With such resistless ardour, to embrace
> Majestic forms, impatient to be free,
> Proud of the strong contention of her toils,
> Proud to be daring?"*—
> "Why departs she wide†
> From the dull track and journey of her times,
> To grasp the good she knows not? In the field
> Of things which may be, in the spacious field
> Of science, potent arts, or dreadful arms,
> To raise up scenes in which her own desires
> Contented may repose,—when things which are
> Pall on her temper like a twice-told tale."‡

It is sufficient that we are endowed with powers of discovery. Our gratitude is due to Heaven for the gift; and the more due for that gracious wisdom which has known how to limit the powers which it gave, so as to produce a greater result of good by the very limitation. Our prejudices, which sometimes forbid reasoning, and the errors, to which our imperfect reasoning often leads us, we should consider, when all their remote relations are taken into account, as indirect sources of happiness; and though we may wish, and justly wish, to analyze them, and to rise above their influence,—for, without this exertion, and consequent feeling of progress, on our part, they would be evil rather than good,—we must not forget, that it is to them we owe the luxury, which the immediate analysis affords, and the acquisition of the innumerable truths, which the prevalence of these errors, in past ages, has left to be discovered by the ages which succeed.

In this, and in every thing which relates to man, Nature has had in view, not the individual or the single generation only, but the permanent race. She has, therefore, not exhausted her bounty on any one period of the long succession; but, by a provision, which makes our very weakness instrumental to her goodness, she has given to all, that distant and ever brightening hope, which, till we arrive at our glorious destination,

> "Leads from goal to goal,
> And opens still, and opens on the soul."*

With enough of mental vigour to advance still farther in the tracks of science that are already formed, and to point out new tracks to those who are to follow, we have enough of weakness to prevent us from exploring and exhausting, what is to occupy, in the same happy search, the millions of millions that are to succeed us. Truth itself, indeed, will always be progressive; but there will still, at every stage of the progress, be something to discover, and abundance to confute. "In 24,000 years," to borrow the prediction of a very skilful prophet,—"In 24,000 years, there will arise philosophers, who will boast that they are destroying the errors which have been reigning in the world for 30,000 years past; and there will be people who will believe, that they are *then only just beginning* to open their eyes."

In these remarks, on the nature of our varied consciousness, and on the unity and identity of the mind in all its varieties,—we have considered the mental phenomena in their general aspect. We have now to consider them as arranged in kindred classes,—or rather to attempt the difficult task of the classification itself.

To this I shall proceed in my next Lecture.

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* Pleasures of Imagination, (first form of the Poem,) b. i. v. 166—171. 175—5.

† ——Why departs the soul
Wide from the track.—*Orig.*

‡ Pleasures of Imagination, (second form of the Poem,) b. i. v. 215—220.

LECTURE XVI.

ON THE CLASSIFICATION OF THE PHENOMENA OF MIND.

After considering the Phenomena of the Mind in general, we are now to proceed to consider them in the separate classes in which they may be arranged. The phenomena themselves, indeed, are almost infinite, and it might seem, on first reflection, a very hopeless task to attempt to reduce, under a few heads, the innumerable feelings which diversify almost every moment of our life. But to those who are acquainted with the wonders which classification has performed, in the other sciences, the task, difficult as it is, will still seem not absolutely hopeless; though, in one respect, its difficulty will be more highly estimated by them than by others;—since they only, who know the advantage of the fixed and definite nature of the objects of classification, in other sciences, can feel, how much greater the obstacles must be, to any accurate arrangement, in a science, of which the objects are indefinite and complex, incapable of being fixed for a moment in the same state, and destroyed by the very effort to grasp them. But, in this, as in other instances, in which Nature has given us difficulties with which to cope, she has not left us to be wholly overcome; or if we must yield, she has at least armed us for so vigorous a struggle that we gain additional intellectual strength even in being vanquished. "Studiorum salutarium, etiam citra effectum, salutaris tractatio est." If she has placed us in a labyrinth, she has at the same time furnished us with a clue, which may guide us, not indeed through all its dark and intricate windings, but through those broad paths which conduct us into day. The single power by which we discover resemblance or relation in general, is a sufficient aid to us, in the perplexity and confusion of our first attempts at arrangement. It begins, by converting thousands, and more than thousands, into one; and, reducing, in the same manner, the numbers thus formed, it arrives at last at the few distinctive characters of those great comprehensive tribes, on which it ceases to operate, because there is nothing left to oppress the memory or the understanding. If there had been no such science as chymistry, who could have ventured to suppose that the innumerable bodies, animate and inanimate, on the surface of our globe, and all, which we have been able to explore in the very depths of the earth itself, are reducible, and even in the imperfect state of the science, have been already reduced, to a few simple elements? The science of mind, as it is a science of analysis, I have more than once compared to chymistry, and pointed out to you, and illustrated its various circumstances of resemblance. In this, too, we may hope the analogy will hold,—that, as the innumerable aggregates, in the one science, have been reduced and simplified, the innumerable complex feelings in the other will admit of a corresponding reduction and simplification.

The classes which we form, in the mental as well as in the material universe, depend, as you cannot but know, on certain relations which we discover in the phenomena; and the relations according to which objects may be arranged, are of course various, as they are considered by different individuals in different points of view. Some of these relations present themselves immediately, as if to our very glance; others are discoverable only after attentive reflection;—and though the former, merely as presenting themselves more readily, may seem, on that account, better suited for the general purpose of arrangement, it is not the less true that the classification, which approaches nearest to perfection, is far from being always that which is founded on relations, that seem, at first sight, the most obvious. The rudest wanderer in the fields may imagine, that the profusion of blossoms around him,—in the greater number of which he is able, himself, to discover many striking resemblances,—may be reduced into some order of arrangement. But he would be little aware, that the principle, according to which they are now universally classed, has relation, not to the parts which appear to him to constitute the whole flower, but to some small part of the blossom, which he does not perceive at the distance at which he passes it, and which scarcely attracts his eye when he plucks it from the stem.

To our mental classifications the remark is equally applicable. In these, too, the most obvious distinctions are not always those which answer best the purposes of systematic arrangement. The phenomena of the mind are only the mind itself existing in certain states; and, as many of these states are in their nature agreeable, and others disagreeable, this difference, which is to the sentient being himself the most important of all differences, may be supposed to afford the most obvious principle of classification. What is pleasant, what is painful, are perhaps the first classes, which the infant has formed long before he is capable of distinguishing them by a name; and the very imbecility of idiotism itself, to which nothing is true or false, or right or wrong,—and to which there is no future beyond the succeeding moment,—is yet capable of making this primary distinction, and of regulating, according to it, its momentary desires.

" The love of pleasure is man's eldest born,
Born in his cradle, living to his tomb.
Wisdom,—her younger sister, though more grave,
Was meant to minister, not to dethrone *
Imperial Pleasure, queen of human hearts."†

The distribution, which we should be inclined to make, of our mental phenomena, according to this obvious principle, would be into those which are pleasing, those which are painful, and those which are neither painful nor pleasing. But, however obvious this first distinction may seem, as a principle of arrangement, the circumstances, on which the differences depend, are so very indefinite, that the distinction,—though it may be useful to have it in view, in its most striking and permanent cases,—cannot be adopted as the basis of any regular system. To take the mere pleasures and pains of sense, for example,—to what intelligible division could we reduce these, which are not merely fugitive in themselves, but vary, from pain to pleasure, and from pleasure to pain, with a change of their external objects so slight often as to be scarcely appreciable, and in many cases, even when the external objects have continued exactly the same? How small, and how variable a boundary separates the warmth which is pleasing from the heat which pains! A certain quantity of light is grateful to the eye. Increase it;—it becomes, not indifferent,—though that would be a less change,—but absolutely painful; and, if the eye be inflamed, even the small quantity of light,—which was agreeable before and which seemed, therefore, to admit of being very safely classed among the sources of pleasure,—is now converted into a source of agony. Since it is impossible, therefore, to fix the limits of pain and pleasure, and every affection or state of mind, agreeable, disagreeable, or indifferent, may, by a very trifling change of circumstance, be converted into an opposite state, it is evident that any division, founded on this vague and transient distinction, must perplex and mislead us, in our attempts to systematize the almost infinite diversities of thought and feeling, rather than give us any aid in the arrangement.

The great leading division of the mental phenomena which has met with most general adoption by philosophers, is into those which belong to the understanding and those which belong to the will;—a division which is very ancient, but, though sanctioned by the approbation of many ages, very illogical; since the will, which, in this division, is nominally opposed to the intellect, is so far from being opposed to it in reality, that, even by the asserters of its diversity, it is considered as exercising, in the intellectual department, an empire almost as wide as in the department allotted to itself. We reason, and plan, and invent, at least as voluntarily,—as we esteem, or hate or hope, or fear. How many emotions are there too, which cannot, without absolute torture, be forced into either division! To take only a few instances, out of many,—to what class are we to reduce grief, joy, admiration, astonishment, which certainly are not phenomena of the mere understanding, and which,—though they may lead indirectly to desires or volitions,—have nothing, in themselves, that is voluntary, or that can be considered as in any peculiar degree connected with the will. The division of the mental phenomena into those which belong to the understanding, and those which belong to the will, seems, therefore, to be as faulty as would be the division of animals into those which have legs and those which have wings; since the same animals might have both legs and wings, and since whole tribes of animals have neither one nor the other.

Another division of the phenomena of mind, similar to the former, and of equal antiquity, since it corresponds with the very ancient division of philosophy into the contemplative and the active, is into those which belong to the intellectual powers and those which belong to the active powers. " Philosophia et contemplativa est et activa; spectat simulque agit." I must confess, however, that this division of the mental phenomena, as referable to the intellectual and the active powers of the mind, though it has the sanction of very eminent names, appears to me to be faulty, exactly in the same manner as the former, which, indeed, it may be considered almost as representing, under a change of name. Its parts are not opposed to each other, and it does not include all the phenomena which it should include. Is mere grief, for example, or mere astonishment, to be referred to our intellectual or to our active powers? I do not speak of the faculties which they may or may not call into action; but of the feelings themselves as present phenomena or states of the mind. And, in whatsoever manner we may define the term *active*, is the mind more active, when it merely desires good, and fears evil, when it looks with esteem on virtue, and with indignation, or disgust and contempt, on vice, than when it pursues a continued train of reasoning, or fancy, or historical investigation?—when, with Newton, it lays down the laws of planetary motion, and calculates in what exact point of the heavens any one of the orbs, which move within the immense range of our solar system, will be found to have its place at any particular moment, one thousand years hereafter; when, with Shakespeare, it wanders beyond the universe itself, calling races of beings into existence, which nature never knew, but which

* Instead of " not to dethrone," the original has " and not to mar."
† Night Thoughts, viii. 595—599.

nature might almost own—or when, with Tacitus, it enrols slowly, year after year, that dreadful reality of crimes and sufferings, which even dramatic horror, in all its license of wild imagination, can scarcely reach,—the long unvarying catalogue of tyrants,—and executioners,—and victims, that return thanks to the gods and die,—and accusers rich with their blood, and more mighty, as more widely hated, amid the multitudes of prostrate slaves still looking whether there may not yet have escaped some lingering virtue, which it may be a merit to destroy, and having scarcely leisure to feel even the agonies of remorse in the continued sense of the precariousness of their own gloomy existence? When it thus records the warning lessons of the past, or expatiates in fields, which itself creates, of fairy beauty or sublimity, or comprehends whole moving worlds within its glance, and calculates and measures infinitude—the mind is surely active, or there are no moments in which it is so. So little, indeed, are the intellectual powers opposed to the active, that it is only when some intellectual energy coexists with desire, that the mind is said to be active, even by those who are unaccustomed to analytical inquiries, or to refinements of metaphysical nomenclature. The love of power, or the love of glory, when there is no opportunity of intellectual exertion, may, in the common acceptation of the word, be as passive as tranquillity itself. The passion is active only when, with intellectual action, it compares means with ends, and different means with each other, and deliberates, and resolves, and executes. Chain some revolutionary usurper to the floor of a dungeon, his ambition may be active still, because he may still be intellectually busy in planning means of deliverance and vengeance; and, on his bed of straw, may conquer half the world. But, if we could fetter his reason and fancy, as we can fetter his limbs, what activity would remain, though he were still to feel that mere desire of power or glory, which, though usually followed by intellectual exertions, is itself, as prior to these exertions, all that constitutes ambition as a passion? There would indeed still be, in his mind, the awful elements of that force which bursts upon the world with conflagration and destruction; but though there would be the thunder, it would be the thunder sleeping in its cloud. To will, is to act with desire; and, unless in the production of mere muscular motion, it is only intellectually that we can act. To class the active powers, therefore, as distinct from the intellectual, is to class them, as opposed to that, without which, as active powers, they cannot even exist.

It may certainly be contended, that, though the mental phenomena, usually ranked under this head, are not immediately connected with action, they may yet deserve this generic distinction, as leading to action, indirectly,—and, if they led, in any peculiar sense, to action, however indirectly, the claim might be allowed. But, even with this limited meaning, it is impossible to admit the distinction asserted for them. In what sense, for example, can it be said, that grief and joy, which surely are not to be classed under the intellectual powers of the mind, lead to action even indirectly, more than any other feelings, or states, in which the mind is capable of existing? We may, indeed, act when we are joyful or sorrowful, as we may act when we perceive a present object, or remember the past; but we may also remain at rest, and remain equally at rest in the one case as in the other. Our intellectual energies, indeed, even in this sense, as indirectly leading to action, are, in most cases, far more active than sorrow, even in its very excess of agony and despair; and in those cases in which sorrow does truly lead to action, as when we strive to remedy the past, the mere regret which constitutes the sorrow is not so closely connected with the conduct which we pursue, as the intellectual states of mind that intervened—the successive judgments, by which we have compared projects with projects, and chosen at last the plan, which, in relation to the object in view, has seemed to us, upon the whole, the most expedient.

If, then, as I cannot but think, the arrangement of the mental phenomena, as belonging to two classes of powers, the intellectual and the active, be at once incomplete, and not accurate, even to the extent to which it reaches, it may be worth while to try, at least, some other division, even though there should not be any very great hope of success. Though we should fail in our endeavour to obtain some more precise and comprehensive principle of arrangement, there is always some advantage gained, by viewing objects, according to new circumstances of agreement or analogy. We see, in this case, what had long passed before us unobserved, while we were accustomed only to the order and nomenclature of a former method; for, when the mind has been habituated to certain classifications, it is apt, in considering objects, to give its attention only to those properties which are essential to the classification, and to overlook, or at least comparatively to neglect, other properties equally important and essential to the very nature of the separate substances that are classed, but not included in the system as characters of generic resemblance. The individual object, indeed, when its place in any system has been long fixed and familiar to us, is probably conceived by us less as an individual, than as one of a class of individuals that agree in certain respects, and the frequent consideration of it, as one of a class, must fix the peculiar relations of the class

more strongly in the mind, and weaken proportionally the impression of every other quality that is not so included. A new classification, therefore, which includes, in its generic characters, those neglected qualities, will, of course, draw to them attention which they could not otherwise have obtained; and, the more various the views are, which we take of the objects of any science, the juster consequently, because the more equal, will be the estimate which we form of them. So truly is this the case, that I am convinced that no one has ever read over the mere terms of a new division, in a science, however familiar the science may have been to him, without learning more than this new division itself, without being struck with some property or relation, the importance of which he now perceives most clearly, and which he is quite astonished that he should have overlooked so long before.

I surely need not warn you, after the observations which I made in my Introductory Lectures, on the Laws and Objects of Physical Inquiry in General, that every classification has reference only to our mode of considering objects; and that, amid all the varieties of systems which our love of novelty and our love of distinction, or our pure love of truth and order may introduce, the phenomena themselves, whether accurately or inaccurately classed, continue unaltered. The mind is formed susceptible of certain affections. These states or affections, we may generalize more or less; and, according to our generalization, may give them more or fewer names. But whatever may be the extent of our vocabulary, the mind itself,—as independent of these transient designations as He who fixed its constitution,—still continues to exhibit the same unaltered susceptibilities which it originally received; as the flowers, which the same divine Author formed, spring up in the same manner, observing the same seasons, and spreading to the sun the same foliage and blossoms, whatever be the system and the corresponding nomenclature according to which botanists may have agreed to rank and name their tribes. The great Preserver of nature has not trusted us with the dangerous power of altering a single physical law which He has established, though He has given us unlimited power over the language which is of our own creation. It is still with us, as it was with our common sire in the original birthplace of our race. The Almighty presents to us all the objects that surround us, wherever we turn our view; but He presents them to us only that we may give them names. Their powers and susceptibilities they already possess, and we cannot alter these, even as they exist in a single atom.

It may, perhaps, seem absurd, even to suppose, that we should think ourselves able to change, by a few generic words, the properties of the substances which we have classed; and if the question were put to us, as to this effect of our language in any particular case, there can be no doubt that we should answer in the negative, and express astonishment that such a question should have been put. But the illusion is not the less certain, because we are not aware of its influence; and indeed it could no longer be an illusion, if we were completely aware of it. It requires, however, only a very little reflection on what has passed in our own minds, to discover, that when we have given a name to any quality, that quality acquires immediately, in our imagination, a comparative importance, very different from what it had before; and though nature in itself be truly unchanged, it is, ever after, relatively to our conception, different. A difference of words is, in this case, more than a mere verbal difference. Though it be not the expression of a difference of doctrine, it very speedily becomes so. Hence it is, that the same warfare, which the rivalries of individual ambition, or the opposite interests, or supposed opposite interests, of nations have produced in the great theatre of civil history, have been produced, in the small but tumultuous field of science, by the supposed incompatibility of a few abstract terms; and, indeed, as has been truly said, the sects of philosophers have combated, with more persevering violence, to settle what they mean by the constitution of the world, than all the conquerors of the world have done to render themselves its masters.

Still less, I trust, is it necessary to repeat the warning already so often repeated, that you are not to conceive that any classification of the states or affections of the mind, as referable to certain powers or susceptibilities, makes these powers any thing different and separate from the mind itself, as originally and essentially susceptible of the various modifications, of which these powers are only a shorter name. And yet what innumerable controversies in philosophy have arisen, and are still frequently arising, from this very mistake, strange and absurd as the mistake may seem. No sooner, for example, were certain affections of the mind classed together, as belonging to the will, and certain others, as belonging to the understanding,—that is to say, no sooner was the mind, existing in certain states, denominated the understanding, and in certain other states denominated the will,—than the understanding and the will ceased to be considered as the same individual substance, and became immediately, as it were, two opposite and contending powers, in the empire of mind, as distinct as any two sovereigns, with their separate nations under their control; and it became an object of as fierce contention to determine, whether certain affections of the mind belonged to the un-

derstanding, or to the will, as in the management of political affairs, to determine, whether a disputed province belonged to one potentate, or to another. Every new division of the faculties of the mind, indeed, converted each faculty into a little independent mind,—as if the original mind were like that wonderful animal, of which naturalists tell us, that may be cut into an almost infinite number of parts, each of which becomes a polypus, as perfect as that from which it was separated. The only difference is, that those who make us acquainted with this wonderful property of the polypus, acknowledge the divisibility of the parent animal; while those, who assert the spiritual multiplicity, are at the same time assertors of the absolute indivisibility of that which they divide.

After these warnings, then, which, I trust, have been almost superfluous, let us now endeavour to form some classification of the mental phenomena, without considering, whether our arrangement be similar or dissimilar to that of others. In short, let us forget, as much as possible, that any prior arrangements have been made, and think of the phenomena only. It would, indeed, require more than human vision to comprehend all these phenomena of the mind, in our gaze, at once,—

> "To survey,
> Stretch'd out beneath us, all the mazy tracts
> Of passion and opinion,—like a waste
> Of sands, and flowery lawns, and tangling woods,
> Where mortals roam bewilder'd."*

But there is a mode of bringing all this multitude of objects within the sphere of our narrow sight, in the same manner as the expanse of landscape, over which the eye would be long in wandering,—the plains, and hills, and woods, and waterfalls,—may be brought by human art within the compass of a mirror, far less than the smallest of the innumerable objects which it represents.

The process of gradual generalization, by which this reduction is performed, I have already explained to you. Let us now proceed to avail ourselves of it.

All the feelings and thoughts of the mind, I have already frequently repeated, are only the mind itself existing in certain states. To these successive states our knowledge of the mind, and consequently our arrangements, which can comprehend only what we know, are necessarily limited. With this simple word *state*, I use the phrase *affection of mind* as synonymous, to express the momentary feeling, whatever it may be,—with this difference only, that the word affection seems to me better suited for expressing that momentary feeling, when considered as an effect,—the feeling itself as a state of the mind, and the relation which any particular state of mind may bear to the preceding circumstances, whatever they may be, that have induced it.

Our states of mind, however, or our affections of mind, are the simplest terms which I can use for expressing the whole series of phenomena of the mind in all their diversity, as existing phenomena, without any mixture of hypothesis as to the particular mode in which the successive changes may be supposed to arise.

When we consider, then, the various states or affections of the mind, which form this series, one circumstance of difference must strike us, that some of them arise immediately, in consequence of the presence of external objects,—and some, as immediately, in consequence of certain preceding affections of the mind itself. The one set, therefore, are obviously the result of the laws both of matter and of mind,—implying, in external objects, a power of affecting the mind, as well as, in the mind, a susceptibility of being affected by them. The other set result from the susceptibilities of the mind itself, which has been formed by its divine Author to exist in certain states, and to exist in these in a certain relative order of succession. The affections of the one class arise, because some external object is present;—the affections of the other class arise, because some previous change in the states of the mind has taken place.

To illustrate this distinction by example. Let us suppose ourselves, in walking across a lawn, to turn our eyes to a particular point, and to perceive there an oak. That is to say, the presence of the oak, or rather of the light reflected from it, occasions a certain new state of the mind, which we call a sensation of vision,—an affection which belongs to the mind alone, indeed, but of which we have every reason to suppose, that the mind, of itself, without the presence of light, would not have been the subject. The peculiar sensation, therefore, is the result of the presence of the light reflected from the oak; and we perceive it, because the mind is capable of being affected by external things. But this affection of the mind, which has an external object for its immediate cause, is not the only mental change which takes place. Other changes succeed it, without any other external impression. We compare the oak with some other tree which we have seen before, and we are struck with its superior magnificence and beauty;—we imagine how some scene more familiar to us would appear, if it were adorned with this tree, and how the scene before us would appear, if it were stripped of it;—we think of the number of years, which must have passed, since the oak was an acorn;—and we moralize, perhaps, on the changes which have taken place in the

* The Pleasures of Imagination, Book IV. p. 9—15.

little history of ourselves and our friends, and, still more, on the revolutions of kingdoms,—and the birth and decay of a whole generation of mankind,—while it has been silently and regularly advancing to maturity, through the sunshine and the storm. Of all the variety of states of the mind, which these processes of thought involve, the only one which can be ascribed to an external object as its direct cause, is the primary perception of the oak: the rest have been the result, not immediately of any thing external, but of preceding states of the mind;—that particular mental state, which constituted the perception of the oak, being followed immediately by that different state which constituted the remembrance of some tree observed before, and this by that different state which constituted the comparison of the two; and so successively, through all the different processes of thought enumerated. The mind, indeed, could not, without the presence of the oak,—that is to say, without the presence of the light which the oak reflects,—have existed in the state which constituted the perception of the oak. But as little could any external object, without this primary mental affection, have produced, immediately, any of those other states of the mind which followed the perception. There is, thus, one obvious distinction of the mental phenomena; as, in relation to their causes external or internal; and, whatever other terms of subdivision it may be necessary to employ, we have, at least, one boundary, and know what it is we mean, when we speak of the external and internal affections of the mind.

The first stage of our generalization, then, has been the reduction of all the mental phenomena to two definite classes, according as the causes, or immediate antecedents, of our feelings are themselves mental or material. Our next stage must be the still further reduction of these, by some new generalizations of the phenomena of each class.

The former of these classes,—that of our external affections of the mind,—is indeed so very simple, as to require but little subdivision. The other class, however,—that of the internal affections or states of the mind,—comprehends so large a proportion of the mental phenomena, and these so various, that, without many subdivisions, it would be itself of little aid to us in our arrangement.

The first great subdivision, then, which I would form, of the internal class, is into our intellectual states of mind, and our emotions. The latter of these classes comprehends all, or nearly all, the mental states, which have been classed, by others, under the head of active powers. I prefer, however, the term *emotions*, partly because I wish to avoid the phrase, *active powers*,—which, I own, appears to me awkward and ambiguous, as opposed to other powers, which are not said to be passive, and partly, for reasons before mentioned, because our intellectual states or energies,—far from being opposed to our active powers,—are, as we have seen, essential elements of their activity,—so essential, that, without them, these never could have had the name of active; and because I wish to comprehend, under the term, various states of the mind which cannot, with propriety, in any sense, be termed active,—such as grief, joy, astonishment,—and others which have been commonly, though, I think, inaccurately, ascribed to the intellectual faculties,—such as the feelings of beauty and sublimity,—feelings which are certainly much more analogous to our other emotions,—to our feelings of love or awe, for example,—than to our mere remembrances or reasonings, or to any other states of mind which can strictly be called intellectual. I speak at present, it must be remembered, of the mere feelings produced by the contemplation of beautiful or sublime objects,—not of the judgment, which we form of objects, as more or less fit to excite these feelings; the judgment being truly intellectual, like all our other judgments; but being, at the same time, as distinct from the feelings which it measures, as any other judgment from the external or internal objects which it compares.

The exact meaning of the term *emotion*, it is difficult to state in any form of words,—for the same reason which makes it difficult, or rather impossible, to explain, what we mean by the term thought, or the terms sweetness or bitterness. What can be more opposite than pleasure and pain! the real distinction of which is evidently familiar, not to man only, but to every thing that lives; and yet if we were to attempt to show, in what their difference consists, or to give a verbal definition of either, we should find the task to be no easy one. Every person understands what is meant by an emotion, at least as well as he understands what is meant by any intellectual power; or, if he do not, it can be explained to him only, by stating the number of feelings to which we give the name, or the circumstances which induce them. All of them, indeed, agree in this respect, that they imply peculiar vividness of feeling, with this important circumstance, to distinguish them from the vivid pleasures and pains of sense,—that they do not arise immediately from the presence of external objects, but subsequently to the primary feelings, which we term sensations or perceptions. Perhaps, if any definition of them be possible, they may be defined to be vivid feelings, arising immediately from the consideration of objects, perceived, or remembered, or imagined, or from other prior emotions. In some cases,—as in that of the emotion which beauty excites,—they may succeed so rapidly to the primary perception, as almost to form a part of it. Yet we find no great difficulty of analysis, in separating the pleasing effect of

beauty from the perception of the mere form and colour, and can very readily imagine the same accurate perception of these, without the feeling of beauty, as we can imagine the same feeling of beauty to accompany the perception of forms and colours very different.

"Sure the rising sun,
O'er the cerulean convex of the sea,
With equal brightness, and with equal warmth,
Might roll his fiery orb; nor yet the soul
Thus feel her frame expanded, and her powers
Exulting in the splendour she beholds,
Like a young conqueror moving through the pomp
Of some triumphal day. When, joined at eve,
Soft murmuring streams, and gales of gentlest breath,
Melodious Philomela's wakeful strain
Attemper, could not man's discerning ear,
Through all its tones, the sympathy pursue;
Nor yet this breath divine of nameless joy
Steal through his veins, and fan the awaken'd heart
Mild as the breeze yet rapturous as the song."*

Our emotions, then, even in the cases in which they seem most directly to co-exist with perception, are still easily distinguishable from it; and, in like manner, when they arise from the intellectual states of memory, imagination, comparison, they are equally distinguishable from what we remember, or imagine, or compare. They form truly a separate order of the internal affections of the mind, —as distinct from the intellectual phenomena, as the class, to which they both belong, is distinguishable from the class of external affections that arise immediately from the presence of objects without.

LECTURE XVII.

CLASSIFICATION OF THE PHENOMENA OF MIND. —CLASS I. EXTERNAL STATES.

In my last Lecture, Gentlemen, I endeavoured to prepare the way, for arranging, in certain classes, that almost infinite variety of phenomena which the mind exhibits, pointing out to you the peculiar difficulty of such a classification, in the case of phenomena so indefinite and fugitive as those of the mind, and the nature of that generalizing principle of analogy or resemblance, on which every classification, whether of the material or mental phenomena, must alike proceed. I then took a slight view of the primary, leading, divisions of the phenomena of the mind, which have met with most general adoption,—the very ancient division of them, as of two great departments, belonging to the understanding and the will,—and the similar division of them, as referable to two classes of powers, termed the intellectual and active powers of the mind. I explained to you the reasons which led me to reject both these divisions, as at once incomplete, from not comprehending all the phenomena, and inaccurate, from confounding even those phenomena, which they may truly be considered as comprehending.

After rejecting these, it became necessary to attempt some new arrangement, especially as we found reason to believe that some advantage could scarcely fail to arise from the attempt itself, even though it should fail as to its great object; and we, therefore, proceeded to consider and arrange the phenomena, as nearly as posssible, in the same manner as we should have done, if no arrangement of them had ever been made before.

In thus considering them, the first important distinction which occurred to us, related to their causes, or immediate antecedents, as foreign to the mind, or as belonging to the mind itself; a distinction too striking to be neglected as a ground of primary division. Whatever that may be which feels and thinks, it has been formed to be susceptible of certain changes of state, in consequence of the mere presence of external objects, or at least of changes produced in our mere bodily organs, which, themselves, may be considered as external to the mind; and it is susceptible of certain other changes of state, without any cause external to itself, one state of mind being the immediate result of a former state of mind, in consequence of those laws of succession of thoughts and feelings, which He, who created the immortal soul of man, as a faint shadow of His own eternal spirit, has established in the constitution of our mental frame. In conformity with this distinction, we made our first division of the phenomena of the mind, into its external and internal affections; the word *affection* being used, by me, as the simplest term for expressing a mere change of state, induced in relation to the affecting cause, or the circumstances, whatever they may have been, by which the change was immediately preceded.

The class of internal affections,—by far the more copious and various of the two,—we divided into two great orders, our intellectual states of mind, and our emotions, words which are, perhaps, better understood, before any definition is attempted of them, than after it, but which are sufficiently intelligible without definition, and appear to exhaust completely the whole internal affections of the mind. We have sensations or perceptions of the objects that affect our bodily organs; these I term the sensitive or external affections of the mind; we remember objects—we imagine them in new situations—we compare their relations; these mere conceptions or notions of objects and their qualities, as elements of our general knowledge, are what I have termed

* Pleasures of Imagination, Book III. v. 461—478.

the intellectual states of the mind; we are moved with certain lively feelings, on the consideration of what we thus perceive or remember, or imagine, or compare, with feelings, for example, of beauty, or sublimity, or astonishment, or love, or hate, or hope, or fear; these, and various other vivid feelings analogous to them are our emotions.

There is no portion of our consciousness, which does not appear to me to be included in one or other of these three divisions. To know all our sensitive states or affections,—all our intellectual states,—all our emotions, is to know all the states or phenomena of the mind;

> "Unde animus scire incipiat, quibus inchoet orsa
> Principiis seriem rerum tenuemque catenam
> Mnemosyne: Ratio unde, rudi sub pectore tardum
> Augeat imperium, et primum mortalibus ægris
> *Ira, dolor, metus,* et *curæ* nascantur inanes."*

It must not be conceived, however, that, in dividing the class of internal affections of the mind into the two distinct orders of intellectual states, and emotions, and, in speaking of our emotions as subsequent in their origin, I wish it to be understood that these never are combined, at the same moment, in that sense of combination, as applied to the mind, which I have already explained too frequently to need again to define and illustrate it. On the contrary, they very frequently concur; but, in all cases in which they do concur, it is easy for us to distinguish them by reflective analysis. The emotion of pity, for example, may continue in the mind, while we are intellectually planning means of relief for the sufferer who occasioned it; but, though the pity and the reasoning co-exist, we have little difficulty in separating them in our reflection. It is the same with all our vivid desires, which not merely lead to action, but accompany it. The sage, who, in the silence of midnight, continues still those labours which the morning began, watching, with sleepless eye, the fate of some experiment that almost promises to place within his hand the invisible thread which leads into the labyrinths of nature, or exploring those secrets of the mind itself, by the aid of which he is afterwards to lay down rules of more accurate philosophizing, and to become the legislator of all who think, is not cheered, in his toils, merely by occasional anticipations of the truths that await his search. The pleasure of future discovery is, as it were, a constant light, that shines upon him and warms him; and, in the very moments in which he watches, and calculates, and arranges, there are other principles of his nature in as lively exercise as his powers of observation and reasoning. The warrior, at the head of an army, which he has often led from victory to victory, and which he is leading again to new fields of conflict, does not think of glory only in the intervals of meditation or action. The passion which he obeys, is not a mere inspiring genius, that occasionally descends to rouse or invigorate: It is the soul of his continued existence,—it marches with him, from station to station,—it deliberates with him in his tent,—it conquers with him in the field,—it thinks of new successes, in the very moment of vanquishing; and even at night, when his body has yielded at last to the influence of that fatigue of which it was scarcely conscious while there was room for any new exertion by which fatigue could be increased, and when all the anxieties of military command are slumbering with it, the passion that animates him, more active still, does not quit him as he rests, but is wakeful in his very sleep, bringing before him dreams that almost renew the tumults and the toils of the day. Our emotions, then, may co-exist with various sensations, remembrances, reasonings,—in the same manner as these feelings, sensitive or intellectual, may variously co-exist with each other. But we do not think it less necessary to class our sensations of vision as different from our sensations of smell, and our comparison, as itself different from the separate sensations compared, because we may, at the same moment, both see and smell a rose, and may endeavour to appreciate the relative amount of pleasure which that beautiful flower thus doubly affords. In like manner, our intellectual states of mind, and our emotions, are not the less to be considered as distinct classes, because any vivid passion may continue to exist together with those intellectual processes of thought which it originally prompted, and which, after prompting, it prolongs.

In all these cases, however, in which an emotion co-exists with the results of other external or internal influences, it is still easy to distinguish its subsequence to the feelings that preceded it. Pity, for example, as in the case to which I have before alluded, may co-exist with a long train of thoughts that are busily occupied in endeavouring to relieve most effectually the misery which is pitied; but the misery must have been itself an object of our thought, before the state of mind which constitutes pity could have been induced. The emotion which we feel, on the contemplation of beauty, may continue to co-exist with our mere perception of the forms and colours of bodies, but these forms and colours must have been perceived by us, before the delightful emotion could have been originally felt. In short, our emotions, though, like the warmth and radiance, which seem to accompany the very presence of the sun, rather than to flow from it—they may seem in many cases to be a part of the very feelings which excite them, are yet, in every instance,

* Gray, de Principiis Cogitandi, Lib. I. v. 1—5.

as truly secondary to these feelings, as the light which beams on us, on the surface of our earth, is subsequent to the rising of the great orb of day.

As yet we have advanced but a short way in our generalization of the mental phenomena; though, as far as we have advanced, our division seems sufficiently distinct and comprehensive. The mind is susceptible of certain external affections, of certain intellectual modifications which arise from these, and of certain emotions which arise from both; that is to say, it is capable of existing in certain states, the varieties of which correspond with these particular designations. We see, we remember, or compare, what we have seen; —we regard what we see, or remember, or compare, with desire or with aversion; and of these, or of states analogous to these, the whole of life, sensitive, intellectual, or moral, is composed. Every minute, therefore, of every hour, in all its variety of occupation, is but a portion of this complicated tissue. Let us suppose ourselves, for example, looking down from an eminence, on the prospect beneath.—On one side all is desolation,—and we see perhaps, at a little distance, some half-roofless hovel, as miserable as the waste immediately around it, which has scarcely the appearance of a dwelling for any living thing, but seems rather, as if Nature herself had originally placed it there, as a part of the general sterility and ruggedness. On the other side, all is plenty and magnificence;—and we see, amid lawns and wooded banks, a mansion as different in aspect as if the beings that inhabited it were of a different race,—which, as a part of the scene where it is placed, accords so harmoniously with the whole, that, without it, the scene itself would appear incomplete, and almost incongruous, as if stripped of some essential charm. To view these separate dwellings, and all the objects around them—if no other feeling arose —would be to have a series of external or sensitive affections only. But it is scarcely possible for us to view them, without the instant rise of those intellectual states of mind which constitute comparison, and of those affections of another order, which constitute the emotions of admiration and desire in the one case, and in the other the emotions that are opposite to admiration and desire, together perhaps with some of those bitter emotions which the sight of misery makes in every breast that is not unworthy of so sacred an influence.

In this example, our intellectual states of mind, and our emotions, have for their objects things really existing without; but the external affections of our senses, though the most permanent, and usually the most vivid, and therefore the best remembered of all the sources of our internal feelings, are far from being necessary, in every instance, to the production of these. There is a constant, or almost constant, succession of internal affections of mind, of thoughts and emotions, following thoughts and emotions, which, even though we were to be rendered incapable of a single new sensation,—if our animal life could in these circumstances be long protracted,—would still preserve to us also that intellectual and moral existence, which is the only life that is worthy of the name. The knowledge which we acquire from without, lives in us within; and, in such a case as that which I have now imagined, our memory would be to us in some measure every sense which we had lost, creating to us again that very world which had vanished before us. If we could compare and love, or hate, only things actually present, we should be far from the maturity and perfection of an infant's mind, and should scarcely be advanced to the rank of idiocy, which, limited as it is in its range, still comprehends, in its little sphere of foresight and memory, some few moments at least of the past, and even a moment or two of the future. It is with the future and with the past, that, intellectually and morally, we are chiefly conversant. To these high capacities of our being, the subjects, which can exercise our powers and feelings, however distant in time or place, are as it were everlastingly present,—like that mysterious eternal *now*, of which theologians speak,—in which past, present, and future are considered, as, in every moment of every age, alike visible to the omniscient glance of the Divinity. We love the virtues, of which we read, with the same sort of emotion with which we love the virtues that are mingling with us in the present hour. The patriot of the most remote age,—of whom we know nothing but the historical tale of his voluntary perils or sufferings in some generous cause, —is like the friend of our familiar intercourse; and the sacrifices, that wrought the happiness of millions of beings, who are now not merely unknown to us, but of whom not a single name is remembered on the earth, awake a sort of veneration that is almost combined with gratitude, as if we were in the presence of a personal deliverer. It is the same with absolute unreality; not merely with that which no longer exists, but with that which never had existence. We are struck with the beauty of what we only imagine, in the same manner, though perhaps not with the same liveliness of feeling, as we are struck with the beauty of external things. Our emotions, then, however dependent they may have been originally, are now no longer dependent on these external things. They may arise, from memory or imagination, as readily as from perception; but when they arise from memory or imagination, they are as truly distinguishable from what we remember and imagine as they are

distinguishable from our perceptions of mere forms and colours, and other sensible qualities, when they arise from what we perceive.

To have arranged all the varieties of feelings of which the mind is susceptible, in the three great divisions to which our arrangement as yet has extended,—though it is unquestionably to have made some advance in our generalization,—is yet to have made only a small part of the necessary progress; since each of these three orders comprehends almost innumerable phenomena, which require the aid of more minute division. In the class of our external affections, indeed, this subdivision is very simple and easy; since our separate organs of sense furnish, of themselves, a very evident ground of distinction. But the two orders of our internal affections have no such obvious and tangible distinction, to serve as the basis of their subdivisions. They admit, however,—as I trust we shall find,—of distinctions which, though not equally obvious, are almost equally definite; and require only a very little reflection, to be understood as clearly as the organic relations, according to which we distinguish our sensations of sound, or smell, or sight. It is not my intention, however, to proceed, at present, to the consideration of these subdivisions; since the nature of the more minute arrangement will, I conceive, be better understood, when we come to treat of each separate order fully, than they could be now by the mere enumeration of a few names, of the propriety of which as mere names, and, still more, of the propriety of the arrangement which they involve, you could not be expected to form any accurate judgment, without a fuller elucidation.

All which I must request you, then, at present to keep in remembrance, is the primary division, which we have made, of the different states of the mind into two great classes, and the secondary division which we have made of one of these classes into its two very comprehensive orders.—You will remember, then, that the various affections, of which the mind is susceptible, are either external, as they arise from causes without the mind, or internal, as they arise from previous states of the mind itself;—that of these internal affections, some are mere conceptions or notions of former feelings, or of objects, and of the qualities or relations of objects, as remembered or variously combined or compared,—results of different susceptibilities of our intellectual constitution, to which different names have been given, conception, memory, imagination, abstraction, reason, and other synonymous terms;—that these internal affections or states of the mind, which I have denominated its intellectual states, are distinctly separable, in our reflective analysis, from certain vivid feelings that may arise instantly in the mind on the consideration of these mere intellectual results, or on the perception of objects without,—feelings of admiration, love, desire, and various other analogous or opposite states of the mind;—but that there is such an order of vivid feelings, which arise, in many cases, on the mere consideration of what we perceive, or remember, or imagine, or compare; and that this order is what I wish to be distinguished by the name of *emotions*.

According to this division, therefore, of the mental phenomena, into those which are of external and those which are of internal origin, and the subdivision which we have made of this latter class, I shall proceed to consider, *first*, The external powers or susceptibilities of the mind; *2dly*, The intellectual powers or susceptibilities of the mind; and, *3dly*, Its susceptibilities of emotion,—beginning with that class, which we have every reason to suppose to be first, in the actual order of developement,—the powers or susceptibilities of the mind, in its immediate relation to its own bodily organs.

Certain states of our bodily organs are directly followed by certain states or affections of our mind;—certain states or affections of our mind are directly followed by certain states of our bodily organs. The nerve of sight, for example, is affected in a certain manner; vision, which is an affection or state of the mind, is its consequence. I will to move my hand; the hand obeys my will so rapidly, that the motion, though truly subsequent, seems almost to accompany my volition, rather than to follow it. In conformity with the definition before given of power and susceptibility, the one as implying a reference to something consequent, the other a reference to something antecedent, I should be inclined to consider the sensation which follows the presence of an external object as indicating a mental susceptibility of being so affected;—the production of muscular motion by the will, as indicating a mental power. But the terms are of less consequence, if you understand fully the distinction that is implied in them; and you may be allowed still, in compliance with the general language, to speak of the power or faculty of sensation or perception, if you mean nothing more, as often as you use these terms, than that the mind is affected in a certain manner, and, therefore, must have had a previous susceptibility of being thus affected whenever certain changes have previously taken place in that nervous system with which it is connected.

In considering the susceptibilities of the mind, I comprehend, under its external affections, all those phenomena or states of the mind which are commonly termed sensations; together with all our internal organic feelings of pleasure or pain that arise from states of the nervous system, as much as our other sensations. Many of these are commonly ranked under another head, that of appetites,—such

as hunger, thirst, the desire of repose, or of change of muscular position, which arises from long-continued exertion; the oppressive anxiety which arises from impeded respiration, and various other desires, arising from bodily uneasiness. But these appetites evidently admit of being analysed into two distinct elements,—a pain of a peculiar species, and a subsequent desire of that which is to relieve the pain,—states of mind, of which one may immediately succeed the other; but which are, unquestionably, as different in themselves as if no such succession took place,—as different as the pleasure of music is from the mere desire of enjoying it again, or as the pain of excessive heat, in burning, from the subsequent desire of coolness. The pain, which is one element of the appetite, is an external affection of the mind, to be classed with our other sensations:—the succeeding desire, which is another element of it, is an internal affection of the mind, to be classed with our other emotions of desire. We might have felt the same pain of hunger, though we had not been aware that it arose from want of food, and consequently could not have felt any desire of food, but merely the general desire of relief which attends every disagreeable sensation. We might have felt the same uneasiness, which we term thirst, though we had not been aware that it would be relieved by a draught of any beverage,—and the same pain of impeded respiration or fatigue, though nature had not led us instinctively, in the one case, to perform the muscular actions necessary for expiration and inspiration; in the other, to change our posture, and thus give repose to the wearied limbs. Whatever be the organic states which occasion these painful feelings, that are elementary in our appetites, there can be no doubt, that some organic affections precede them, as truly as some affection of an external organ precedes the pain of a burn, or the painful temporary blindness when we are dazzled with excessive light. And though, in the case of the appetite, we may give the same name to the pain, and to the desire of that which is to relieve the pain; or rather, may give one name to the combination of the two feelings,—which is not to be wondered at, where the two feelings are so universally and so immediately successive—this error, or rather this mere abbreviation of language, is no reason that we should consider the elementary pain itself as different, in kind, from our other pains, that have not merely half a term to express them, but a whole undivided word of their own. The pain, of which the appetite desires relief, is a sensation as much as any other internal bodily pain which we feel,—a state or affection of the mind, arising, immediately and solely, from a state or affection of the body,—which is the only definition that can be given of a sensation.

The pain of hunger and thirst, then, and, in general, every internal pain arising from a state of the bodily organs,—and distinct from the subsequent desires which they occasion,—are as truly sensations as any other sensations; and the desires that follow these particular sensations are as truly desires as any other desires of which we have the consciousness. We may, indeed, if we resolve to invent a new name for those particular desires that terminate immediately in the relief of bodily pain, or the production of bodily pleasure, give to such desires the name of appetites; but it is surely a very simple analysis only that is necessary to separate, from the desire of relief, the feeling of the pain which we wish to be relieved; since it is very evident that the pain must have existed primarily before any such desire could be felt.

That the various species of uneasiness, which are elementary parts of our appetites, recur, at intervals in which there is some degree of regularity, does not alter their nature, when they do recur, so as to render a peculiar arrangement necessary for including them. The mental states, which constitute the uneasiness that is felt, recur thus at intervals, not from any thing peculiar in the mind itself, the phenomena of which alone we are considering, but because the body is only at intervals in the state which precedes or induces those peculiar mental affections. If, instead of the two or three periods at which the appetite of hunger recurs, the nervous system were, one hundred times in the day, at intervals the most irregular, in that state which is immediately followed by the feeling of hunger, the painful feeling,—and the consequent desire of food, which has been found to relieve it,—would, of course, be felt one hundred times in the day. The regularity, therefore, of the recurrence of this state of the nerves, is a phenomenon which belongs to the consideration of the physiologist of the body, not of the physiologist of the mind, whose immediate office is finished when he can trace any particular feeling of the mind to some affection of our organic frame, as its invariable antecedent; and who, knowing, therefore, that the feeling of pain in any of our appetites is the effect or result of some organic affection, is not surprised that it should not recur when that organic affection has not previously taken place,—any more than he is surprised that we do not enjoy the fragrance of roses or violets, when there are no particles of odour to be inhaled by us; or do not listen to songs and choral harmonies, when there is no vibration to be transmitted to the auditory nerve. It is at certain regular periods that the full light of day and the twilight of morning and evening are perceived by us. But we do not think it necessary, on this account, to give any peculiar name to these visual perceptions, to distinguish them from

others less regular, because we know that the reason of the periodic recurrence of these perceptions, is, that the various degrees of sunshine, which produce them, exist only at such intervals. We are hungry, when the nerves of the stomach are in a certain state; we perceive the sun, when the organ of vision is in a certain state. It is as little wonderful, that we should not have the feeling of hunger except when the nerves of the stomach are in this state, as that we should not have the perception of the meridian sun when the sun itself is beneath our horizon.

Since the mere pains of appetite, however, most important as they truly are for the ends which they immediately answer, are yet of little importance in relation to our general knowledge, it is unnecessary to dwell on them at length. But I cannot quit the consideration of them, without remarking that admirable provision which the gracious Author of Nature has made by them, for the preservation not of our being merely, but of our well-being—of that health and vigour, without which, a frail and feverish existence, at least in its relation to this earthly scene, would be of little value. The daily waste of the body requires daily supply to compensate it; and if this supply be neglected, or be inadequate —or, on the other hand, if it be inordinately great, disease is the necessary consequence. To preserve the medium, therefore, or at least to prevent any very great deviation from it, He, who planned our feelings and faculties as well as our bodily frame, has made it painful for us to omit what is so important to life; and painful also to prolong the supply in any great proportion, after the demands of nature have been adequately satisfied. If food had afforded gratification only as relieving the pain of hunger, these natural boundaries of appetite would have required no aid from moral or physical lessons of temperance. But the indulgence of nature, in conferring on us the sense of taste, and making food a luxury as well as a relief, we abuse, as we abuse her other kindnesses. The pleasures of this most intemperate of senses may lead, in some degree, beyond the due point of supply, the greater number of mankind; and may drive, to excesses more injurious, all those herds of unthinking sensualists who prefer the sickly enjoyment of an hour to the health and virtue, and intellectual as well as physical comfort, of more frugal repasts. Yet even to them nature points out, in the feeling of satiety, where intemperance begins, or where it has already begun; and if they persist, notwithstanding this feeling, how much more would they be in danger of overloading the powers of life, if there had been no such feeling of growing uneasiness to repress the avidity of insatiable indulgence.

"Though a man knew," says Doctor Reid, "that his life must be supported by eating, reason could not direct him when to eat, or what: how much, or how often. In all these things, appetite is a much better guide than our reason. Were reason only to direct us in this matter, its calm voice would often be drowned in the hurry of business of the charms of amusement. But the voice of appetite rises gradually, and at last becomes loud enough to call off our attention from any other employment."*

If, indeed, the necessary supply were long neglected, the morbid state of the body which would ensue, though no pain of actual hunger were to be felt, would convince at last the sufferer of his folly. But the providence of our gracious Creator has not trusted the existence of man to the dangerous admonition of so rough a monitor, which might, perhaps, bring his folly before him, only when it was too late to be wise. The pain of hunger—that short disease, if it may be so termed, which it is in our power so speedily to cure, prevents diseases that more truly deserve the name. Between satiety on one side, and want on the other, the stream of health flows tranquilly along, which, but for these boundaries, would speedily waste itself and disappear; as the most magnificent river, which, if dispersed over a boundless plain, would flow almost into nothing, owes its abundance and majestic beauty to the very banks that seem to confine its waters within too narrow a channel.

Beside those particular feelings of bodily uneasiness, which, as attended with desire, constitute our appetites, there are other affections of the same class, which, though not usually ranked with our external sensations or perceptions, because we find it difficult to ascribe them to any local organ, are unquestionably to be arranged under the same head; since they are feelings which arise, as immediately and directly, from a certain state of a part of the nervous system, as any of the feelings which we more commonly ascribe to external sense. Of this kind is that muscular pleasure of alacrity and action, which forms so great a part of the delight of the young of every species of living beings, and which is felt, though in a less degree, at every period of life, even the most advanced; or which, when it ceases in age, only gives place to another species of muscular pleasure—that which constitutes the pleasure of ease—the same species of feeling which doubles to every one the delight of exercise, by sweetening the repose to which it leads, and thus making it indirectly, as well as directly, a source of enjoyment.

In treating of what have been termed the acquired perceptions of vision, which are truly

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* On the Active Powers, Essay III. c. 1.

what give to vision its range of power, and without which the mere perception of colour would be of little more value than any other of the simplest of our sensations, I shall have an opportunity of pointing out to you some most important purposes to which our muscular feelings are instrumental; and in the nicer analysis which I am inclined to make of the perceptions commonly ascribed to touch, —if my analysis be accurate,—we shall find them operating at least as powerfully. At present, however, I speak of them merely as sources of animal pleasure or pain, of pleasure during moderate exercise and repose, and of pain during morbid lassitude, or the fatigue of oppressive and unremitted labour.

The pleasure which attends good health, and which is certainly more than mere freedom from pain, is a pleasure of the same kind. It is a pleasure, however, which, like every other long-continued bodily pleasure, we may suppose to be diminished by habitual enjoyment; and it is, therefore, chiefly, on recovery from sickness, when the habit has been long broken by feelings of an opposite kind, that we recognize what it must originally have been; if, indeed, it be in our power to separate, completely, the mere animal pleasure from those mingling reflex pleasures which arise from the consideration of past pain and the expectation of future delight. To those among you who know what it is to have risen from the long captivity of a bed of sickness, I need not say, that every function is, in this case, more than mere vigour; it is a happiness but to breathe and to move; and not every limb merely, but almost every fibre of every limb, has its separate sense of enjoyment. "What a blessed thing it is to breathe the fresh air!" said Count Struensee, on quitting his dungeon, though he was quitting it only to be led to the place of execution, and cannot, therefore, be supposed to have felt much more than the mere animal delight.

> "He does not scorn it, who, imprisoned long
> In some unwholesome dungeon, and a prey
> To sallow sickness, which the vapours dank
> And clammy of his dark abode have bred,
> Escapes at last to liberty and light;
> His cheek recovers soon its healthful hue;
> His eye relumines its extinguish'd fires:
> He walks, he leaps, he runs—is wing'd with joy,
> And riots in the sweets of every breeze."*

On these mere animal gratifications, however, I need not dwell any longer. There is much more to interest our curiosity, in the sensations and perceptions which more frequently go under those names; to the consideration of which I shall proceed in my next Lecture.

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* Cowper's Task, book i.

LECTURE XVIII.

ON THE MORE DEFINITE EXTERNAL AFFECTIONS OF MIND.

In my Lecture, yesterday, after some further elucidation of the triple division which we formed of the mental phenomena, as external or sensitive affections of the mind, intellectual states of the mind,—emotions,—I proceeded to consider the first of these divisions, of which the characteristic distinction is, that the phenomena included in it have their causes or immediate antecedents external to the mind itself. In this division, I comprehended, together with the feelings which are universally ascribed to certain organs of sense, many feelings, which, though unquestionably originating in states of our bodily organs, as much as our other sensations, are yet commonly ranked as of a different order,—such as our various appetites, or rather that elementary uneasiness which is only a part, but still an essential part of our appetites, and which is easily distinguishable from the mere desire, which is the other element; since, however rapid the succession of them may be, we are yet conscious of them as successive. The particular uneasiness, it is evident, must have been felt as a sensation before the desire of that which is to relieve the uneasiness could have arisen. To the same class, too, I referred the various organic feelings which constitute the animal pleasure of good health, when every corporeal function is exercised in just degree; and, in a particular manner, our muscular feelings, whether of mere general lassitude or alacrity; or those fainter differences of feelings which arise in our various motions and attitudes, from the different muscles that are exercised, or from the greater or less contraction of the same muscles. These muscular feelings, though they may be almost unnoticed by us, during the influence of stronger sensations, are yet sufficiently powerful, when we attend to them, to render us, independently of sight and touch, in a great measure sensible of the position of our body in general, and of its various parts; and, comparatively indistinct as they are, they become,—in many cases, as in the acquired perceptions of vision for example, and equally, too, as I conceive, in various other instances, in which little attention has been paid to them by philosophers,—elements of some of the nicest and most accurate judgments which we form.

It is, however, to that widest and most important order of our external affections, which comprehends the feelings more commonly termed sensations, and universally ascribed to particular organs of sense, that we have now to proceed. In these, we find the rude elements of all our knowledge, the material

on which the mind is ever operating, and without which it seems to us almost impossible to conceive that it could ever have operated at all, or could, even in its absolute inactivity, have been conscious of its own inert existence.

This order of our external feelings comprehends all those states of mind, however various they may be, which immediately succeed the changes of state, produced, in any of our organs of sense, by the presence of certain external bodies. The mental affections are themselves,—as I have said,—commonly termed sensations; but we have no verb, in our language, which exactly denotes what is expressed in the substantive noun. To feel is, in its two senses, either much more limited or much more general; being confined, in its restricted meaning, to the sensations of one organ, that of touch,—and, as a more general word, being applicable to all the varieties of our consciousness, as much as to those particular varieties which are immediately successive to the affections of our organs of sense. We are said, in this wider use of the term, to feel indignation, love, surprise, as readily as we are said to feel the warmth of a fire, or the coldness of snow.

In defining our sensations to be those mental affections which are immediately successive to certain organic affections, produced by the action of external things, it is very evident that I have made two assumptions,—first, of the existence of external things, that affect our organs of sense; and, secondly, of organs of sense that are affected by external things;—unless, indeed, the assumption of the existence of organs of sense be considered,—as in philosophic truth it unquestionably is,—only another form of the assumption of the existence of external things; since, in relation to the sentient mind, the organs thus supposed to exist, are, in strictness of language, external, as much as the objects supposed to act upon them. All of which we are truly conscious, in sensation, is the mental affection, the last link of the series, in the supposed process; what we term our perceptions of organs of sense, or of other external things that act upon these—our ideas, for example, of a brain or an eye, a house or a mountain, being as truly states of our own percipient mind, and nothing but states of our own mind, as our feeling of joy or sorrow, hope or fear, love or hate,—to which we never think of giving an existence, nor a direct and immediate cause of existence, out of ourselves. By the very constitution of our nature, however, or by the influence of associations as irresistible as intuition itself,—it is impossible for us not to feel this essential reality in the causes of one set of our mental affections, in the same manner as it is impossible for us to ascribe it to another set. The brain, the eye, the house, the mountain, we believe, and cannot but believe, to have external existence, independent of our own; the joy and sorrow, hope and fear, love and hate, we believe, and cannot but believe, to be merely states of our own mind, occasioned by other former states of mind, and dependent, therefore, for their continuance, on our own continued existence only. Even in our wildest dreams,—in which we imagine all things that are possible, and almost all things which are impossible; we never consider our joy or sorrow as directly indicative of any thing separate from ourselves, and independent of us.

"While o'er our limbs sleep's soft dominion spread,
What tho' our soul fantastic measures trod,
O'er fairy fields; or mourned along the gloom
Of pathless woods; or, down the craggy steep
Hurl'd headlong, swam with pain the mantled pool;
Or scaled the cliff,—or danced on hollow winds,
With antic shapes, wild natives of the brain;"*

it was still only the cliff, the wood, the pool, which we considered as external: the sorrow with which we mourned along our gloomy track, the pain with which we swam the turbid water, the horror which we felt at the antic shapes with which we mingled in the ghostly dance, were felt to be wholly in ourselves, and constituted, while they lasted, the very feeling of our own existence.—The belief of an external world is, however, to come afterwards under our full examination:—It is sufficient, for the present, to know, that, in the period, after infancy, to which alone our memory extends, we are led irresistibly to believe in it; and that the belief of it, therefore, in whatever manner it may have originated in the imperfect perceptions of our infancy, is now, when those perceptions are mature, so completely beyond the power of argument to overcome, that it exists as strongly, in those who reason against it, as in those who reason for it;—that the reference to a direct external cause, however, does not accompany every feeling of our mind, but is confined to a certain number of that long succession of feelings, which forms the varied consciousness of our life,—and that the feelings, with respect to which this reference is made, are the class of sensations which, when combined with this reference, have commonly been distinguished by the name of perceptions. That we have no perfect evidence of the external existence thus ascribed by us, independently of our own irresistible belief of it, may be allowed to the sceptic;—and the reasoning of Doctor Reid on the subject, as far as he proceeds beyond the assertion of this irresistible belief, and attempts, what has been commonly regarded as a confutation of the scepticism on this point,—by representing it as proceeding on a mistake, with respect to the nature

* Young's Night Thoughts, Book I. 90—97.

of our ideas,—is itself, as we shall afterwards find, nugatory and fallacious. But still, notwithstanding the errors of philosophers with respect to it, the belief itself is, in the circumstances in which we now exist, so truly a part of our constitution, that, to contend against it in argument would be to admit its validity, since it would be to suppose the existence of some one whom we are fairly undertaking to instruct or to confute.

In what circumstance the intuitive belief,—if, as I have said, the belief be in any case intuitive,—arises; or rather, in how large a proportion of cases, in which the reference seems primary and immediate, it is, more probably, the effect of secondary associations transferred from sense to sense,—will appear better after the minute analysis, on which we are to enter, of the different tribes of our sensations.

In referring to the particular class of sensations, and, consequently, to an external cause, a certain number only of the affections of our mind, there can be no doubt that we proceed now, in the mature state of our knowledge, with more accuracy than we could have attained in that early period of life when our original feelings were more recent. We have now a clearer, and more definite belief of an external world, and of objects of sensation separate from our sensations themselves; without which general belief, previously obtained, we should as little have ascribed to an external organic cause many of our feelings, which we now ascribe to one—our sensations of sound and fragrance, for example,—as we now ascribe, to such an immediate external cause, our emotions of joy or sorrow. A still more important acquisition, is our knowledge of our own organic frame, by which we are enabled, in a great measure, to verify our sensations,—to produce them, as it were at pleasure, when their external objects are before us, and in this way to correct the feelings which have risen, spontaneously, by those which we ourselves produce. Thus, when, in reverie, our conceptions become peculiarly vivid, and the objects of our thought seem almost to exist in our presence; if only we stretch out our hand, or fix our eyes on the forms that are permanently before us, the illusion vanishes. Our organ of touch or of sight is not affected in the same manner as if the object that charms us in our musing dream were really present; and we class the feeling, therefore, as a conception,—not as a sensation,—which, but for the opportunity of this correction, we should unquestionably, in many instances, have done.

But, though, in forming the class of our sensations, we derive many advantages from that full knowledge which the experience of many years has given, we purchase these by disadvantages which are perhaps as great, and which are greater, from the very circumstance that it is absolutely out of our power to estimate their amount. What we consider as the immediate sensation, is not the simple mental state, as it originally followed that corporeal change which now precedes it; but, at least in the most striking of all the tribes of our sensations, is a very different one. We have the authority of reason, *a priori*, as showing no peculiar connexion of the points of the retina with one place of bodies more than with another; and we have the authority also of observation,—in the celebrated case of the young man who was couched by Cheselden, and in other cases of the same peculiar species of blindness, in which the eyes, by a surgical operation, have been rendered for the first time capable of distinct vision, that if we had had no organ of sense but that of sight, and no instinctive judgment had been superadded to mere vision,—we should not have had the power of distinguishing the magnitude and distant place of objects; a mere expanse of colour being all which we should have perceived if even colour itself could, in these circumstances, have been perceived by us as expanded. Yet it is sufficient now, that rays of light, precisely the same in number, and in precisely the same direction, as those which, at one period of our life, exhibited to us colour, and colour alone, should fall once more on the same small expanse of nerve, to give us instantly that boundlessness of vision, which, almost as if the fetters of our mortal frame were shaken off, lifts us from our dungeon, and makes us truly citizens, not of the earth only, but of the universe. Simple as the principle may now seem, which distinguishes our secondary or acquired perceptions of vision from those which were primary and immediate, it was long before the distinction was made; and till a period which,—if we consider it in relation to those long ages of philosophic inquiry, or, rather, most unphilosophic argumentation, which had gone before—may be considered almost as in our own time, longitudinal distance was conceived to be as completely an original object of sight as the varieties of mere colour and brilliancy. There may, therefore,—though we have not yet been able, and may never be able, to discover it,—be a corresponding difference in our other sensations, which now seem to us simple and immediate. In the case of sound, indeed, there is a very evident analogy to these visual acquired perceptions; since a constant reference to place mingles with our sensations of this class, in the same manner, though not so distinctly, as in our perceptions of sight. We perceive the sound, as it were, near or at a distance, in one direction rather than in another; as, in the case of longitudinal distance in vision, we perceive colour at one distance rather than at another. Yet there is as little reason, from the nature of the organic changes themselves, to suppose, that

different affections of our auditory nerves should originally give us different notions of distance, as that such notions should originally be produced by different affections of the retina; and, as in sight and hearing, so it is far from improbable that, in all our senses, there may, by the reciprocal influence of these upon each other, or by the repeated lessons of individual experience in each, be a similar modification of the original simple feelings, which, in that first stage of existence that opened to us the world and its phenomena, each individual organ separately afforded. Our reasoning with respect to them, therefore, as original organs of sense, may perhaps be as false as our chymical reasoning would be, were we to attempt to infer the properties of an uncombined acid, or, alkali, from our observation of the very different properties of a neutral salt, into the composition of which we know that the acid or the alkali has entered.

If, indeed, it were in our power to be introduced to a society, like that of which Diderot speaks, in his Letter on the Deaf and Dumb, and to hold communication with them, all our doubts on this subject would be removed. "What a strange society," says he, "would five persons make, each of them endowed with one only of our five different senses; and no two of the party with the same sense! There can be no doubt, that, differing as they must differ, in all their views of nature, they would treat each other as madmen, and that each would look upon the others with all due contempt. It is, indeed, only an image of what is happening every moment in the world; we have but one sense, and we judge of every thing."*—"There is, however," he justly remarks, "one science, though but one science, in which the whole society or the different senses might agree,—the science which has relation to the properties of number. They might each arrive, by their separate abstractions, at the sublimest speculations of arithmetic and algebra; they might fathom the depths of analysis, and propose and resolve problems of the most complicated equations as if they were all so many Diophantuses. It is perhaps," he adds, "what the oyster is doing in its shell." †

From such a society,—if, indeed, we could hold any communication with these profound algebraists, except in their common science of numbers—we might undoubtedly learn what are the direct immediate affections of mind to which our senses individually give rise, and consequently how much, while feeling has blended with feeling, they have reciprocally operated on each other. But, in our present circumstances, unaided by intercourse with such living abstractions, it is impossible for us to remove wholly this uncertainty, as to the kind and degree of influence which experience may have had in modifying our primary sensations. We may wish, indeed, to be able to distinguish our present feelings from those which the same objects originally excited; but since no memory can go back to the period at which we did not perceive longitudinal distance, as it were, immediately by the eye, as little, we may suppose, can any memory go back to the period when other sensations, less interesting than those of vision, were first excited. Could we trace the series of feelings, in a single mind,—as variously modified, in the progress from infancy to maturity,—we should know more of the intellectual and moral nature of man than is probably ever to be revealed to his inquiry,—when, in ages, as remote from that in which we live, and perhaps as much more enlightened, as our own age may be said to be, in relation to the period of original darkness and barbarism, he is still to be searching into his own nature with the same avidity as now. He must, indeed, be a very dull observer, who has not felt, on looking at an infant, some desire to know the little processes of thought that are going on in his curious and active mind; and who, in reflecting on the value, as an attainment in science, which the sagest philosopher would set on the consciousness of those acquisitions which infancy has already made, is not struck with that nearness, in which, in some points, extreme knowledge and extreme ignorance may almost be said to meet. What metaphysician is there, however subtle and profound in his analytical inquiries, and however successful in the analyses which he has made, who would not give all his past discovery, and all his hopes of future discovery, for the certainty of knowing with exactness what every infant feels? The full instruction, which such a view of our progressive feelings, from their very origin, in the first sensations of life, would afford, Nature, in her wisdom, however, has not communicated to us, more than she has communicated to us the nature of that state of being which awaits the soul after it has finished its career of mortality. Our existence seems, in our conception of it, never to have had a beginning. As far back as we can remember any event, there is always a period that appears to us still farther back, the events of which we cannot distinguish; as, when we look toward the distant horizon, we see, less and less distinctly, in the long line which the sunshine of evening still illuminates, plains, and woods, and streams, and hills, more distant, half melting into air, beyond which our eye can find nothing,—though we are still certain that other woods, and streams, and plains, are there, and that it is only

* Œuvres, tom. II. p. 12. † P. 131.

the imperfection of our sight which seems to bound them as in another world. It is to man, when he thinks upon his own beginning as if he felt himself in a world of enchantment, amid the shades and flowers of which he had been wandering, unconscious of the time at which he entered it, or of the objects that are awaiting him, when he shall have arrived at the close of that path whose windings still lead him forward,—and knowing little more than that he is himself happy, and that the unknown Being, who has raised this magnificent scene around him, must be the Friend of the mortal whom he has deigned to admit into it.

"Well pleased he scans
The goodly prospect,—and with inward smiles,
Treads the gay verdure of the painted plain,—
Beholds the azure canopy of heaven,
And living lamps, that over-arch his head
With more than regal splendour,—bends his ear
To the full choir of water, air and earth;
Nor heeds the pleasing error of his thought,
Nor doubts the painted green or azure arch,
Nor questions more the music's mingling sounds,
Than space, or motion, or eternal time;
So sweet he feels their influence to attract
His fixed soul, to brighten the dull glooms
Of care, and make the destined road of life
Delightful to his feet. So, fables tell,
The adventurous hero, bound on hard exploit,
Beholds with glad surprise, by secret spell
Of some kind sage, the patron of his toils,
A visionary paradise disclosed,
Amid the dubious wild;—With streams, and shades,
And airy songs, the enchanted landscape smiles,
Cheers his long labours, and renews his frame."*

The philosophic use of the term sensation does not necessarily imply, what, in its popular use, is considered almost as involved in it; and perhaps, therefore, it may not be superfluous to warn you, that it is not confined to feelings which are pleasurable or painful, but extends to every mental affection that is the immediate consequence of impression on our organs of sense,—of which mental states or affections, many, and, as I am inclined to think, by far the greater number, are of a kind that cannot be termed either agreeable or disagreeable. Of the objects of sight, for example, which are of such very frequent occurrence, how few are there, at which we look, either with pleasure or with pain,—if we except that indirect pleasure, which, in particular cases, they may afford, as communicating to us information that is valuable in itself, or as gratifying even our idlest curiosity. To take one of the most striking cases of this sort: Though we may derive, from the perusal of a work that interests us, the purest delight, it is a delight resulting only from the conceptions which the author, in consequence of the happy contrivance of symbolic characters, has been able to transfuse, as it were, from his own mind into ours; but, during all the time of the perusal, sensations, almost innumerable, have been excited in us by the separate characters with which the pages are covered, that have never mingled even the faintest direct pleasure with the general emotion which they, and they alone, have indirectly produced.

"I apprehend," says Dr Reid, "that, besides the sensations that are either agreeable or disagreeable, there is still a greater number that are indifferent. To these we give so little attention that they have no name, and are immediately forgot, as if they had never been; and it requires attention to the operations of our minds to be convinced of their existence. For this end, we may observe, that, to a good ear, every human voice is distinguishable from all others. Some voices are pleasant, some disagreeable; but the far greater part can neither be said to be one or the other. The same thing may be said of other sounds, and no less of tastes, smells, and colours; and if we consider, that our senses are in continual exercise while we are awake, that some sensation attends every object they present to us, and that familiar objects seldom raise any emotion, pleasant or painful,—we shall see reason, besides the agreeable and disagreeable, to admit a third class of sensations that may be called indifferent. The sensations that are indifferent are far from being useless. They serve as signs to distinguish things that differ; and the information we have concerning things external comes by their means. Thus, if a man had no ear to receive pleasure from the harmony or melody of sounds, he would still find the sense of hearing of great utility: Though sounds gave him neither pleasure nor pain, of themselves, they would give him much useful information; and the like may be said of the sensations we have by all the other senses."*

It is as signs, indeed, far more than as mere pleasures in themselves, that our sensations are to us of such inestimable value. Even in the case to which I before alluded, of the symbolic or arbitrary characters of a language, when we consider all the important purposes to which these are subservient, as raising us originally from absolute barbarism, and saving us from relapsing into it, there might be an appearance of paradox indeed, but there would be perfect truth in asserting, that the sensations which are themselves indifferent, are more precious, even in relation to happiness itself, than the sensations which are themselves accompanied with lively delight, or rather, of which it is the very essence to be delightful. Happiness, though necessarily

* Pleasures of Imagination, Book III. v. 493—514. The Fixed Soul, v. 505; Exploits, v. 508; and Spells, v. 509. *Orig.*

* On the Intellectual Powers, Essay II. c. 16.

involving present pleasure, is the direct or indirect, and often the very distant, result of feelings of every kind, pleasurable, painful, and indifferent. It is like the beautiful profusion of flowers which adorn our summer fields. In our admiration of the foliage, and the blossoms, and the pure airs and sunshine, in which they seem to live, we almost forget the darkness of the soil in which their roots are spread. Yet how much should we err, if we were to consider them as deriving their chief nutriment from the beams that shine around them, in the warmth and light of which we have wandered with joy. That delightful radiance alone would have been of little efficacy, without the showers, from which, in those very wanderings, we have often sought shelter at noon; or at least without the dews, which were unheeded by us, as they fell silently and almost insensibly on our evening walk.

With the common division of our sensations into five classes,—those of smell, taste, hearing, sight, touch, we have been familiar, almost from our childhood, and though the classification may be far from perfect, in reference to our sensations themselves, considered simply as affections of the mind, it is sufficiently accurate in reference to the mere organs of sense; for, though our sensations of heat and cold, in one very important respect, which is afterwards to be considered by us, have much less resemblance to the other sensations which we acquire by our organs of touch, or at least to sensations which we are generally supposed to derive from that organ, than to sensations which we receive by the medium of other organs, our sensations of smell and sound for example—still, as they arise from an affection of the same organ, they may be more conveniently referred to the same than to any other class; since, if we quit that obvious line of distinction which the difference of organs affords, we shall not find it easy to define them by other lines as precise.

But whatever may be the arbitrary division or arrangement which we may form either of our sensations themselves, or of the organs that are previously affected, the susceptibility of the mind, by which it is capable of being affected by the changes of state in our mere bodily organs, must be regarded as, in every sense of the word, of primary value in our mental constitution. To the individual, indeed, it may be said to be in itself all the things which are around him, however near or afar; because it is truly that by which alone all things near or afar become known to him. It constitutes, by this mutual relation which it establishes, a power of more than magic agency, before which the great gulf, that appeared to separate for ever the worlds of matter and of spirit, disappears,—which thus links together substances, that seemed, in their nature, incapable of any common bond of union,—and which, bringing the whole infinity of things within the sphere of our own mind, communicates to it some faint semblance of the omnipresence of its Author. "What is that organ," says an eloquent French writer, speaking of the eye,—"what is that astonishing organ, in which all objects acquire, by turns, a successive existence,—where the spaces, the figures, and the motions that surround me are as it were created,—where the stars, that exist at the distance of a hundred millions of leagues, become a part of myself,—and where, in a single half inch of diameter, is contained the universe?" This power of external sense, which first awakes us into life, continues, ever after, to watch, as it were, round the life which it awoke, lavishing on us perpetual varieties of instruction and delight; and if, from the simple pleasures, and simple elementary knowledge which it immediately affords, we trace its influence, through all the successive feelings to which it indirectly gives rise, it may be said to exist, by a sort of intellectual and moral transmutation, in the most refined and ethereal of all our thoughts and emotions. What Gray says of it,—in the commencement of his beautiful fragment De Principiis Cogitandi, addressed to his friend West, is not too high a panegyric,—that every thing delightful and amiable, friendship, and fancy, and wisdom itself, have their primary source in it.

"Non illa *leves* primordia motus,
Quanquam parva, dabunt. Lætum vel amabile quicquid
Usquam oritur, trahit hinc ortum; nec surgit ad auras,
Quin ea conspirent simul, eventusque secundent.
Hinc variæ vitaï artes, ac mollior usus,
Dulce et amicitiæ vinclum: Sapientia dia
Hinc roseum accendit lumen, vultûque sereno,
Humanas aperit mentes, nova gaudia monstrans.
Illa etiam, quæ te (mirùm) noctesque diesque
Assiduè fovit inspirans linguamque sequentem
Temperat in numeros, atque horas mulcet inertes,
Aurea non alia si jactat origine Musa." *

So much, indeed, of human knowledge, and of all that is valuable and delightful in human feeling, involves these elementary sensations, as it were in the very essence of the thoughts and feelings themselves, that one of the most acute of modern French metaphysicians, and, with scarcely an exception, all the philosophers of the French metaphysical school, who are his followers, have considered the whole variety of human consciousness, as mere sensation variously transformed; though, in stating the nature of this transformation, and the difference of the sensations as transformed from the primary forms of mere external feeling, they have not been so explicit as the assertors of a system so paradoxical ought assuredly to have been. On

* Lib. I. v. 18—25, and 28—31.

the fallacies of this very prevalent theory of the mind, however, which is afterwards to be examined by us fully, I need not at present make any remarks.

Though this excessive simplification of the phenomena of human thought and feeling is, however, far more than the phenomena truly allow, it is not the less certain, that all the varieties of our consciousness, though not mere transformations of external sense, are, when traced to their source, the results of sensation, in its various original forms. In inquiring into the phenomena of our senses, then, we begin our inquiry where knowledge itself begins; and though the twilight, which hangs over this first opening of intellectual life, is perhaps only a presage, or a part of that obscurity which is to attend the whole track of human investigation, it still is twilight only, not absolute darkness. We can discover much, though we cannot discover all; and where absolute discovery is not allowed, there is still left to us a probability of conjecture, of which, in such limited circumstances, even philosophy may justly avail herself without departing from her legitimate province.

LECTURE XIX.

BRIEF NOTICE OF THE CORPOREAL PART OF THE PROCESS, IN SENSATION.

THE mental phenomena, of the class which is at present under our consideration, being those which arise in consequence of certain previous affections of our organs of sense, it is necessary that we should take some notice of the corporeal part of the process; though it must always be remembered, that it is the last part of the process, the mental affection only, which truly belongs to our science,—and that, if this, in all its varieties, had been the result of any other species of affections of organs constituted in any other manner,—as long as there was the regular correspondence of certain mental affections with certain organic affections,—the philosophy of mind would have continued precisely the same as now. Our systems of anatomy, and of the physiology of our mere bodily frame, would indeed have been different,—but not that more intimate physiology which relates to the functions of the animating spirit, whose presence is life, and without which our bodily frame, in all its beautiful adaptation of parts to parts, is a machine as inert and powerless as the separate atoms that compose it.

The great essential organ of all sensation is the brain with its appendages, particularly the nerves that issue from it to certain organs which are more strictly termed the organs of sense; as it is there the immediate objects, or external causes of sensation, the particles of light, for example, in vision, or of odour in smell, arrive, and come, as it were, into contact with the sensorial substance. Each organ, as you well know, has objects peculiar to itself, which it would be superfluous to enumerate; and since the blind are still sensible of sound, the deaf of colour, and both of smell, and taste, and touch, there must evidently be some difference, either in the sensorial substance itself, which is diffused over the different organs, or in the mode of its diffusion, and exposure in the different organs, from which this striking diversity of their relative sensibilities proceeds. The nervous matter, however, considered separately from the coats in which it is enveloped, is of the same half fibrous, but soft and pulpy texture, as the substance of the brain itself, and is in perfect continuity with that substance, forming, therefore, with it, what may be considered as one mass, as much as the whole brain itself may be considered as one mass; which has, indeed, for its chief seat the great cavity of the head; the

> "Superas hominis sedes, arcemque cerebri;
> Namque illic posuit solium, et sua templa sacravit,
> Mens animi;"—*

but which extends, by innumerable ramifications, over the whole surface, and through the internal parts of the body. The mind, in that central brain in which it is supposed to reside, communicating with all these extreme branches, has been compared, by a very obvious but a very beautiful similitude, to the parent Ocean, receiving from innumerable distances the waters of its filial streams:

> "Ac uti longinquis descendunt montibus amnes,
> Velivolus Tamisis, flaventisque Indus arenæ,
> Euphratesque, Tagusque, et opimo flumine Ganges,
> Undas quisque suas volvens,—cursûque sonoro
> In mare prorumpunt; hos magno acclinis in antro
> Excipit Oceanus, natorumque ordine longo
> Dona recognoscit venientûm, ultròque serenat
> Cœruleam faciem, et diffuso marmore ridet.
> Haud aliter species properant se inferre novellæ
> Certatim menti."†

In the brain itself, the anatomist is able to show us, with perfect clearness, many complicated parts, which we must believe to be adapted for answering particular purposes in the economy of life; but when we have gazed with admiration on all the wonders which his dissecting hand has revealed to us, and have listened to the names with which he most accurately distinguishes the little cavities or protuberances which his knife has thus laid open to our view, we are still as ignorant as before

* Gray de Princip. Cogit. Lib. 1. v. 48—50.
† Ibid. Lib. I. v. 54—63.

of the particular purposes to which such varieties of form are subservient; and our only consolation is,—for there is surely some comfort in being only as ignorant as the most learned,—that we know as much of the distinct uses of the parts as the anatomist himself, who exhibits them to us, and teaches us how to name them. A structure in every respect different, though assuredly less fit than the present, which has been chosen by infinite wisdom, might, as far as we know, have answered exactly the same end; which is as much as to say, that our ignorance on the subject is complete. The only physiological facts of importance, in reference to sensation, are, that if the nerves, which terminate in particular organs, be greatly diseased, the sensations which we ascribe to those particular organs cease; and cease in like manner, if the continuity of the nerves with the brain be destroyed, by cutting them in any part of their course; or if, without loss of absolute continuity, their structure in any part of their course be impaired by pressure, whether from tight ligatures drawn around them for the purpose of experiment, or from natural morbid causes. In short, if the brain and nerves be in a sound state, and certain substances be applied to certain parts of the nervous system,—as, for instance, sapid bodies to the extremities of the nerves of taste, or light to that expansion of the optic nerve, which forms what is termed the retina,—there is then instant sensation; and when the brain itself is not in a sound state to a certain extent, or when the nerve which is diffused on a particular organ is, either at this extremity of it, or in any part of its course, to a certain degree impaired, then there is no sensation, though the same external causes be applied. This very slight general knowledge of the circumstances in which sensation takes place, and of the circumstances in which it does not take place, is all the knowledge which physiology affords us of the corporeal part of the process;—and it is likely to continue so for ever,—at least in all the more important respects of our ignorance,—since any changes which occur in the corpuscular motion, and consequent new arrangement of the particles of the substance of the brain and nerves, corresponding with the diversities of feeling during those particular states,—if such corpuscular motions or changes do really take place,—are probably far too minute to be observable by our organs; even though we could lay open all the internal parts of the brain to complete observation, without destroying, or at all affecting, the usual phenomena of life:—

> In "following life through creatures we dissect,
> We lose it, in the moment we detect."*

* Pope's Essay on Man, Ep. II. 174—177.

Indeed, we are not able to do even so much as this; for life has already vanished, long before we have come upon the verge of its secret precincts. It is like a Magician, that operates at a distance on every side, but still keeps himself apart, within a narrow circle. If we remain without the circle, we may gaze with never-ceasing admiration on the wonders that play in rapid succession before our eyes. But if we rush within, to force an avowal of the secret energy that produces them, the enchanter and the enchantments alike are fled.

The brain, then, and the various nerves of sense in continuity with it, may, when taken together, be considered as forming one great organ, which I would term briefly the sensorial organ, essential to life, and to the immediate production of those mental phenomena which constitute our sensations, and, perhaps, too, modifying in some measure, directly or indirectly, all the other phenomena of the mind.

> "Dum mens alma caput cerebrique palatia celsa
> Occupat, et famulos sublimis dirigit artus,
> Et facili imperio nervorum flectit habenas,
> Illius ad nutum sensus extranea rerum
> Explorant signa, et studio exemplaria fido
> Ad dominam adducunt: vel qui statione locantur
> Vicina, capitisque tuentur limina, ocelli,
> Naresque, auriculæque, et vis arguta palati;
> Vel qui per totam currit sparso agmine molem
> Tactus, ad extremas speculator corporis oras.
> His sensim auxiliis instructa fidelibus, olim,
> Mens humilis nulloque jacens ingloria cultu
> Carceris in tenebris mox sese attollit in auras
> Dives opum variarum, et sidera scandit Olym

Of the nature of the connexion of this great sensorial organ with the sentient mind, we never shall be able to understand more than is involved in the simple fact, that a certain affection of the nervous system precedes immediately a certain affection of the mind. But, though we are accustomed to regard this species of mutual succession of bodily and mental changes, as peculiarly inexplicable, from the very different nature of the substances which are reciprocally affected, it is truly not more so than any other case of succession of events, where the phenomena occur in substances that are not different in their properties, but analogous, or even absolutely similar; since, in no one instance of this kind, can we perceive more than the uniform order of the succession itself; and of changes, the successions of which are all absolutely inexplicable, or, in other words, absolutely simple, and unsusceptible therefore, of further analysis, none can be justly said to be more or less so than another. That a peculiar state of the mere particles of the brain, should be followed by a change of state of the sentient mind, is truly wonderful; but if we consider it strictly, we shall find it to be by no means more wonderful than that the arrival of the moon, at a certain point of the heavens, should render the state of a body on the surface of our

earth different from what it otherwise would naturally be, or that the state of every particle of our globe, in its relative tendencies of gravitation, should be instantly changed, as it unquestionably would be, by the destruction of the most distant satellite of the most distant planet of our system, or, probably too, by the destruction even of one of those remotest of stars, which are illuminating their own system of planets, so far in the depth of infinity that their light,—to borrow a well-known illustration of sidereal distance,—may never yet have reached our earth since the moment at which they darted forth their first beams on the creation of the universe. We believe, indeed, with as much confidence, that one event will uniformly have for its consequent another event, which we have observed to follow it, as we believe the simple fact that it has preceded it in the particular case observed. But the knowledge of the present sequence, as a mere fact to be remembered,and the expectation of future similar sequences, as the result of an original law of our belief, are precisely of the same kind, whether the sequence of changes be in mind or in matter, singly or reciprocally in both.

What the nature of the change is, that is produced at the extremity of the nerve, it is beyond our power to state, or even to guess; and we are equally ignorant of the manner in which this affection of the nerve is communicated, or is supposed to be communicated, to the brain. But that some affection is gradually propagated, from the one to the other, so as to render the change in the state of the brain subsequent, by a certain interval, to the change in the state of the nerve, is universally believed. In applying to this change the term *impression*, a term indeed which had been in common use before, Dr Reid is careful to point out the reason for which this term appears to him preferable to others; and though I confess that the word seems to me to convey too much the notion of a peculiar well known species of action,—that which consists in producing a certain configuration of the object impressed, corresponding with the figure of the impressing object, the very notion that has had so pernicious an effect in the theory of perception; and though I conceive the simple term *change* or *affection* to be all which is safely admissible, as long as the nature of the particular change is absolutely unknown;—still it must be confessed that impression is a term a little more general than the other names of action to which Dr Reid alludes, and therefore preferable to them, in the present case.

"There is sufficient reason," he says, "to conclude, that, in perception, the object produces some change in the organ; that the organ produces some change upon the nerve; and that the nerve produces some change in the brain. And we give the name of an impression to those changes, because we have not a name more proper to express, in a general manner, any change produced in a body by an external cause, without specifying the nature of that change. Whether it be pressure, or attraction, or repulsion, or vibration, or something unknown, for which we have no name, still it may be called an impression. But, with regard to the particular kind of this change or impression, philosophers have never been able to discover any thing at all."*

That the word *impression* is not so free, as Dr Reid supposes, from that hypothetical meaning which he wished to avoid, I have already remarked. But the reason assigned by him for his preference of it, is unquestionably a just one; since a phrase which expresses the least possible knowledge, must be allowed to be the best suited to human ignorance,—that ignorance which, not in the philosophy of intellect only, but in whatever track of science we may proceed, and whatever truths we may proudly discover in our way, still meets us at the end of every path, as if to mock at once our weakness and our pride,—and which seems to us to be everywhere, because it is wherever we are ourselves. The splendour of nature, as it exists in itself, is, if I may speak figuratively, like sunshine on a boundless plain, on the flowers and herbage of which, though there be innumerable varieties of colour, there is brilliancy in all. But the misfortune is, that, as soon as we have approached near enough to distinguish the diversity of tints, their brilliancy is so obscured by our very approach to them, that their nice diversities are no longer distinguishable; as if man could not move along without throwing his own shadow on every thing before him.

When I say, that we are ignorant of the nature of that change, which is propagated along the nerve to the brain, I speak in reference to an opinion that is universal. But though it may be improbable, it is certainly far from impossible, that there is really no such progressive communication as this which is supposed. The brain and nerves, though, from the difference of names, you might be led, perhaps, to consider them as distinct, I have already said, are not separate organs, but are in continuity with each other, at least as much as various parts of the brain itself, which are comprehended under that single term, can be said to be continuous. When taken together, they form what is truly one complicated sensorial organ,—the organ of all our sensations, according to the different states in which the organ exists, or the different parts of it which are chiefly affected. In hearing, for example, a certain state of that

* On the Intellectual Powers, Essay II. chap. ii.

part of the sensorial organ which constitutes the auditory nerves,—in vision, a certain state of that part of it, which constitutes the optic nerves, is necessary to sensation,—and, in both cases, according to the universal supposition on the subject, all or part of the brain likewise must exist in a certain state, of which we know nothing more, than that it is followed, in the one case, by the sensation of sound, in the other case by that of sight. The connexion of the mind with the bodily frame,—which must be equally inexplicable on every supposition that can be formed,—is not supposed, by any philosopher, to depend on the state of a single physical point of the brain alone; and, if it extend to more than one such point, there is nothing, in the nature of the connexion itself, independently of experience, which necessarily limits it to one portion of the complex sensorial organ more than to another,—to the particles of the central mass of the brain, for example, more than to those of the nerve itself. It is experience, then, to which we are referred; and experience, though it shows that certain nerves are not essential to life, since life continues equally after they may have been impaired, or even destroyed, is far from showing that an affection of them is not essential to sensation, at the very moment of the particular sensation; nor does it afford even the slightest evidence to justify the belief that the only use of the nerve is to communicate a certain affection to the brain, which affection of the mere central part of the sensorial organ would, of itself, immediately induce sensation, though the nerves were annihilated in the preceding instant. The sensation may be the immediate effect, not of the state of the brain only, but of the state of the brain and of any particular nerve considered as existing together at the moment; in the same manner, as, by those who ascribe the immediate origin of sensation to the mere brain, exclusive of its nervous appendages, it is supposed to depend on the state, not of one physical point of the central brain, but on the state of many such co-existing points. We know not to what extent, in the great sensorial organ, this change is necessary; but we believe, that, to some extent, it is necessary; and the question is, whether, in the whole portion so affected, the affection be produced by a succession of changes, propagated from part to part? This may, perhaps, be the more probable supposition;—but whatever may be the comparative probability or improbability, it certainly has not been demonstrated by observation or experiment; nor can there be said to be, *a priori*, any absurdity in the opposite supposition, that the sensorial affection, to whatever extent it may be necessary, is not progressive, but immediate,—that, as long as the sensorial organ (under which term I comprehend, as I have already frequently repeated, not the brain merely, but also its nervous appendages, that exist in apparent continuity with the brain,) is unimpaired by accident or disease, the presence of the immediate object of sense, at the external organ, which, on every supposition, must be followed by some sensorial change of state, is instantly followed by that general change of state of the internal organ, whatever it may be, which is necessary to sensation, in the particular case; in the same manner as the presence of a celestial body, at a certain point in the heavens, is immediately followed by a change of state in the whole gravitating particles of our globe; the change in any long line of these gravitating particles being not communicated from each to each, but depending only on the presence of the distant sun or planet; and beginning in the most remote particles of the line, at the very same instant, as in that which is nearest, on the surface of the earth. An instant change, in the long line of sensorial particles,—if the affection of a long line of these particles be necessary,—on the presence of a particular object, is not more improbable in itself, than this instant and universal influence of gravitation, that varies with all the varying positions of a distant object.

But is it, indeed, certain, that, in sensation, there is an affection of the central brain, whether immediate or progressive? Is it not possible, at least, or more than possible, that the state of the mind, when we perceive colours and sounds, may be the immediate consequent of the altered state of that part of the sensorial organ which forms the expansion of the nerve in the eye or ear? The sensations must be supposed, in every theory, to be the consequents of states induced in some sensorial particles, and there is nothing but the mere names of brain and nerve, invented by ourselves, and the notions which we have chosen, without evidence, to attach to these mere names, which would mark the sensorial particles in the nervous expanse itself, as less fitted to be the immediate antecedents of sight and hearing, than the similar sensorial particles in any portion of the central mass of the brain. There is no reason, in short, *a priori*, for supposing that a state of the sensorial particles of the nerves cannot be the cause of sensation, and that the sensation must be the effect of a state equally unknown, of apparently similar particles, in that other part of the general sensorial organ, which we have denominated the brain. Sensation, indeed, is prevented by decay, or general disease of the brain, or by separation of the nerve, or pressure on it, in any part of its course. But it is far from improbable, that these causes, which must evidently be injurious to the organ, may act, merely by preventing that sound state of the nerve which is necessary for sensation, and which, in an organ so very delicate, may be affected by the slightest influ-

ences,—by influences far slighter than may naturally be expected to result from such an injury of such a part. The nerves and brain together form one great organ; and a sound state of the whole organ, even from the analogy of other grosser organs, may well be supposed to be necessary for the healthy state and perfect function of each separate part.

If, indeed, the appearance of the brain and nerves were such as marked them to be peculiarly fitted for the communication of motion of any sort, there might be some presumption, from this very circumstance, in favour of the opinion that sensation takes place only after a progressive series of affections of some sort, propagated along the nerve to the interior brain. But it must be remembered, that the nature, both of the substance of the nerves themselves, and of the soft and lax substance in which they are loosely embedded, renders them very ill adapted for the communication of nice varieties of motion, and gives some additional likelihood, therefore, to the supposition that affections of the sensorial organ, so distinct as our sensations are from each other, and so exactly corresponding with the slightest changes of external objects, do not depend on the progressive communication of faint and imperceptible motion, in circumstances so unfavourable to the uninterrupted progress even of that more powerful motion which can be measured by the eye. In a case so doubtful as this, however, in which the intervening changes supposed by philosophers,—if such a progressive series of motions do really take place,—are confessed to be beyond our observation, it is impossible for any one, who has a just sense of the limits which nature has opposed to our search, to pronounce with certainty, or even perhaps with that faint species of belief which we give to mere probability. My conjectures on the subject, therefore, I state simply as conjectures, and nothing more.

If, indeed, what is but a mere conjecture could be shown to be well founded, it would add another case to the innumerable instances, in which philosophers have laboured, for ages, to explain what did not exist,—contenting themselves, after their long toil, with the skill and industry which they have exhibited, in removing difficulties, which they had before, with great skill and industry, placed in their own way. "I am not so much convinced of our radical ignorance," says an ingenious writer, "by the things that are, of which the nature is hid from us, as by the things that are not, of which notwithstanding we contrive to give a very tolerable account; for this shows that we are not merely without the principles which lead to truth, but that there are other principles in our nature, which can accommodate themselves very well, and form a close connexion with what is positively false."

But whatever reason there may be for removing this supposed link of the corporeal part of the process of sensation, there is another prior link, which it appears to me of great importance to separate from the chain. I allude to the distinction which is commonly made, of the objects of sense, as acting themselves on our organs, or as acting through what is termed a medium.

"A second law of our nature," says Dr Reid, "regarding perception is, that we perceive no object, unless some impression is made upon the organ of sense, either by the immediate application of the object or by some medium which passes between the object and the organ. In two of our senses, to wit, touch and taste, there must be an immediate application of the object to the organ. In the other three, the object is perceived at a distance, but still by means of a medium, by which some impression is made upon the organ. The effluvia of bodies drawn into the nostrils with the breath, are the medium of smell; the undulations of the air, are the medium of hearing; and the rays of light passing from visible objects to the eye, are the medium of sight. We see no object, unless rays of light come from it to the eye. We hear not the sound of any body, unless the vibrations of some elastic medium, occasioned by the tremulous motion of the sounding body, reach our ear. We perceive no smell, unless the effluvia of the smelling body enter into the nostrils. We perceive no taste, unless the sapid body be applied to the tongue, or some part of the organ of taste. Nor do we perceive any tangible quality of a body, unless it touch the hands, or some part of our body."*

It is evident, that, in these cases of a supposed medium which Dr Reid considers as forming so important a distinction of our sensations, the real object of sense is not the distant object, but that which acts immediately upon the organs,—the light itself, not the sun which beams it on us,—the odorous particles, which the wind has wafted to us from the rose, not the rose itself upon its stem,—the vibrations of the air, within our ear, not the cannon that is fired at the distance of miles. The light, the odour, the vibrating air, by which alone our senses are affected, act on our nerves of sight, of smell, and hearing, with an influence as direct, and as little limited in the kind of action, as that with which the fruit, which we eat or handle, acts on our nerves of taste or touch. This influence of the objects immediately external is all in which our organs of sense, and consequently the mind, as the principle of mere sensation, is concerned. The reference to

* On the Intellectual Powers, Essay II. chap. ii.

the distant sun, or rose, or cannon, which alone leads us to speak of a medium in any of these cases, is the effect of another principle of our intellectual nature,—the principle of association, or suggestion,—that is afterwards to be considered by us, without which, indeed, our mere transient sensations would be comparatively of little value; but which, as a quality or susceptibility of the mind, is not to be confounded with that by which the mind becomes instantly sentient, in consequence of a certain change produced in the state of its sensorial organ.

Since, however, precisely the same series of changes must take place in nature, whether we class the sun, the flower, the cannon, as the objects of sense, or merely the light, the odorous particles, and the vibrating air, it may perhaps be thought, that the distinction now made is only a verbal one, of no real importance. But it will not appear such to those who are conversant with the different theories of perception which we are afterwards to review; many of which, that have had the greatest sway, and a sway the most fatal to the progress of intellectual philosophy, appear to me, to have arisen entirely, or at least chiefly from this very misconception as to the real external object of sense. It is sufficient at present to allude to the effect which the mere distance of the supposed object must have had, in giving room to all the follies of imagination to fill up the interval.

It may be necessary, however, to remark by the way, that though I do not conceive the bodies, which act through a medium, as it is said, to be the real objects of the particular sense;—the immense orb of the sun, for example, in all its magnitude, to be the object of that small organ by which we are sensible of light; or the cannon, which exists we know not where, to be the object of that organ by which we are sensible of sound;—I am still far from objecting to the popular and very convenient phraseology, by which we speak of seeing the sun, and hearing the cannon—a phraseology that expresses briefly a reference, which could not otherwise be expressed but by a very awkward circumlocution, and to make any innovation in which would be as absurd as to reject the popular phrases of the sun's rising and setting merely because they are inconsistent with our astronomical belief. The most rigid philosophy can require no more, than that, when we talk of the sun's actual setting, we should mean, by it, only a certain position relative to that great luminary at which the earth arrives in its diurnal revolution,—and that, when we talk of seeing it descend, we should mean nothing more, than that we see light of a certain brilliancy, from which we infer the existence and relative position of the orb that has projected it.

I have been led into these observations, on the various parts of the corporeal process which precedes sensation, by the desire of removing, as much as possible, any obscurity in which your notions on the subject might be involved,—as I know well the influence which even a slight confusion in our notion of any part of a complicated process has, in spreading, as it were, its own darkness and perplexity over parts of the process which otherwise we should have found no difficulty in comprehending. You might think, that you knew less distinctly the mental sensation itself, because you knew only obscurely the series of bodily changes that precede sensation; but still it must be remembered, that it is only the last link of the corporeal chain,—the ultimate affection of the sensorial organ, in whatever manner and to whatever extent it may be affected,—immediately antecedent to the affection of the mind, which is to be considered as that with which nature has united the corresponding change in our mental frame. This mysterious influence of our bodily on our mental part, has been poetically compared to that which the sun was supposed to exercise on a lyre, that formed part of a celebrated Egyptian statue of Memnon, which was said to become musical when struck with its beams; and though the poet has extended the similitude, beyond our mere elementary sensations, to the complex perception of beauty, it is still a very happy illustration—as far as a mere poetic image can be an illustration—of the power which matter exercises over the harmonies of mind:—

> "For, as old Memnon's image, long renown'd
> By fabling Nilus, to the quivering touch
> Of Titan's ray, with each repulsive string
> Consenting, sounded through the warbling air
> Unbidden strains,—even so did Nature's hand,
> To certain species of external things
> Attune the finer organs of the mind.
> So the glad impulse of congenial powers,
> Or of sweet sound, or fair proportion'd form,
> The grace of motion, or the bloom of light,
> Thrills through Imagination's tender frame,
> From nerve to nerve. All naked and alive,
> They catch the spreading rays; till now the soul
> At length discloses every tuneful spring,
> To that harmonious movement from without
> Responsive. Then the charm, by Fate prepar'd,
> Diffuses its enchantment.* Fancy dreams
> Of sacred fountains, and Elysian groves,
> And vales of bliss! the Intellectual Power
> Bends from his awful throne a wondering ear,
> And smiles; the Passions, gently soothed away,
> Sink to divine repose; and Love and Joy
> Alone are waking."†

When we consider the variety of our feelings thus wonderfully produced,—the pleasures, and, still more, the inexhaustible know-

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* "Then the charm," &c. to "enchantment," from the second form of the Poem. The corresponding clause, in the first form, from which all the rest of the quotation is taken, is this,

> "Then the inexpressive strain
> Diffuses its enchantment."

† Pleasures of Imagination, Book I. v. 109—181.

ledge, which arise, by this mysterious harmony, from the imperceptible affection of a few particles of nervous matter, it is impossible for us not to be impressed with more than admiration of that Power, which even our ignorance, that is scarcely capable of seeing any thing, is yet, by the greatest of all the bounties of heaven, able to perceive and admire. In the creation of this internal world of thought, the Divine Author of our being has known how to combine infinity itself with that which may almost be considered as the most finite of things; and has repeated, as it were, in every mind, by the almost creative sensibilities with which He has endowed it, that simple but majestic act of omnipotence, by which, originally, He called from the rude elements of chaos, or rather from nothing, all the splendid glories of the universe.

LECTURE XX.

PARTICULAR CONSIDERATION OF OUR SENSATIONS—NAMELESS TRIBES OF SENSATIONS—SENSATIONS OF SMELL—OF TASTE—OF HEARING.

A CONSIDERABLE portion of my last Lecture, Gentlemen, was employed in illustrating the corporeal part of the process of perception, which, though less immediately connected with our Science than the mental part of the process, is still, from its intimate connexion with this mental part, not to be altogether neglected by the intellectual inquirer. The importance of clear notions of the mere organic changes is, indeed, most strikingly exemplified in the very false theories of perception which have prevailed, and in some measure still prevail; and which evidently, in part at least, owe their origin to those confused notions, to which I alluded in my last Lecture, of the objects of perception, as supposed to operate at a distance through a medium, and of complicated series of changes supposed to take place in the nerves and brain.

In considering the Phenomena of our Mind, as they exist when we are capable of making them subjects of reflection, I mentioned to you, in a former Lecture, that although we have to encounter many additional difficulties, in consequence of early associations, that modify for ever after our original elementary feelings with an influence that is inappreciable by us, because it is truly unperceived, there are yet some advantages, which, though they do not fully compensate this evil, at least enable us to make some deduction from its amount. The benefit to which I allude, is found chiefly in the class of phenomena which we are now considering,—a class, indeed, which otherwise we should not have regarded as half so comprehensive as it truly is, since, but for our previous belief of the existence of a permanent and independent system of external things acquired from other sources, we should have classed by far the greater number of the feelings, which we now refer to sense, among those which arise spontaneously in the mind, without any cause external to the mind itself.

Though the sensations, which arise from affections of the same organ,—as those of warmth and extension for example, or at least the feeling of warmth and a tactual feeling, that is commonly supposed to involve extension, from affections of the same nerves of touch,—are not, in every case, more analogous to each other than the sensations which arise from affections of different organs,—and though, if we were to consider the sensations alone, therefore, without reference to their organs, we might not form precisely the same classification as at present,—the division, according to the organs affected, in most cases corresponds, so exactly, with that which we should make, in considering the mere sensations as affections of the mind, and affords in itself a principle of classification, so obvious and definite, that we cannot hesitate, in preferring it to any other which we might attempt to form. In the arrangements of every science, it is of essential consequence, that the lines of difference, which distinguish one class from another, should be well marked; and this advantage is peculiarly important in the science of mind, the objects of which do not, as in the other great department of nature, outlast inquiry, but are, in every case, so very shadowy and fugitive, as to flit from us in the very glance that endeavours to catch their almost imperceptible outline.

In examining, then, according to their organs, our classes of sensations;—and considering what feelings the organic affections excite at present, and what we may suppose them to have excited originally,—I shall begin with those which are most simple, taking them in the order of smell, taste, and hearing,—not so much, from any hope that the information, which these afford, will throw any great light on the more complex phenomena of sight and touch, as because the consideration of them is easier, and may prepare you gradually for the difficult analysis, which awaits us afterwards, in the examination of those more perplexing phenomena.

I begin, then, with the consideration of that very simple order of our sensations which we ascribe to our organ of

SMELL.

The organ of smell, as you well know, is principally in the nostrils,—and partly also in some continuous cavities on which a portion of the olfactory nerves is diffused.

Naribus interea consedit odora hominum vis
Docta leves captare auras, Panchaia quales
Vere novo exhalat, Floræve quod oscula fragrant
Roscida, cum Zephyri furtim sub vesperis horâ
Respondet votis, mollemque aspirat amorem.*

When the particles of odour affect our nerves of smell, a certain state of mind is produced, varying with the nature of the odoriferous body. The mere existence of this state is all the information which we could originally have received from it, if it had been excited previously to our sensations of a different class. But, with our present knowledge, it seems immediately to communicate to us much more important information. We are not merely sensible of the particular feeling, but we refer it, in the instant,—almost in the same manner, as if the reference itself were involved in the sensation,—to a rose, hemlock, honeysuckle, or any other substance, agreeable or disagreeable; the immediate presence or vicinity of which we have formerly found to be attended with this particular sensation. The power of making the reference, however, is unquestionably derived from a source different from that from which the mere sensation is immediately derived. We must previously have seen, or handled, the rose, the hemlock, the honeysuckle; or if, without making this particular reference, we merely consider our sensation of smell as caused by some unknown object external to our mind, we must at least have previously seen or handled some other bodies, which excited, at the same time, sensations analagous to the present. If we had been endowed with the sense of smell, and with no other sense whatever, the sensations of this class would have been simple feelings of pleasure or pain, which we should as little have ascribed to an external cause, as any of our spontaneous feelings of joy or sorrow, that are equally lasting or equally transient. Even at present, after the connexion of our sensations of fragrance with the bodies which we term fragrant, has been, in a great measure, fixed in our mind by innumerable repetitions, we still, if we attend to the process of the reference itself, are conscious of a suggestion of remembrance, and can separate the sensation, as a mere feeling of the mind, from the knowledge of the object or external cause of the sensation, which seems to us a subsequent state of the mind, however close the succession may be. Indeed, what is there which we can discover in the mere sensation of fragrance, that is itself significant of solidity, extension, or whatever we may regard as essential to the existence of things without? As a mere change in the form of our being, it may suggest to us the necessity of some cause or antecedent of the change. But it is far from implying the necessity of a corporeal cause;—any more than such a direct corporeal cause is implied in any other modification of our being, intellectual or moral,—in our belief, for example, of the most abstract truth, at which we may have arrived by a slow developement of proposition after proposition, in a process of internal reflective analysis,—or in the most refined and sublime of our emotions, when, without thinking of any one of the objects around, we have been meditating on the Divinity who formed them—himself the purest of spiritual existences. Our belief of a system of external things, then, does not, as far as we can judge from the nature of the feelings, arise from our sensations of smell, more than from any of our internal pleasures or pains; but we class our sensations of smell as sensations, because we have previously believed in a system of external things, and have found, by uniform experience, that the introduction of some new external body, either felt or seen by us, was the antecedent of those states of mind which we denominate sensations of smell, and not of those internal pains or pleasures, which we therefore distinguish from them, as the spontaneous affections of our own independent mind.

* Gray de Principiis Cogitandi, Lib. I. v. 130—134.

TASTE.

With the organ of taste you are all sufficiently acquainted. In considering the phenomena which it presents, in the peculiar sensations that directly flow from it, it is necessary to make some little abstraction from the sensation of touch, which accompanies them in consequence of the immediate application of the tangible sapid body to the organ; but the sensations, thus co-existing, are so very different in themselves, as to be easily distinguishable. When the organ of taste is in a sound state, the application of certain substances produces, immediately, that change or affection of the sensorial organs which is attended with a corresponding change or affection of the sentient mind. In our present state of knowledge, we immediately refer this simple sensation to something which is bitter or sweet, or acrid, or of some other denomination of sapid quality; and we have no hesitation in classing the sensations as sensations,—effects of laws of action that belong jointly to matter and mind,—not as feelings that arise in the mind, from its own independent constitution. But, if we attend sufficiently to the feeling that arises in the case of taste, we shall find, however immediate the reference to a sapid body may seem to be, that it is truly successive to the simple sensation, and is the mere suggestion of former experience, when a body previously recognised by us as an external substance, was applied to our organ of taste;—in the same manner, as, when we see ashes and dying embers, we immedi-

ately infer some previous combustion, which we could not have inferred, if combustion itself had been a phenomenon altogether unknown to us. In the simple sensation which precedes the reference,—the mere pleasure of sweetness or the mere pain of bitterness—there is nothing which seems to mark more distinctly the presence of honey or wormwood, or any similar external substance, than in any of our joys or sorrows to which we have not given a name; and there can be no doubt, that, if the particular feeling which we now term joy, and the particular feeling which we now term sorrow, had been excited, whenever we knew, from other sources, that certain bodies were applied to the tongue, we should have considered these internal feelings as sensations, in the strict sense of the word, precisely in the same manner as we now regard, as sensations, the feeling which we term sweetness, and the feeling which we term bitterness; because, like these sensations, they could not have failed to suggest to us, by the common influence of association, the presence and direct coincidence of the object without. In the case of taste, therefore, as in the case of smell, we could not, from the simple sensations,—if these alone had been given to us,—have derived any knowledge of an external world of substances extended and resisting; but we consider them as sensations, in the strict philosophic meaning of the term, because we have previously acquired our belief of an external world.

It may be remarked, of these two classes of sensations, now considered, that they have a greater mutual resemblance than our sensations of any other kind. It is only a blind man who thinks that what is called scarlet is like the sound of a trumpet; but there are tastes which we consider as like smells, in the same manner as we consider them to be like other tastes; and if we had not acquired a distinct knowledge of the seats of our different organs, and had yet known that smells and tastes arose from external causes acting upon some one or other of these, we should probably have been greatly puzzled, in many cases, in our attempt to refer the particular sensation to its particular organ.

In considering the advantages which we derive from our organs of smell and taste, the mere pleasures which they directly afford, as a part of the general happiness of life, are to be regarded, from their frequent occurrence, as of no inconsiderable amount. The fragrance of the fields enters largely into that obscure but delightful group of images, which rise in our minds on the mere names of spring, summer, the country, and seems to represent the very form of ethereal purity, as if it were the breath of heaven itself.

If we imagine all the innumerable flowers which nature pours out, like a tribute of incense to the God who is adorning her, again to be stripped, in a single moment, of their odour, though they were to retain all their bright diversities of colouring, it would seem as if they were deprived of a spirit which animates them,—how cold and dead would they instantly become,—and how much should we lose of that vernal joy, which renders the season of blossoms almost a new life to ourselves.

> "In vain the golden Morn aloft
> Waves her dew-bespangled wing;
> With vermeil cheek and whisper soft
> She woos the tardy Spring;
> Till April starts and calls around
> The sleeping fragrance from the ground."*

It is by this delightful quality that the tribes of vegetable life seem to hold a sort of social and spiritual communion with us. It is, as it were, the voice with which they address us, and a voice which speaks only of happiness. To him who walks among the flowers which he has tended,

> "Each odoriferous leaf,
> Each opening blossom, freely breathes abroad
> Its gratitude, and thanks him with its sweets."

The pleasures of the sense of taste, in the moderate enjoyment of which there is nothing reprehensible, are, in a peculiar manner, associated with family happiness. To have met frequently at the same board, is no small part of many of the delightful remembrances of friendship; and to meet again at the same board, after years of absence, is a pleasure that almost makes atonement for the long and dreary interval between. In some half-civilized countries, in which the influence of simple feelings of this kind is at once more forcible itself, and less obscured in the confusion of ever-varying frivolities and passions, this hospitable bond forms, as you well know, one of the strongest ties of mutual obligation, sufficient often to check the impetuosity of vindictive passions which no other remembrance could, in the moment of fury, restrain. Had there been no pleasure attached to a repast, independent of the mere relief from the pain of hunger, the coarse and equal food would probably have been taken by each individual apart, and might even, like our other animal necessities, have been associated with feelings which would have rendered solitude a duty of external decorum. It would not be easy, even for those who have been accustomed to trace a simple cause through all its remotest operations, to say, how much of happiness, and how much even of the warm tenderness of virtue, would be destroyed by the change of manners, which should simply put an end to the social meal; that meal which

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* Gray on the Pleasure arising from Vicissitude, Stanza I.—In v. i. the original has, instead of "in vain," "now."

now calls all the members of a family to suspend their cares for a while, and to enjoy that cheerfulness which is best reflected from others, and which can be permanent only when it is so reflected, from soul to soul, and from eye to eye.

One very important advantage, more directly obvious than this, and of a kind which every one may be disposed more readily to admit, is afforded by our senses of smell and taste, in guiding our selection of the substances which we take as alimentary. To the other animals, whose senses of this order are so much quicker, and whose instincts, in accommodation to their want of general language, and consequent difficulty of acquiring knowledge by mutual communication, are providentially allotted to them in a degree, and of a kind far surpassing the instincts of the slow, but noble reflector, man, these senses seem to furnish immediate instruction as to the substances proper for nourishment, to the exclusion of those which would be noxious. To man, however, who is under the guardianship of affections, more beneficial to him than any instinct of his own could be, there is no reason to believe that they do this primarily, and of themselves, though in the state in which he is brought up, instructed with respect to every thing noxious or salutary, by those who watch constantly over him in the early period of his life, and having, therefore, no necessity to appeal to the mere discrimination of his own independent organs, and, still more as in the artificial state of things in which he lives, his senses are at once perplexed and palled, by the variety and confusion of luxurious preparation, it is not easy to say how far his primary instincts,—if it had not been the high and inevitable dignity of his nature to rise above these,—might, of themselves, have operated as directors. But, whatever their primary influence may be, the secondary influence of his organs of taste and smell is not the less important. When we have once completely learned what substances are noxious, and what are salutary, we then, however similar they may be in their other sensible qualities, discriminate these as often as they are again presented to us, by that taste or smell, which they affect with different sensations; and our acquired knowledge has thus ultimately, in guiding our choice, the force and the vivacity of an original instinct.

HEARING.

In considering the phenomena of the sense of hearing, to which I now proceed, I may apply to them the same remark, which has been already applied to the phenomena of the senses before considered. They are classed by us, as sensations, merely in consequence of our previous belief in the existence of those external bodies, the motion of which we have known to be followed by similar feelings. Our mind begins suddenly to exist in a certain state; and we call this state *joy* or *sorrow*, without supposing that it depends on the immediate presence of any external object. It begins again to exist, in a different state, and we say that we hear a flute, referring the feeling immediately to an external cause. But there can be no doubt, that, in making this reference in the one case, and not in the other, we are influenced by experience, and by experience alone. If we suppose ourselves endowed with the single sense of hearing, and incapable, therefore, of having previously seen or felt the flute which is breathed before us, or any other extended and resisting object whatever, we may imagine the mere sound to recur, innumerable times, without discovering any mode by which it can give us more knowledge than we should receive from a similar recurrence of any internal joy or sorrow. That we should be able to refer it to a body such as we now mean, when we speak of a flute, is manifestly impossible; since this implies knowledge of solidity, and form, and colour, which could not be acquired without touch and sight. But there seems even no reason to think that we should refer it to any external cause whatever, unless, indeed, such a reference necessarily accompanied every feeling, which we know is far from being the case, since we have many internal pleasures, not more like to each other than they are to the sound of a flute, which we do not refer to any thing, separate or separable, from the constitution of our own mind. In hearing, therefore, as in taste and smell, we do not derive from its sensations our knowledge of things external, but, in consequence of our knowledge of things external, we regard these feelings as sensations, in the common philosophic meaning of that term.

Simple as our sense of hearing may seem, it affords a striking specimen of that almost infinite variety, which is not inconsistent with the closest resemblance; and the notion which we may form of the innumerable varieties of sound, is perhaps not more vast, when we attempt to wander over its boundless discrepancies, than when we limit ourselves to its greatest similarities, in a single word of a language, or, in that which we might be inclined at first to regard as simplicity itself, a single musical tone.

"A flute, a violin, a hautboy, and a French horn," it has been truly remarked, "may all sound the same tone, and be easily distinguishable. Nay, if twenty human voices sound the same note, and with equal strength, there will still be some difference. The same voice, while it retains its proper distinctions, may be varied many ways, by sickness or health, youth or age, leanness or fatness, good or bad humour. The same words, spoken by

foreigners and natives, nay, by different provinces of the same nation, may be very easily distinguished."*

When we speak of the value of this sense as a part of our mental constitution, it is enough to say, that it is to it we are indirectly indebted for the use of verbal language,—that power so peculiarly distinctive of man, that, in the poetical phraseology of one celebrated country, it gave him his name as a *divider of the voice*, in other words, an utterer of articulate sounds. If we consider speech simply as a medium of the reciprocal expression of present feelings to the little society of citizens and friends of which we are a part, even in this limited view, of what inestimable value does it appear! To communicate to every one around us, in a single moment, the happiness which we feel ourselves,—to express the want which, we have full confidence, will be relieved as soon as it is known,—or to have the still greater privilege of being ourselves the ministers of comfort to wants, which otherwise could not have been relieved by us, because they could not have been discovered,—when the heart which we love is weighed down with imaginary grief, to have it in our power, by a few simple sounds, to convert anguish itself into rapture,—these are surely no slight advantages; and yet, compared with the benefit which it affords to man as an intellectual being, even these are inconsiderable. To be without language, spoken or written, is almost to be without thought; and if, not an individual only, living among his fellows whose light may be reflected upon him, but our whole race had been so constituted, it is scarcely possible to conceive that beings, whose instincts are so much less various and powerful than those of the other animals, could have held over them that dominion which they now so easily exercise. Wherever two human beings, therefore, are to be found, there language is. We must not think, in a speculative comparison of this sort, of mere savage life; for the rudest savages would be as much superior to a race of beings without speech, as the most civilized nations at this moment are, compared with the half-brutal wanderers of forests and deserts, whose ferocious ignorance seems to know little more than how to destroy and be destroyed. Even these are still associated in tribes, that concert together verbally their schemes of havoc and defence; and employ, in deliberating on the massacre of beings as little human as themselves, or the plunder of a few huts that seem to contain nothing but misery and the miserable, the same glorious instrument with which Socrates brought wisdom down from heaven to earth, and Newton made the heavens themselves, and all the wonders which they contain, descend, as it were, to be grasped and measured by the feeble arm of man.

Such are the benefits of language, even in its fugitive state; but the noblest of all the benefits which it confers, is in that permanent transmission of thought, which gives to each individual the powers and the wisdom of his species; or rather,—for the united powers and wisdom of his species, as they exist in myriads at the same moment with himself, upon the globe, would be comparatively a trifling endowment,—it gives him the rich inheritance of the accumulated acquisitions of all the multitudes, who, like himself, in every preceding age, have inquired, and meditated, and patiently discovered, or, by the happy inspiration of genius, have found truths which they scarcely sought, and penetrated, with the rapidity of a single glance, those depths of nature which the weak steps and dim torch-light of generations after generations had vainly laboured to explore. By that happy invention, which we owe indirectly to the ear, the boundaries of time seem to be at once removed. Nothing is past; for every thing lives, as it were, before us. The thoughts of beings who had trod the most distant soil, in the most distant period, arise again in our mind, with the same warmth and freshness as when they first awoke to life in the bosom of their author. That system of perpetual transmigration,—which was but a fable, as believed by Pythagoras,—becomes reality when it is applied, not to the soul itself, but to its feelings. There is then a true metempsychosis, by which the poet and the sage, in spreading their conceptions and emotions from breast to breast, may be said to extend their existence through an ever-changing immortality. Who does not feel the justness of what Lucan says, when he speaks of the events of Pharsalia, and predicts the lively feelings with which they are afterwards to be regarded, not as past, and therefore indifferent, but as present and almost future:

"Hæc et apud seras gentes, populosque nepotum,
Sive sua tantum venient in secula fama,—
Sive aliquid magnis nostri quoque cura laboris
Nominibus prodesse potest,—cum bella legentur,
Spesque metusque simul, perituraque vota movebunt:
Attonitique omnes, veluti *venientia* fata
Non *transmissa* legent, et *adhuc* tibi magni favebunt."*

"There is without all doubt," as has been justly observed, "a chain of the thoughts of human kind, from the origin of the world down to the moment at which we exist,—a chain not less universal than that of the generation of every being that lives. Ages have exerted their influence on ages; nations on nations; truths on errors; errors on truths.

* Reid's Inquiry into the Human Mind, c. iv. sect 1.

* Pharsalia, Lib. VII. v. 207—213

In conformity with this idea of the generation of thought, I may remark, that we are in possession of opinions,—which, perhaps, regulate our life in its most important moral concerns, or in all its intellectual pursuits,—with respect to which, we are as ignorant of the original anthors, by whom they have been silently and imperceptibly transmitted to us from mind to mind, as we are ignorant of those ancestors, on whose existence in the thousands of years which preceded our entrance into the world, our life itself has depended, and without whom, therefore, we should not have been.

The unlimited transmission of thought, which the invention of language allows, brings the universe of mind into that point of view, in which an eloquent living French author has considered the physical universe,—as exhibiting at once all its splendid varieties of events, and uniting, as it were, in a single moment, the wonders of eternity. "Combine," says he, "by your imagination, all the fairest appearances of things. Suppose that you see, at once all the hours of the day, and all the seasons of the year,—a morning of spring and of autumn,—a night brilliant with stars, and a night obscure with clouds,—meadows, enamelled with flowers,—fields, waving with harvest,—woods, heavy with the frosts of winter,—you will then have a just notion of the spectacle of the universe. Is it not wondrous that, while you are admiring the sun, who is plunging beneath the vault of the west, another observer is beholding him as he quits the regions of the east,—in the same instant reposing, weary, from the dust of the evening, and awaking, fresh and youthful, in the dews of morn! There is not a moment of the day in which the same sun is not rising, shining in his zenith, and setting on the world! or, rather, our senses abuse us, and there is no rising, nor setting, nor zenith, nor east, nor west; but all is one fixed point, at which every species of light is beaming at once from the unalterable orb of day."

In like manner,—if I may venture to consider the phenomena of the mind in the same fanciful point of view,—every moment may be said to be exhibiting the birth, and progress, and decay of thought. Infancy, maturity, old age, death, are mingled, as it were, in one universal scene. The opinions which are perishing in one mind, are rising in another; and often, perhaps, at the last fading ray of the flame of genius, that may have almost dazzled the world with excess of brilliancy, some star may be kindling, which is to shine upon the intellectual universe with equal light and glory:—

"Flowers of the sky! ye too, to age must yield,
Frail, as your silken sisters of the field!
Star after star from Heaven's high arch shall rush:
Suns sink on suns, and systems systems crush:
Headlong, extinct, to one dark centre fall,
And Death, and Night, and Chaos, mingle all!
—Till, o'er the wreck, emerging from the storm,
Immortal Nature lifts her changeful form;
Mounts from her funeral pyre on wings of flame,
And soars, and shines,—another, and the same."*

Such are the benefits resulting from that happiest of all inventions, which we may be said to owe to our sense of Hearing,—if, indeed, it be an invention of man, and not rather, as many have thought, a coeval power, bestowed on him by his provident Creator at the very moment which gave him life. But still, whether original or invented, the ear must equally have been its primary recipient. We have seen, in the view which we have taken of it, that of our more social intercourse it constitutes the chief delight,—giving happiness to hours, the wearying heaviness of which must otherwise have rendered existence an insupportable burthen; and that, in its most important character, as fixed, in the imperishable records which are transmitted, in uninterrupted progression, from the generation which passes away to the generation that succeeds, it gives to the individual man the product of all the creative energies of mankind; extending even to the humblest intellect, which can still mix itself with the illustrious dead, that privilege which has been poetically allotted to the immortality of genius, of being "the citizen of every country, and the contemporary of every age."

LECTURE XXI.

ON HEARING—CONTINUED.

Gentlemen, after considering, in a former Lecture, some states of mind which arise immediately from affections of our nerves, and which, therefore, I can see no reason for classing apart from our other sensations, I proceeded, in my last Lecture, to consider the feelings, which are more commonly termed sensations, beginning with the most simple of these, in the order of smell, taste, and hearing.

In the elucidation of these, my great object was to show, that there is nothing in the mere states of mind, that constitute the sensations of fragrance, sweetness, sound, which could have led us to ascribe them to corporeal objects as their causes,—more than in any of our internal joys or sorrows,—if we had had no other means of acquiring knowledge of those causes than are afforded by the sensations themselves,—that, in short, we consider them as sensations, or external affections of

* Darwin's Botanic Garden, Canto IV. v. 371—380.

the mind, because we have previously believed in an external world,—not that we believe in an external world merely because we have had those particular sensations.

The various advantages which these three senses afford, I endeavoured to point out to you; and, in particular, occupied a great part of my Lecture in illustrating the advantages for which we are indebted to our organ of hearing, as the medium of language, and by it, more or less directly, not of the high acquisitions of science and civilization only, but of the rudest forms of social communication, and almost of social existence.

After the remarks on this advantage received from language,—which is unquestionably, and beyond all comparison, the most inestimable benefit which the sense of hearing affords, it would be improper to omit wholly the mention of the pleasure which we receive from it as a source of musical delight,—of that expression of feeling, which itself, almost like verbal discourse, may be said to be a language, since it is the utterance of thought and emotion from heart to heart,—but which has a voice as independent of the mere arbitrary forms of speech, as the tears of gratitude or the smiles of love, that may, indeed, give eloquence to words, but require no words to render them eloquent. Though, when very strictly considered, even the pure, and almost spiritual delight of music, may perhaps be counted only a pleasure of sense, it yet approaches, by so many striking analogies, to the nature of our intellectual enjoyments, that it may almost be said to belong to that class; and though,—relatively to minds that are capable of enjoyments more truly intellectual,—it is to be considered as a mere pastime or relaxation, it assumes a far higher character in its relation to the general pleasures of common minds, and may be said, at least, to be the intellectual luxury of those who are incapable of any other luxury that deserves so honourable a name. And it is well that there should be some intermediate pleasure of this sort, to withdraw for a while the dull and the sensual from the grosser existence in which they may be sunk, and to give them some glimpses, at least, of a state of purer enjoyment, than that which is to be derived from the sordid gains and sordid luxuries of common life.

Of the influence,—whether salutary or injurious,—which music has upon the general character, when cultivated to great refinement, and so universally as almost to become a part of the habit of daily social life,—it is not, at present, the place to speak. But of its temporary influence as a source of tranquillizing delight, there can be no doubt,—nor, perhaps too, of its occasional efficacy in exciting emotions of a stronger kind, when peculiar circumstances may have predisposed to them in a very high degree. But there can be as little doubt, that by far the greater number of anecdotes of this kind, which have been handed down in ancient history, are as fabulous as the existence of that god of music, to whose miraculous influence alone they could, with any decent appearance of epic or dramatic truth, have been ascribed.

"Hear how Timotheus' varied lays surprise,
And bid alternate passions fall and rise;
While, at each change, the son of Lybian Jove
Now burns with glory, and then melts with love,—
Now his fierce eyes with sparkling fury glow,
Now sighs steal out and tears begin to flow;
Persians and Greeks like turns of nature found,
And the *world's victor* stood *subdued*—by sound!"*

On these lines, which allude to the celebrated ode of Dryden,—who adapted, with most happy application to the burning of the Persian palace, an anecdote recorded of the power of Timotheus over the same great warrior on another occasion,—I may remark, by the way, what influence the accidental composition of this ode has had, in giving almost a sort of dignity to the very madness of the act which it records. It is impossible for us,—even though we knew well how fictitious is the circumstance attached to it,—not to look upon the action in a different light from that in which we should have viewed it, if we had read only the historical account of it, as originating in a drunken debauch, at the instigation of a drunken prostitute.

Ebrio scorto de tanta re ferente sententiam, unus et alter, et ipsi mero onerati, assentiunt: Rex quoque fuit avidior quam patientior. "Quin igitur ulciscimur Græciam, et urbi faces subdimus?" Omnes incaluerunt mero; itaque surgunt temulenti ad incendendam urbem, cui armati, perpercerant.†

Such is the influence of genius. Its power extends not over the present and the future merely, but, in some measure, also over the past, which might have seemed fixed for ever. In spite of our conviction, we look upon an action of Alexander differently, because an individual existed many centuries after him, and in a country which would then have been justly counted barbarous by the very barbarians whom he overcame.

Of the wonders, which were said, in ancient times, to have been performed on the mind and body, by a judicious adaptation of musical sounds to the nature of the particular case, intellectual, moral, or corporeal, I might read many histories to you from the original authors, which would, perhaps, not be less truly ludicrous in the serious gravity of their narration, than in the affected solemnity of the fictitious personage whose speech I am about to quote. The experiment with which the quotation closes is, it must be allowed, a

* Pope's Essay on Criticism, v. 371—381.
† Quintius Curtius, Lib. V. cap. 7.

very powerful one, and, certainly could not have been more successful in the hands of Timotheus himself.

"The bare mention of music threw Cornelius into a passion. 'How can you dignify,' quoth he, 'this modern fiddling with the name of music? Will any of your best hautboys encounter a wolf now-a-days with no other arms but their instruments, as did that ancient piper, Pythocaris? Have ever wild boars, elephants, deer, dolphins, whales, or turbots, showed the least emotion at the most elaborate strains of your modern scrapers, all which have been, as it were, tamed and humanized by ancient musicians? Whence proceeds the degeneracy of our morals? Is it not from the loss of ancient music, by which (says Aristotle) they taught all the virtues? Else might we turn Newgate into a college of Dorian musicians, who should teach moral virtues to those people. Whence comes it that our present diseases are so stubborn? whence is it that I daily deplore my sciatical pains? Alas! because we have lost their true cure, by the melody of the pipe. All this was well known to the ancients, as Theophrastus assures us, (whence Cælius calls it *loca dolentia decantare;)* only indeed some small remains of this skill are preserved in the cure of the tarantula. Did not Pythagoras stop a company of drunken bullies from storming a civil house, by changing the strain of the pipe to the sober spondæus? and yet your modern musicians want art to defend their windows from common nickers. It is well known that when the Lacedæmonian mob were up, they commonly sent for a Lesbian musician to appease them, and they immediately grew calm as soon as they heard Terpander sing: Yet I don't believe that the Pope's whole band of music, though the best of this age, could keep his holiness's image from being burnt on a fifth of November.' 'Nor would Terpander himself,' replied Albertus, 'at Billingsgate, nor Timotheus at Hockley in the Hole, have any manner of effect, nor both of them together bring Horneck to common civility.' 'That's a gross mistake,' said Cornelius, very warmly, 'and to prove it so, I have here a small lyra of my own, framed, strung, and tuned after the ancient manner. I can play some fragments of Lesbian tunes, and I wish I were to try them upon the most passionate creatures alive.'— 'You never had a better opportunity,' says Albertus, 'for yonder are two apple-women scolding, and just ready to uncoif one another. With that Cornelius, undressed as he was, jumps out into his balcony, his lyra in hand, in his slippers,—with a stocking upon his head, and waistcoat of murrey-coloured satin upon his body: He touched his lyra with a very unusual sort of an harpegiatura, nor were his hopes frustrated. The odd equipage, the uncouth instrument, the strangeness of the man and of the music, drew the ears and eyes of the whole mob that were got about the two female champions, and at last of the combatants themselves. They all approached the balcony, in as close attention as Orpheus's first audience of cattle, or that of an Italian opera, when some favourite air is just awakened. This sudden effect of his music encouraged him mightily, and it was observed he never touched his lyre in such a truly chromatic and enharmonic manner as upon that occasion. The mob laughed, sung, jumped, danced, and used many odd gestures, all which he judged to be caused by the various strains and modulations. 'Mark,' quoth he, 'in this, the power of the Ionian; in that you see the effect of the Æolian.' But in a little time they began to grow riotous, and threw stones: Cornelius then withdrew. 'Brother,' said he, 'do you observe I have mixed unawares too much of the Phrygian? I might change it to the Lydian, and soften their riotous tempers: But it is enough; learn from this sample to speak with veneration of ancient music. If this lyre in my unskilful hands can perform such wonders, what must it not have done in those of a Timotheus or a Terpander?' Having said this he retired with the utmost exultation in himself, and contempt of his brother; and, it is said, behaved that night with such unusual haughtiness to his family, that they all had reason to wish for some ancient Tibicen to calm his temper."*

That, in enlightened countries, so many wonders should have been related, and credited,—if no phenomena that could justify them were truly observed,—may perhaps, on first reflection, appear so unaccountable, as almost to induce belief of the wonders themselves, as less inexplicable than the very credit which was given to them. But it must be remembered, that in all ages, and even in countries of philosophers, there is a very large fund of credulity in man,—which yields, very readily, to every thing that is not absolutely impossible, and which is even not very nice in estimating what is impossible,—leaning always, whenever there is the slightest doubt on this point, with a very favourable inclination, to the side of the possibility;—and, in the second place, that the phenomena of music are precisely of a kind which gives this credulity the widest scope. They are pleasing in themselves, and of a kind, therefore, on which it is gratifying to the imagination to dwell: Their influence on the mind is felt in a very high and wonderful degree, even without any fabulous addition;—they are produced by instruments, which seem, in their sensible ap-

* Mart. Scrib. Book I. c. 7, with some exclusions.

pearance, so little adequate to the production of them, that the result is almost like the effect of supernatural agency to which we know not how to give any limits;—and, when a little mystery is once admitted, the imagination, which has fairly got over the difficulty of this first admission, is not very scrupulous afterwards as to degrees, but is sufficiently ready of itself to admit a great deal more, without pausing to consider its exact amount.

The phenomena of music, in addition to their general interest, are truly worthy, in another respect, of our astonishment, from that striking diversity of organic power in the perception of melody, and still more of harmony, which they exhibit in different individuals, in whom all other circumstances are apparently the same,—a diversity which has often attracted the attention of philosophers, and has led even those who have no great tendency to speculation of any kind, to wonder at least, which is the first step of all philosophizing. In the present instance, however, unfortunately, this first step is the only step which philosophers have been able to take. They have been obliged to desist, after all their efforts to proceed further, and to submit to share, and even to acknowledge that they share, the ignorance of the vulgar. If, indeed, the want of musical ear had involved either a general defect of hearing, or a general slowness of discrimination in other cases of nice diversity, the wonder would not have been great. But those who are without ear for music perceive, as readily as others, the faintest whisper; —they distinguish, like them, the faintest shades of difference in the mere articulations of sound which constitute the varieties of language, nor the articulations only, but the differences also of the mere tones of affection or displeasure, grief or gaiety, which are so strikingly analogous to the varied expression of musical feeling;—and their power of discrimination in every other case, in which the judgment can be exercised, is not less perfect. Nay,—to increase still more the difficulty,—they are often as sensible as others, of the beauty of series of tones of a different kind; and some of our best poets and declaimers,—who of course must have had a quick discernment of metrical rhythm, and of the melody of elocution,—have yet been incapable of distinguishing the musical relations of sounds, as reciprocally high or low, the melody that results from them in certain successions, and the harmony or the discord of their union. That it depends chiefly, or perhaps entirely, on the structure or state of the mere corporeal organ of hearing,—which is of a kind, it must be remembered, peculiarly complicated, and therefore susceptible of great original diversity in the parts, and relations of the parts, that form it, is very probable; though the difference of the separate parts themselves, or of their relations to each other, may, to the mere eye, be so minute as never to be discovered by dissection,—thus leaving, to every future race of inquirers, the same difficulty which has perplexed ourselves, and the same impossibility of overcoming it. In the sense of vision, I may remark, there is a species of defect, very analogous to the want of musical ear,—a defect, which consists in the difficulty, or rather the incapacity, of distinguishing some colours from each other—and colours, too, which, to general observers, seem of a very opposite kind. As the want of musical ear implies no general defect of mere quickness of hearing, this visual defect, in like manner, is to be found in persons who are yet capable of distinguishing, with perfect accuracy, the form, and the greater or less brilliancy of the coloured object;—and I may remark, too, in confirmation of the opinion that the want of musical ear depends on causes not mental but organic, that, in this analogous case, some attempts, not absolutely unsuccessful, have been made, to explain the apparent confusion of colours, by certain peculiarities of the external organ of sight. Though the one case, however, were to throw no light upon the other, it is still gratifying to philosophers to have a case at all analogous, to which, when they are weary of considering what has baffled all their endeavours to explain it, they may have the comfort of turning away their attention, without the mortification of seeming absolutely to fly from the subject. Such is the strange constitution of our nature, that merely to have another difficulty presented to us, though it may yet be absolutely unsurmountable in itself,—if only it have some slight resemblance to a former difficulty,—seems to us almost as if we had succeeded in explaining the first; and each difficulty, by a very convenient transposition, which our pride knows well how to make, supplies, according as we may have been considering the one rather than the other, the place of explanation to that which is afterwards to explain it, no less clearly, in its turn.

In considering sound relatively to its external cause, we give the name of vibration to the successive pulses, or alternate approaches and recessions of the particles of the elastic sounding body; and the word is a very convenient one for expressing this series. But still it may be necessary to warn you, that the word, though single, is not the less expressive of a plurality of states, which have no other unity than as they are comprehended in this single word,—a word, like many other single words, by which we express the combination of various objects, or incidents invented by us merely to aid our weakness, that is incapable, without such helps, of conceiving or remembering even a small part of that wide series of physical changes which we are able

to discover in the universe, if each event of the series were to be distinguished by a peculiar name. This mere aid of our weakness, however, we are apt, by a very absurd, but a very general fallacy, to consider as something much more dignified in its nature than a mere arbitrary verbal abbreviation,—as truly an explanation of the very phenomena, or series of phenomena, which it simply designates. You must not flatter yourselves, however, that you have advanced the slightest step, in explaining the connexion of sound with the pulses of air, when you have merely invented a brief term for those successive pulses, and ascribed the sound to vibration ; you have, indeed, given a name to a series of corpuscular phenomena, but you have not discovered any thing additional to the phenomena themselves, which can be considered as explanatory of the changes produced.

What, then, is truly meant, when it is said that, for producing the mental affection, which constitutes hearing, some previous vibration is necessary? It certainly cannot mean, as I have already remarked, that the vibration is any thing in itself different from the series of physical events which it expresses, however few or numerous these may be, since it is only the name which we give to them, when we consider them together ; nor can it mean that the direct cause of the sensation is any thing different from the one organic state immediately preceding the sensation,—a state which may, indeed, have resulted from a long sequence of prior organic states, produced during the continued vibratory motion of the air, but which is itself, in its relation to the phenomenon which succeeds it,—that affection of the sentient mind which constitutes hearing,—to be considered independently of these prior states, that have no other relation to the mind, than as gradually inducing that ultimate organic state which is the state that is followed by sensation. There is a part, less or greater, of the sensorial organ, which must be affected in a certain manner, before the sensation of hearing can take place ; and, in vibration, there is nothing but a repeated approach and recession of the vibrating particles. If vibration, then, or a series of pulses, be necessary, it is evident that a corresponding series of changes in the organ is necessary ; that is to say, there is no one instant, at which the vibrating particles are in such a state, relatively to the sensorial organ, that if no previous changes had been excited in the organ itself, they could have produced in it immediately the precise state which is instantly followed by the mental affection of hearing. There must, therefore, be a series of changes, in the sensorial organ itself, the last of which only is followed by sensation. The particles of the air, or any other elastic medium, for example, must, in their first appulse, produce a certain state of the sensorial organ ; in their second appulse, a different state, by acting on an organ already affected in a certain manner ; in their third appulse, a still different state ; and thus successively, till, at last, they produce that particular definite state of the sensorial organ in consequence of which the mind becomes instantly sentient,—a state which could not have been produced by any single impulse of the particles on the unaffected organ, because then vibration, or a series of pulses, would not then have been necessary.

To this successive modification of states of an organ, terminating in a particular result, different from each of the prior states, there are abundant analogies in the history of the mind, and many in the phenomena of sensation itself. One of the most remarkable of these is the production of the sensation of whiteness, by the rapid revolution of a cylinder, on which the separate prismatic colours, and the separate colours only, are painted, in certain proportions :—each colour, in this case, acting on the organ already affected by a former colour, till a sensation, altogether different from the result of each of them when separate, is their joint ultimate result,—the sensation of whiteness, without any external object that is white.

In this way only, by a series of progressive organic affections, and not by any single affection, can the vibration of an elastic medium, as different from one simple unrepeated impulse, terminate in the production of sound. It is, in short, a name for this series of changes, and nothing more.

If, in a case so very obscure as that of musical ear, in which all that is truly evident is, that, in different individuals, there is a diversity of some kind or other,—I could permit myself to indulge any conjecture with respect to this diversity,—I might, perhaps, be inclined to look to the view now given of the real nature of vibration, and its progressive effects on the auditory part of our nervous system, as furnishing some slight ground, not indeed, for any theory, which is far too presumptuous a word, but for the preference of one mere possibility, to other mere possibilities, which is all that can be hoped in any conjecture, on so very dim and impalpable a subject.

We have seen that the series of pulses of the vibrating air,—if vibration, or a series of pulses be necessary to sound,—must produce a series of changes in the sensorial organ, which produce no corresponding affection of the mind, till, at last, a state of the organ is produced, which is attended with sensation. This, and this only, can be meant, when we speak of vibration as the antecedent of sound,—a series of organic changes, and, after this series, an affection of the mind. In such circumstances, it is certainly more probable that the organ thus affected with a

series of progressive changes, does not pass instantly from the greatest change to the state in which it was originally, before the first pulse, but that it retains this state, for a time, however short, or, at least, passes through some series of states, in its gradual return; so that, if a new vibration be excited by the pulse of any sounding body, before the organ of hearing have returned to its original state, the effect may be supposed to be different, from that which it would have been, if the same vibration had been primarily communicated to the organ, in its state of rest, or in that state, which, from our want of a better word, may be termed its state of rest.

The phenomena most analogous to these vibratory affections of the ear, as depending on successive impulses, are unquestionably the phenomena of titillation, or rather, to express what is so familiar and simple, by a more homely and appropriate word, the phenomena of tickling. In this, the great circumstance distinguishing musical feeling, is to be found, that the feeling arises not from the separate impressions, but from their successions or co-existence. When the palm of the hand is gently tickled, as the finger passes rapidly and repeatedly over the palm, the parts first affected are again affected with various degrees of pressure, as the ear, in melody, is successively affected by repeated varieties of vibration; and various parts of the organ of touch exist, at the same moment, in various states, forming one joint result of sensation, as, in harmony, various vibrations of the organ of hearing co-exist, and blend together in one mingled delight. To produce tickling, a certain rapidity of succession is necessary; for, if the parts, first affected, have returned to their original state, before other parts begin to be affected, or themselves to be affected again, the slow motion, it is evident, may be continued, for any length of time, without any effect different from that of simple pressure. The quicker, then, the return of the parts may be to their original state, the less will be the titillation; and it is, very probably, a difference in this quickness of return, which constitutes the difference of ticklishness so remarkable in different individuals, who feel, equally, the light pressure of each separate touch. That there is a difference of ticklishness, in different persons, you all know; some being easily excited, even to convulsive laughter, by slight motions that scarcely produce any effect in others, beyond that of the simple primary sensation of touch. A person who is ticklish, and a person who is not ticklish, agree in receiving this first tactual sensation; but they differ afterwards, is this respect, that when the same slight impulse is rapidly repeated, on the same surface, it produces a livelier effect than before, in the one, but not in the other. The organ of the one who is not ticklish is in the same state, or nearly in the same state, when it receives the second, third, and fourth impression, as when it received the first, and no peculiar excitement therefore is produced. The organ of the other, more susceptible, or more tenacious of the affection produced, has not returned to its original state, when the rapid impression is repeated, and is, therefore, at every new impression, affected in a different manner.

Proceeding on the analogy of these phenomena,—of mere tickling, with which I may suppose you to be all acquainted,—an analogy which, striking as it is in many circumstances, I readily own, does not justify more than conjecture in the case to which I would apply it,—I conceive it to be, at least, not absolutely impossible, since a diversity of some kind there must be, that in those who receive no pleasure from music, as in those who are not ticklish, there is a rapid return of the nervous organ, after each separate affection, to its original state; that each separate touch or pressure in the one case, and each separate tone in the other case, produces its particular effect,—that effect which it would have produced in all, if unaccompanied by any other tone in music, or slight pressure in tickling,—but that a succession of these produces no effect different from that which each would have produced singly. A certain interval is necessary for distinct hearing in every case; and before this interval has passed, the auditory nerves, in this case, may he imagined to be again quiescent, or nearly quiescent.

I need not add, that, in an inquiry of this sort, all which is necessary is to account for the mere original defect of pleasure; since, if the relations of notes, as reciprocally high or low, never gave any delight, the ear, having no object of interest in these successions, would soon habitually neglect them, and at length cease altogether to distinguish them, attending only to the verbal meaning of sounds, and not to their tone; in the same manner as we pay little attention to another relative difference of voices as more or less loud, unless when the difference is very considerable, and not in those common differences of intensity which distinguish every voice in conversation from every other voice,—or as, after living long in a province, the dialect of which is distinguished by any accentual peculiarities, we at last become unconscious of these, and hear the words, as it were, stripped of their peculiarity of tone. In what is termed the cultivation of a musical ear, however, we have not an analogy merely, but a direct proof of this influence of habit. That the ear may be improved by cultivation, or, in other words, by nice attention to the differences of musical sound, every one knows; and if this attention can enable us, even in mature life, to distinguish sounds as different in themselves, which, but for the habitual attention, we

should have regarded as the same, it may well be supposed, that continued inattention from earliest infancy may render us insensible of musical relations still more obvious and precise than those which we have thus only learned to distinguish; or, which is the same thing, that continued attention from infancy to slight musical differences of sound,—an attention which may be regarded as the natural effect of pleasure received,—may render us capable of distinguishing tones as very dissimilar, the differences of which, however obvious at present, we should scarcely, but for such original attentive discrimination, have been able to detect. What, in comparison, the refined musical ear of a performer,—almost every hour and every moment of whose life has been spent amid sounds,

> "Untwisting all the chains that tie
> The hidden soul of harmony,"*—

is to a common musical ear, that common musical ear may be to those in whom this discriminating skill seems to be wholly or nearly defective. The refined musician,—who, but for the long practice of his art, would have shared that incapacity which now excites his wonder,—is astonished that persons of common ear do not distinguish the nice differences which appear to him almost as remarkable as those differences which they are capable of perceiving; and the person of common musical ear only does the same thing, when he is astonished that the less refined differences, remarked by himself, are not obviously distinguishable by all mankind, or, at least, by all who have no deafness to incapacitate them from hearing the separate sounds. The discrimination in both has depended on previous attention, which has necessarily been greater in one case than in the other; and what attention can we suppose to have been originally given, if, from the cause which I have ventured to state as a possible one in persons without musical ear, no pleasure had originally been felt by them in any sequence of notes as successive, and the whole value of sound been to them the meaning of which it was symbolically representative, which, accordingly, they have learned to discriminate in every case, as accurately as others.

I might follow out this speculation at much greater length; but I have already dwelt too long on what is at best a conjecture, and what, perhaps, even as a mere conjecture, is founded only on a slight analogy.

After the examination of the phenomena of Smell, Taste, and Hearing, which are peculiarly simple, I proceed to the consideration of Senses which afford phenomena that are more complicated, or, at least, which seem more complicated, as considered in the mature state of the mind; when the sensations that arise from one set of organs, by frequent co-existence with sensations that arise from affections of other sets of organs, are, as it were, blended with them in one compound perception, and so permanently modified for ever after, that it is difficult in all cases, and in many cases perhaps impossible, to form any accurate notion of the sensations as they existed in their original elementary state.

Since, of the two senses of Sight and Touch, that of Sight,—as far, at least, as we are able, by intellectual analysis at present to discover its original sensations,—is more simple, and more analogous to the senses before considered, I should be inclined on these accounts to proceed to the consideration of it, previously to any inquiry into the sense of Touch. But this order, though unquestionably the more regular, if we had to consider only the original sensations of each organ, would be attended with great inconvenience in considering their subsequent modified sensations; since those of Vision depend, in a very great degree, on the prior affections of touch, with the nature of which, therefore, it is necessary for you to be acquainted in the first place. I am aware, indeed, that, in considering even Touch, I may sometimes find it necessary to refer, for illustration, to the phenomena of Vision, though these have not been considered by us, and must, therefore, for the time, be taken upon trust. But when phenomena are at all complicated, such occasional anticipations are absolutely unavoidable. Sensation, indeed, says Aristotle, is a straight line, while intellect is a circle,—Αἴσθησις γραμμὴ, νοῦς κύκλος,—or, to use the paraphrastic translation of Cudworth, in his treatise on Immutable Morality, "Sense is of that which is without. Sense wholly gazes and gads abroad; and, therefore, doth not know and comprehend its object, because it is different from it. Sense is a line, the mind is a circle. Sense is like a line, which is the flux of a point running out from itself; but intellect like a circle that keeps within itself."* That sense is not a circle, is indeed true, since it terminates in a point; but, far from being a straight line, it is one of the most perplexing of curves; and is crossed and cut by so many other curves,—into many of which it flows and unites with them completely,—that, when we arrive at the extremity of the line, it is almost impossible for us to determine with accuracy what curve it is, which, in the strange confusion of our diagram, we have been attempting to trace from its initial point.

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* Milton's L'Allegro, 143—145.

* Page 98, 99.

I proceed, then, to the consideration of the phenomena of the sense of

TOUCH.

If priority of sensation alone were to be regarded, the sense of *touch* might deserve to be considered in the first place; as it must have been exercised long before birth, and is probably the very feeling with which sentient life commences. The act of birth, in relation to the mind of the litt'e stranger who is thus painfully ushered into the wide scene of the world, is a series of feelings of this class; and the first feeling which awaits him, on his entrance,—in the change of temperature to which he is exposed,—is still to be referred to the same organ. It is at this most important moment of existence, when one dark and solitary life of months, of which no vestige is afterwards to remain in the memory, is finished, and a new life of many years,—a life of sunshine and society,—is just beginning, that, in the figurative language of the author, whom I am about to quote to you, *Pain*, the companion of human life, receives him on the first step of his journey, and embraces him in his iron arms.

"Primas tactus agit partes, primusque minutæ
Laxat iter cæcum turbæ, recipitque ruentem.
Non idem huic modus est qui fratribus: amplius ille
Imperium affectat senior, penitusque medullis,
Visceribusque habitat totis, pellisque recentem
Funditur in telam, et late per stamina vivit.
Necdum etiam matris puer eluctatus ab alvo,
Multiplices solvit tunicas, et vincula rupit;
Sopitus molli somno, tepidoque liquore
Circumfusus adhuc; tactus tamen aura lacessit
Jamdudum levior sensus, animamque reclusit.
Idque magis, simul ac solitum blandamque calorem
Frigore mutavit cœli, quod verberat aeri
Impete inassuetos artus: tum sævior adstat,
Humanæque comes vitæ Dolor excipit; ille
Cunctantem frustra et tremulo multa ore querentem
Corripit invadens, ferreisque amplectitur ulnis."*

It is at this moment so painful to himself, that he is affording to another bosom, perhaps, the purest delight of which our nature is capable, and has already kindled in a heart, of the existence of which he is as ignorant as of the love which he excites in it, that warmth of affection, which is never, but in the grave, to be cold to him, and to which, in the many miseries that may await him,—in sorrow, in sickness, in poverty,—and perhaps, too, in the penitence of guilt itself,—when there is no other eye, to whose kindness he can venture to look, he is still to turn with the confidence that he has yet, even on earth, one friend who will not abandon him,—and who will still think of that innocent being, whose eye, before it was conscious of light, seemed to look to her for the love and protection which were ready to receive him.

* Gray de Princip. Cogit. lib. i. v. 64—80.

LECTURE XXII.

ON THE FEELINGS USUALLY ASCRIBED TO THE SENSE OF TOUCH,—AND ANALYSIS OF THESE FEELINGS.

In my last Lecture, Gentlemen, I finished the remarks which I had to offer, on our sense of hearing; and, in the conclusion of it, had begun the consideration of a very important order of our feelings, those which belong to the sense of touch.

Of these, I may mention, in the first place, the sensations of heat and cold,—sensations that arise from affections of our nerves of touch, or at least from affections of nerves, which, as equally diffused and intermingled with them, it is impossible to distinguish from those which constitute our organ of touch,—the same wide surface rendering us sensible, as it were, at every point, of warmth as of pressure.

I have already remarked to you, how little analogy there is of our sensations of warmth, to the other sensations commonly ascribed to this organ; and the great difference of the feelings has led some physiologists to believe, that the organs of sensations so different, must themselves be different. But, even though the sensations were as dissimilar as is supposed, there is no reason *a priori* to believe,—and to experience, it is evident, that, in this case, we cannot appeal, so as to derive from it any ground for believing,—that sensations, which are very different, must arise from affections of different organs. As far, indeed, as we can safely appeal to experience, in this very case, there are sensations which we never hesitate in referring to our tactual nerves, as different from the more common sensations ascribed to touch, as the sensation of warmth itself. I allude to the pain of puncture or laceration of the skin. Indeed, if the brain be ultimately the great organ of all our sensations, it is evident that we must refer to affections of one sensorial organ, not the various feelings of touch only, but, with them, the still greater variety of feelings that constitute our sensations of smell, taste, sound, and colour.

But are we indeed sure, that there truly is that great dissimilarity supposed, or may not our belief of it arise from our reference to touch of sensations that truly do not belong to it? Such, at least, is the opinion, to which, I think, a nicer analysis will lead us. The primary original feelings, which we owe to our mere organ of touch, I consider as of a kind, all of which are far more analogous to the sensations of warmth, or of pain on puncture, than to the perceptions of form and hardness, which are generally regarded as tangible. Before entering on the analysis

however, it will be necessary to consider, what are the sensations which we are supposed to owe to this organ.

The sensations of heat and cold,—as received from our organ of touch,—we may almost lay out of account in our analytical inquiry. It is unnecessary to dwell on them, or even to repeat, in application to them, the argument, which has been already applied more than once to the sensations before considered. It is quite evident, that, in classing our warmth or chillness, as a sensation,—and not as a feeling that has arisen spontaneously in the mind,—we are influenced by that experience, which has previously given us the belief of objects external,—at least, of our own corporeal frame,—and that, if we had been unsusceptible of any other sensations than those of heat and cold, we should as little have believed these to arise directly from a corporeal cause, as any of our feelings of joy or sorrow. The same remark may be applied to the painful sensations of puncture and laceration.

It is only to the other more important information ascribed to the sense of touch, therefore, that our attention is to be directed.

By touch, we are commonly said to be made acquainted with extension, magnitude, divisibility, figure, motion, solidity, liquidity, viscidity, hardness, softness, roughness, smoothness. These terms, I readily allow, are very convenient for expressing notions of certain forms or states of bodies, that are easily distinguishable. But, though specifically distinguishable, they admit generically of very considerable reduction and simplification. Hardness and softness, for example, are expressive only of greater or less resistance,—roughness is irregularity of resistance, when there are intervals between the points that resist, or when some of these points project beyond others,—smoothness is complete uniformity of resistance,—liquidity, viscidity, are expressive of certain degrees of yieldingness to our effort, which solidity excludes, unless when the effort employed is violent. All, in short, I repeat, are only different species or degrees of that which we term *resistance*, whatever it may be, which impedes our continued effort, and impedes it variously, as the substances without are themselves various. Such is one order, then, of the feelings commonly ascribed to the sense which we are at present considering.

To proceed to the other supposed tangible qualities, before included in our enumeration, —figure is the boundary of extension, as magnitude is that which it comprehends; and divisibility, if we consider the apparent continuity of the parts which we divide, is only extension under another name. If we except motion, therefore, which is not permanent, but accidental,—and the knowledge of which is evidently secondary to the knowledge which we acquire of our organs of sense, before which the objects are said to move,—and secondary in a much more important sense, as resulting not from any direct immediate organic state of one particular moment, but from a comparison of sensations past and present,—all the information, which we are supposed to receive primarily and directly from touch, relates to modifications of *resistance* and *extension*.

Though it is to the sense of touch, however, that the origin of the knowledge of these is generally ascribed, I am inclined to think, in opposition to this opinion, that, in both cases, the reference is wrongly made,—that, if we had the sense of touch only, we should not be sensible of resistance, nor, I conceive, even of extension,—and that we seem to perceive the varieties of extension and resistance immediately by touch only, because the simple original tactual feeling has become representative of these, in the same manner, and for the same reason, as we seem to perceive the varieties of distance immediately by the eye. The sense of touch has unquestionably, like all our other senses, its own peculiar feelings, though, for the simple original feelings attached to the affections of this most extensive of organs, we have unfortunately no name but that which is applied in popular, and even in philosophic language, to all the affections of the mind. Our joy or grief, hope or fear, love or hate, I before remarked, we term feelings, as readily and frequently as we use this term to express our sensations of touch; and that which, however restricted in its original meaning, is now the common name of our mental affections of every class, has, by this extension, unfortunately become a very unfit one for distinguishing a limited order of those affections.

Whatever be the term which we may use, however, there is, and must be a sensation peculiar to touch, without regard to the extent or quantity of the surface impressed,—as there is, in colour, a sensation peculiar to vision, without regard to the extent of the portion of the retina on which the light may have fallen. Every physical point of our organ of touch, when existing in a certain state, is capable of inducing in the mind a peculiar feeling, though no other physical point of the organ were affected,—as every physical point of the retina, though but a single ray of light were admitted to the eye, is capable of inducing in the mind a peculiar affection of vision; and when many such physical points are affected together by some impressing surface, the form of which we think that we discover immediately by touch, it is from experience only that we can learn the vicinity of the physical points of our own tactual surface thus impressed, and consequently the con-

tinued extension of the object which impresses them. Before we have so much knowledge of external things as to know even that we have any bodily organs whatever,—and it is of this state of absolute ignorance alone that we must think, as often as we speculate on the information which our senses separately afford,—when we know as little of our bodily frame as of that material universe of which we know nothing, we cannot, by the very terms of this supposition, know, that different points of our organ of touch are affected in a certain manner—that these points are contiguous to each other—and that the mass affecting these contiguous points must consequently itself be composed of points, that are, in like manner, contiguous. We know nothing of our organs—we know nothing of any external masses—but a certain feeling is excited in our mind;—and it is this simple feeling alone, whatever it may be, which constitutes the direct elementary sensation of touch, though this simple elementary sensation, like many other sensations, may afterwards be so blended with other feelings as to become significant of them, and even to seem to involve them, as if originally and necessarily co-existing.

It is impossible for us at present, indeed, to have a body impressed on us, without the immediate notion of something external and extended,—as it is impossible for one, whose sight is perfect, to open his eyes in the light of day, without perceiving, as it were, immediately, the long line of variegated landscape, in the scenery before him:—the one impossibility is exactly equal to the other;—yet we know, in the case of vision, that all which we immediately perceive, at the very moment when our eyes seem to comprehend the worlds of half infinity, in the hemisphere on which we gaze, is a small expanse of light,—if, even which I greatly doubt, there truly be, in our original perceptions of this sense, so much of extension as is implied in the smallest possible expanse. In touch, in like manner, I conceive that the immediate sensation, though, like colour, it may now seem inseparable from extension and *outness*,—if, on the authority of Berkeley, I may venture to use that barbarous but expressive term,—was, like colour, originally distinct from them,—that, by the mere original sensations of this organ, in short, we could as little know the existence of an impressing body, as, by the mere original sensations of vision, we could learn that such a body existed at the extremity of the room in which we sit.

In defining sensation, when we began our inquiry into its nature, I stated it to be that affection of the mind which is immediately subsequent to the affection of certain organs, induced by the action of external bodies; and I admitted, that, in this definition, two assumptions were made,—the existence of foreign changeable external bodies, as separate from the mind,—and the existence of organs, also separate from the mind, and in relation to it truly external, like other bodies, but forming a permanent part of our corporeal frame, and capable of being affected, in a certain manner, by the other bodies, of which the existence was assumed. As far as our analytical inquiry has yet proceeded, these assumptions are assumptions still. We have not been able to detect, in the sensations considered by us, more than in any of our internal pleasures or pains, any circumstances that seem to be indicative of a material world without.

Our analytical inquiry itself, however, even in attempting to trace the circumstances in which the belief originates, must proceed on that very belief. Accordingly, in examining our senses of smell, taste, and hearing, I uniformly took for granted the existence of odoriferous, sapid, and vibratory bodies; and considered merely, whether the sensations excited by these, were of themselves capable of communicating to us any knowledge of the external and independent existence of the bodies which excited them.

In the present stage of our inquiry, I must, in like manner, take for granted the existence of bodies which act, by their contiguity or pressure, on our organ of touch, as the odoriferous or sapid particles act on our nerves of smell and taste—not that I assume this belief as existing in the mind whose intellectual acquisitions are the subject of inquiry,—for, in that case, the inquiry itself would be superfluous. I assume it merely as existing in the mind of us the inquirers,—and only because it is impossible, without such an assumption, to make the suppositions that are necessary for the inquiry. All our language is at present adapted to a system of external things. There is no distinct vocabulary of scepticism; and even the most cautious and philosophic inquirer, therefore, must often be obliged to express his doubt or his dissent in language that implies affirmation. In the present case, when we attempt to analyse our sensations, it is impossible to speak of the circumstances in which the infant is placed, or, I may say even, to speak of the infant himself, without that assumption which we have been obliged to make. The real existence of an external universe, and the belief of that existence, are, however, in themselves, perfectly separate and distinct; and it is not the existence of an external world which we are now endeavouring to establish as an object of belief. We are only endeavouring, in our analysis of the sensations afforded by our different organs, to ascertain in what circumstance the belief arises. There might be a world of suns and planets, though there were no human being whose mind could be affected with belief of it; and even the most zealous defenders of

the reality of external nature must admit, that, though no created thing but ourselves were in existence, our mind might still have been so constituted as to have the very series of feelings which form at present its successive phenomena, and which are ascribed in no small number to the action of external things.

Are the primary sensations derived from the organ of touch, then, of such a kind as to afford us that knowledge which they are supposed to give of things without?

Let us imagine a being endowed with the sense of touch, and with every other sense and faculty of our mind, but not with any previous knowledge of his own corporeal frame, or of other things external,—and let us suppose a small body, of any shape, to be pressed, for the first time, on his open hand. Whatever feelings mere touch can give, directly of itself, would of course be the same in this case as now, when our knowledge is increased and complicated from many other sources.

Let the body, thus impressed, be supposed to be a small cube, of the same temperature with the hand itself, that all consideration of heat or cold may be excluded, and the feeling produced be as simple as possible.

What, then, may we suppose the consequent feeling to be?

It will, I conceive, be a simple feeling of the kind of which I have already spoken, as capable of arising from the affection of a single point of our organ of touch,—a feeling that varies, indeed, with the quantity of pressure, as the sensation of fragrance varies with the number of the odorous particles, but involves as little the notion of extension, as that notion is involved in the mere fragrance of a violet or a rose. The connexion of this original tactual feeling, however, with that of extension, is now so indissoluble,—as, indeed, it could not fail to become, in the circumstance in which it has uniformly arisen,—that it is almost impossible to conceive it as separate. We may perhaps, however, make a near approach to the conception of it, by using the gentle gradual pressure of a small-pointed body, which, in the various slight feelings excited by it,—before it penetrates the cuticle, or causes any considerable pain,—may represent, in some measure, the simple and immediate effect which pressure, in any case, produces,—exclusively of the associate feelings which it indirectly suggests.

Such of you as have the curiosity to try the experiment with any small bodies not absolutely pointed,—such as the head of a pin, or any body of similar dimensions,—will be astonished to feel how very slightly, if at all, the notion of extension or figure is involved in the feeling, even after all the intimate associations of our experience;—certainly far less than the notion of longitudinal distance seems to us to be involved in the immediate affections of our sense of sight. It is an experiment, therefore, which I must request you not to neglect to make.

But the pressure of such a large body as the cube, which we have supposed to be pressed against our organ of touch, now awakens very different feelings. We perceive, as it were immediately, form and hardness. May not, then, the knowledge of resistance and extension, and consequently the belief of the essential qualities of matter,—be originally communicated by the affections of this organ?

The feeling of resistance,—to begin with this,—is, I conceive, to be ascribed, not to our organ of touch, but to our muscular frame, to which I have already more than once directed your attention, as forming a distinct organ of sense; the affections of which, particularly as existing in combination with other feelings, and modifying our judgments concerning these, (as in the case of distant vision, for example,) are not less important than those of our other sensitive organs. The sensations of this class are, indeed, in common circumstances, so obscure as to be scarcely heeded or remembered by us; but there is probably no contraction, even of a single muscle, which is not attended with some faint degree of sensation that distinguishes it from the contractions of other muscles, or from other degrees of contraction of the same muscle. I must not be understood, however, as meaning that we are able, in this manner, by a sort of instinctive anatomy, to perceive and number our own muscles, and, when many of them are acting together, as they usually do, to distinguish each from each; for, till we study the internal structure of our frame, we scarcely know more than that we have limbs which move at our will, and we are altogether ignorant of the complicated machinery which is subservient to the volition. But each motion of the visible limb, whether produced by one or more of the invisible muscles, is accompanied with a certain feeling, that may be complex, indeed, as arising from various muscles, but which is considered by the mind as one; and it is this particular feeling, accompanying the particular visible motion,—whether the feeling and the invisible parts contracted be truly simple or compound,—which we distinguish from every other feeling accompanying every other quantity of contraction. It is as if a man, born blind, were to walk for the first time in a flower garden. He would distinguish the fragrance of one parterre from the fragrance of another, though he might be altogether ignorant of the separate odours united in each; and might even consider as one simple perfume, what was, in truth, the mingled product of a thousand.

Obscure as our muscular sensations are in

common circumstances, there are other circumstances,—which I pointed out to you in treating before of this subject,—in which they make themselves abundantly manifest. I need not refer to the diseased state of the muscles, in which they become painfully sensible; and I will admit, that the reference to such a morbid state, in which the structure may be supposed to be altered by the disease, would perhaps scarcely be a fair one. It is sufficient to refer to phenomena of which every one must have been conscious innumerable times, and which imply no disease nor lasting difference of state. What is the feeling of fatigue, for example, but a muscular feeling? that is to say, a feeling of which our muscles are as truly the organ as our eye or ear is the organ of sight or hearing. When a limb has been long exercised, without sufficient intervals of rest, the repetition of the contraction of its muscles is accompanied, not with a slight and obscure sensation, but with one which amounts, if it be gradually increased, to severe pain, and which, before it arrives at this, has passed progressively through various stages of uneasiness. Even when there has been no previous fatigue, we cannot make a single powerful effort, at any time, without being sensible of the muscular feeling connected with this effort. Of the pleasure which attends more moderate exercise, every one must have been conscious in himself, even in his years of maturity, when he seldom has recourse to it for the pleasure alone; and must remember, still more, the happiness which it afforded him in other years, when happiness was of less costly and laborious production than at present. By that admirable provision, with which nature accommodates the blessings which she gives, to the wants that stand in need of them, she has, in that early period,—when the pleasure of mental freedom, and the ambitions of busy life, are necessarily excluded,—made ample amends to the little slave of affection, in that disposition to spontaneous pleasure, which renders it almost an effort to be sad, as if existence itself were delight; giving him a fund of independent happiness in the very air which she has poured around him, and the ready limbs which move through it, almost without his bidding. In that beautiful passage, in which Goldsmith describes the sounds that come, in one mingled murmur, from the village, who does not feel the force of the happiness which is comprised in the single line, that speaks of

"The playful children, just let loose from school."*

It is not the mere freedom from the intellectual task of which we think; it is much more, that burst of animal pleasure, which is felt in every limb, when the long constraint that has repressed it is removed, and the whole frame is given once more to all the freedom of nature. It is by the pleasure of exertion, and the pain of inexertion, that we are roused from that indolence, into which, with great injury to society, that requires our contribution of active aid, we otherwise might sink; —as we are roused, in like manner, by the pleasure of food, and the pain of hunger, to take the aliment that is necessary for our individual sustenance; and though the mere aliment is, indeed, more important for life, it is not more important for happiness than that pleasure of activity which calls and forces us from our slothful repose.

"Thee, too, my Paridel,—I saw thee there,
Stretch'd on the rack of a too easy chair,
And heard thy everlasting yawn confess
The penalties and pains of idleness."*

With the same happy provision with which she has considered the young of our own species, Nature has, in the other animals, whose sources of general pleasure are still more limited than in the child, converted their muscular frame into an organ of delight. It is not in search of richer pasture that the horse gallops over his field, or the goat leaps from rock to rock; it is for the luxury of the exercise itself. "If the shell fish on the shore," says Dr Ferguson, "perform no visible action but that of opening and closing his shell, to receive the brine that accommodates, or to exclude the foul matter that annoys him, there are other animals that, in the opposite extreme, are active; and for whom Nature seems to administer the means of supply, merely as a restorative of that strength which they are so freely to waste in the seemingly sportive or violent exercises to which they are disposed."†

"The bounding fawn, that darts across the glade,
When none pursues, through mere delight of heart,
And spirits buoyant, with excess of glee;
The horse as wanton, and almost as fleet,
That skims the spacious meadow at full speed,
Then stops, and snorts, and throwing high his heels,
Starts to the voluntary race again;
The very kine, that gambol at high noon,—
The total herd,—receiving first from one,
That leads the dance, a summons to be gay;
Though wild their strange vagaries, and uncouth
Their efforts, yet resolved, with one consent,
To give such act and utterance as they may
To ecstasy, too big to be suppressed."‡

It is this appearance of happy life which spreads a charm over every little group with which Nature animates her scenery; and he who can look without interest on the young lamb, as it frolics around the bush, may gaze, indeed, on the magnificent landscape as it

* Deserted Village, v. 120.

* Pope's Dunciad, book iv. 363. 366.

† Principles of Moral and Political Science, Part 1. c. i. sect. 1.

‡ Cowper's Task, Book IV.

opens before him,—but it will be with an eye which looks languidly, and in vain, for pleasure which it cannot find.

These observations, on our muscular pains and pleasures, in conformity with that view of them which I endeavoured to give you in a former lecture, are not digressive now, nor uselessly repeated. It is of great importance for the applications which we have to make, that you should be fully aware that our muscular frame is not merely a part of the living machinery of motion, but is also truly an organ of sense. When I move my arm, without resistance, I am conscious of a certain feeling: when the motion is impeded, by the presence of an external body, I am conscious of a different feeling, arising partly, indeed, from the mere sense of touch, in the moving limb compressed, but not consisting merely in this compression, since, when the same pressure is made by a foreign force, without any muscular effort on my part, my general feeling is very different. It is the feeling of this resistance to our progressive effort, (combined, perhaps, with the mere tactual feeling,) which forms what we term our feeling of solidity or hardness; and, without it, the tactual feeling would be nothing more than a sensation indifferent or agreeable, or disagreeable or severely painful, according to the force of the pressure, in the particular case; in the same way as the matter of heat, acting, in different degrees, on this very organ of touch, and on different portions of its surface, at different times, produces all the intermediate sensations, agreeable, disagreeable, or indifferent, from the pain of excessive cold to the pain of burning; and produces them, in like manner, without suggesting the presence of any solid body, external to ourselves.

Were the cube, therefore, in the case supposed, pressed, for the first time, on the hand, it would excite a certain sensation, indeed, but not that of resistance, which always implies a muscular effort that is resisted, and consequently not that of hardness, which is a mode of resistance. It would be very different, however, if we fairly made the attempt to press against it; for, then, our effort would be impeded, and the consequent feeling of resistance would arise; which, as co-existing in this case, and in every case of effort, with the particular sensation of touch, might afterwards be suggested by it, on the simple recurrence of the same sensation of touch, so as to excite the notion of hardness in the body touched, without the renewal of any muscular effort on our part, in the same manner as the angular surfaces of the cube, if we chance to turn our eye on it, are suggested by the mere plane of colour, which it presents to our immediate vision, and which is all that our immediate vision would, of itself, have made known to us. The feeling of resistance, then, I trust, it will be admitted, and consequently of hardness, and all the other modes of resistance, is a muscular, not a tactual feeling.

But, though the resistance or hardness of the cube, as implying the experience of some counter effort, may not be immediately sensible to our superficial organ of touch, are not its dimensions so perceived? Its cubical form, indeed, it will be allowed, cannot be felt, since only one of its surfaces is supposed to be pressed upon the hand; but is not at least this square surface perceived immediately? In short, does not touch, originally and immediately, convey to us the knowledge of extension?

With our present complete belief of external things, indeed, and especially of our organs of sense, the most important of these, the origin of our knowledge of extension, seems to us a matter of very easy explanation. The square surface presses on our organ of touch,—it affects not a single physical point merely, but a portion of the organ, corresponding exactly in surface with itself; and the perception of the similar square, it will be said, thus immediately arises. But, in all this easy explanation, it is very strangely forgotten, that the feeling, whatever it may be, which the impression of the square surface produces, is not itself the square configuration of our tactual organ, corresponding with that surface, but the state of a very different substance, which is as little square, as it is round or elliptical,—which is, indeed, from its own absolute simplicity, incapable of resemblance in shape to any thing; and the resemblance of which, therefore, to the shape of the mere organ, is as little to be expected in the sensations of touch,—as that other state of mind, which constitutes the sensation of the fragrance of a rose, can be expected to resemble the shape of the odorous particles themselves, or of the organ of smell, which is affected by them. The very knowledge which touch is supposed to give, is, in this case, most inconsistently assumed as existing in the mind before the very touch which is supposed to give it. If, indeed, the mind could know that a part of its external corporeal organ is compressed into the form of a square, or that another square surface is compressing that organ, the difficulty would be at an end; for it would, then, most undoubtedly, have that very knowledge of extension, the origin of which we seek. But it is not explained, how the mind, which alone can have sensation or knowledge, and which certainly is not square itself, is to be made acquainted with the squareness of its own corporeal organ, or of the foreign body; nor, indeed, how the squareness of the mere external organ should produce this particular affection of the mind, more than if the organ were compressed into the shape of a polygon of one thousand sides.

Let it be supposed, that, when a small

cube is pressed on the hand, one hundred physical points of the organ of touch are affected in a certain manner. We have, it is said, an immediate perception of a square surface. Let it next be supposed, that, instead of one hundred of these continuous points of the organ, an equal number of points, at various distances in the surface of the body, are affected in the same manner. On this supposition, it will scarcely be said, that the perception of a square would arise, when there is no square, more than any other imaginable form, in the space comprehended in the pressure. Yet what difference is there, in these two cases, to a mind that is, by supposition, absolutely ignorant of every bodily organ, and consequently alike ignorant of the nearness or distance of the points of the organ of touch? In both cases, one hundred points, equally sensible, are affected, and are affected precisely in the same manner;—and there is truly no difference, unless we tacitly suppose the mind to be conscious of the bodily frame, and, therefore, of the continuity of certain points of the organ of touch, with the other points that are proximate to them,—a sort of knowledge for which it would not be easy to account, and which it is impossible to conceive, without conceding the very point in question. A little attentive reflection on the circumstances of these two cases will perhaps aid you in freeing your minds from the illusive belief, of which it may not be easy for you at first to divest youselves,—that the continuity and similarity of shape, which are known to us the inquirers, are known also to that little sentient being whose first elements of knowledge we are endeavouring to trace.

We are too apt to forget, in inquiries of this sort, that it is not in our organ of touch merely, that a certain extent of the nervous extremity of our sensorial organ is affected. This occurs, equally, in every other organ. In the superficial expansion of the nerves of hearing, smell, taste, for example, it is not a point merely that is affected, but a number of continuous points, precisely as in the superficial organ of touch; and if, therefore, the notion of extension in general, or of figure, which is limited extension, arose whenever a part of the nervous expansion was affected in any way, we should derive these notions as much from a taste, or a smell, or a sound, as from any of the configurations or affections of our organ of touch.

It is not, therefore, merely because a certain limited part of the sensorial organ is affected, that we have the notion of the square surface, in the case supposed by us: for, if this alone were necessary, we should have square inches, and half inches, and various other forms, rectilinear or curvilinear, of fragrance and sound.

But, it may perhaps be urged, though all our organs must, indeed, exist equally with our organ of touch of a certain shape when affected,—and though the sensorial figure of our other organs is not accompanied with any of those mental affections which constitute the perception of angular or curvilinear figure, there is something in the nature of that part of the sensorial organ, which terminates on the general surface of the body, that impresses the mind immediately with a sensation, corresponding with the exact figure in which the organ may itself exist. When the square, therefore, in the case imagined by us, is impressed upon the organ, the mental affection which constitutes our notion of a square may immediately arise, though it would not arise from the similar squareness of our organs of smell or hearing.

In answer to this mere supposition, I may remark, that the sensorial organ of touch exists, at every moment, of a certain shape, and that we yet have no perception of this shape, so as to be able to delineate the whole extent of our tactual organ, in the same manner as we could delineate the impressing square, in the case supposed: or, if it be said, that the configuration of the organ does not excite this mental affection, in the quiescent state of the part, but only when it is itself affected, I may remark, that we are as little able to delineate its figure, when we are exposed to the action of heat, which yet acts most powerfully upon this very organ, inducing sensations, at least as vivid as those of hardness or figure.

It may still, however, be contended,—for, in a question of this sort, I wish fairly to imagine every possible argument,—it may still be contended, that, though the organ of touch has no effect in this way, merely as configured, and might, in any other configuration, operate precisely in the same manner on the sentient mind,—still the harmony of the bodily and mental changes is so arranged by nature, that the organic state in touch, whatever it may be, is immediately followed by the knowledge of the extension of the impressing body,—in the same manner as a certain state of the organ of smell, whatever that state may be, is immediately followed by that affection of the mind which constitutes our sensation of the fragrance of a rose. Though this argument, in truth, rather begs the question than attempts to meet it, let us give to it all the force which it may claim. The accurate determination of the point may, indeed, seem at first almost impossible; since, in whatever manner the seeming perception may arise, it must be admitted that we now seem to perceive extension, as it were immediately, by touch; though not more immediately than in vision we seem to perceive the positions of objects in different distances before our eyes.—But there is, fortunately, at least one test which the point in question still admits. If the apparent perception of extension by touch be truly and

originally immediate, and not acquired, like the apparent perception of distance in vision, so as to involve a sort of intellectual measurement or suggestion of some sort, after the primary sensation,—the perception must be constant and universal,—not confined to a few simple and familiar forms, which, if we can distinguish these alone, we may be supposed to have learned from experience, but extending to forms of every kind; for it would certainly be a very strange abuse of the license of supposition, to imagine that we perceive a square immediately but not a circle, or a circle but not a square, or, indeed, any one figure, but not any other figure. Even at present, then,—though the circumstances of the trial —when the experience of many years must have exhausted so many varieties of form, associating the notion of these with the particular tactual feeling, whatever that may be —are surely very unfavourable to the opinion which I maintain,—even at present, I may safely trust to experiment the determination of the question. When a body which we do not see, is pressed on any part of our tactual organ, do we immediately discover its form, —as immediately as we are sensible of fragrance when our organ of smell is in a healthy state and an odoriferous body is presented to it, or of sound when a cannon is fired beside us? This we certainly should do, if figure were as direct an object of the sense of touch as fragrance and sound are of the senses of smell and hearing. Even though it be a form of the simplest kind, square, round, triangular, that is thus pressed upon our palm, we scarcely distinguish the precise species of figure for a moment, and are long before we can convince ourselves that we have perceived its exact magnitude, in the determination of which, after all, we shall very probably be mistaken, if we confine ourselves to the mere intellectual measurement; though we should even add to the immediate sensation of touch all the discriminating skill of our judgment and reflection. But, if the body be irregular in form,—however slight the irregularity may be, and of a species that would not perplex in the slightest degree our sense of sight, and which certainly, therefore, should perplex as little our sense of touch, which is supposed to be still more immediately perceptive of form,—we are incapable for some time, and I may even say are incapable altogether, of fixing with precision its magnitude and figure, —that very magnitude and figure which are yet said to be the direct objects of touch. Of this a single trial may convince any one; it is a trial which, as it seems to me decisive, I must request you not to omit. Are we then entitled to say, in the case of the square surface of the cube pressed upon our hand, that, though we cannot discover other forms and magnitudes, we yet discover its extension, and consequently its figure, by the immediate sense of touch?—or may we not rather conclude with confidence, that what is true of other forms is true of this also; that it is only in consequence of more frequent experience we have learned as it were to distinguish, with some degree of certainty, the simpler forms, which, as mere forms, are not more direct objects of the sense of touch than forms the most irregular; and that without such experience, therefore, our mere sense of touch is incapable of informing us of the figure of bodies, immediately and originally.

If, then, the knowledge of extension be not derived from our immediate sense of touch, it must be derived from some other source, which allows it to be associated with the feelings of touch, and afterwards suggested by these, in the same manner as distant extent, in the case of vision, is suggested by a few slight varieties of colour. Let us endeavour, then, since some such source there must be, to discover what the source is.

LECTURE XXIII.

ANALYSIS OF THE FEELINGS USUALLY ASCRIBED TO THE SENSE OF TOUCH—CONTINUED.

My last Lecture, Gentlemen, was employed in considering the information which we receive from the sense of touch, or rather the information which we are commonly supposed to receive from that sense,—but which, in a great part at least, I am inclined to ascribe to another source.

The qualities of bodies supposed to be made known to us by touch, I reduced to two, of which all—whatever be the variety of names that express them—are mere varieties, *resistance* and *extension*:—solidity, liquidity, viscidity, hardness, softness, roughness, smoothness, being modes of resistance, and nothing more;—figure, magnitude, divisibility, as evidently nothing more than modes of extension: and I stated reasons which induce me to believe, that neither our feeling of resistance nor that of extension has its direct origin in the sense of touch; though the original simple feeling, which this organ affords, is now, from constant association, almost indissolubly combined with both, in some one or other of their varieties.

The first of these classes,—that which includes the various modifications of resistance, I examined at great length, and showed, I trust, that it is not to our organ of touch we are indebted for these, but that they are feelings of another sense, of which our muscular frame is the organ,—the feelings, in short, of which every one must have been conscious, who has attempted to grasp any body, or to

press against it, when the full contraction of the muscles must, of course, have been impeded. According as the body is hard or soft, rough or smooth,—that is to say, according as it resists, in various degrees, the progress of our effort of contraction,—the muscular feeling which arises from the variously impeded effort will vary in proportion; and we call hard, soft, rough, smooth, that which produces one or other of the varieties of these muscular feelings of resistance,—as we term sweet or bitter, blue or yellow, that which produces either of these sensations of taste or vision. With the feeling of resistance, there is, indeed, in every case, combined, a certain tactual feeling, because we must touch whatever we attempt to grasp; but it is not of this mere tactual feeling we think when we term bodies hard or soft,—it is of the greater or less resistance which they afford to our muscular contraction.

I next proceeded to consider the other class of supposed tangible qualities, which includes the various modifications of extension, and urged many arguments to show, in like manner, that—however indissolubly these may seem at present to be connected with the simple feelings of our organ of touch—it is not to our simple original feelings of this sense that we owe our knowledge of them as qualities of things without.

That we now seem to perceive extension immediately by touch, cannot be denied; and, in a case so obscure as this,—with our very limited knowledge, and our very limited power of adding to this knowledge,—it may seem the most prudent, and perhaps even the most suitable,—as it is, without all question, by far the easiest part,—to acquiesce in the opinion, that the preception, which now seems immediate, was so originally,—that the belief of the presence of an external figured body is, by the very constitution of our nature, attached to a certain affection of the mere organ of touch. But, since there are circumstances,—as we have seen,—which show this opinion, when very nicely examined, to be inadmissible, we may, at least, attempt to proceed a little farther, if we do this with a sufficient sense of the very great difficulty of the attempt, in relation to our powers and knowledge,—and consequently with a very humble assurance as to the certainty of any opinion which we may be led to form. To know the mind well, is to know its weaknesses as well as its powers; and it is precisely in a case of this sort, that he, whose knowledge is least imperfect, will be the best judge of its imperfection, and, therefore, the least disposed to put complete reliance on it in his own speculations,—or to assert it dogmatically, when he offers it, as all opinions on so very obscure a subject should be offered, to the inquiry, rather than to the undoubting assent of others.

The analysis, I own, is one which must require a considerable effort of attention on your part, because it is truly one of the most subtle on which I could call you to enter. But you must be aware that this subtlety is in the nature of the very inquiry itself; since it is an inquiry into the elements and progressive growth of feelings, which seem to us, at present, simple and immediate, and that the alternatives, therefore, are not those of greater or less subtlety and refinement of analysis, but of attempting the analysis, or abandoning it altogether.

Before proceeding farther in our inquiry with respect to the origin of the notion of extension, it may, however, be of advantage to take a short retrospect of the progress which we have already made; for, if we have found nothing more, we have, at least, as I conceive, found reason to reject a considerable part of our former belief on the subject, which, though a negative acquisition, is yet a very important one. Though we should not be able to discover the true source of the notion which we seek, it is something, at least, to know, that we have little reason to expect to find it where we have uniformly been accustomed to seek it.

In the first place, then, we have seen the fallacy of the supposition, that our knowledge of extension may be easily accounted for by the similarity in figure of the compressed part of the organ of touch to the compressing body, since the notion of extension is not a state of the material organ, compressed and figured, —which, as mere matter, however exquisitely organized, is as little capable of this notion, as of smell, or taste, love or aversion,—but a state of the mind itself, which is unsusceptible of shape or pressure, being as little square, when it perceives a square, as when it perceives a circle; and any affection of which, therefore, may be supposed as much to follow any one shape as any other shape of the mere external organ. If, indeed, as this explanation most strangely seems to assume, we could be supposed to have any previous knowledge of the shape of our organ of touch, nothing more would be necessary; for we should then have a perfect knowledge of extension, though no other extended body but our own organ of touch were in existence. To refer us to the organ is, however, only to bring the very same difficulty one step nearer, since, previously to the application of an external body, the mind has as little knowledge of the shape of its organ of touch as it has of the body compressing it; and it is manifestly most absurd to ascribe the origin of our knowledge of extension to our knowledge of the resemblance in figure of an external body to our organ; since this very knowledge of the resemblance must imply the previous knowledge of the figure of both, and consequently of that very extension, which, according to this supposition, must be known to us before it is known.

In the second place, we have seen, that, if the configuration of the sensorial organ were the only circumstance necessary to induce, immediately, in the mind, the notion of figure, this notion should accompany every sensation of every kind,—the smell of a rose, for example, as much as the pressure of a cube or a sphere; for the nervous expansion, in the organ of smell, and in every other organ, is of a certain figure, before sensation, during sensation, and after sensation, as much as the nervous expansion of the organ of touch. And, though we were to confine ourselves wholly to this organ, the nervous matter in it is, at all times, of a certain shape, as much when there is no pressure on it as when it is exposed to such pressure; yet the mere figure of the organ of touch is not then accompanied with the mental notion of its figure; nor is this the case merely when the sense is quiescent, but, in many cases, in which it is affected in the most lively manner, as, for example, when we are exposed to great cold or heat; in which cases, the shape of this very tactual organ, thus strongly affected, is as much unperceived by us as when there is no affection of it whatever.

Lastly,—which is a point of much more importance, because it has relation to the only philosophic view of touch, as the immediate organ of extension,—the view, in which the mere configuration of the compressed organ, as similar to that of the compressing body, is laid out of account, and the immediate belief of extension is supposed to depend on the original constitution of the mind, by which its affections have been arranged, so as to correspond with certain affections of the bodily organs; the mental state which constitutes the perception of a square, arising immediately when the organ of touch is affected, in a certain manner, as that mental state which constitutes the sensation of the fragrance of a rose, arises immediately when the organ of smell is affected in a certain manner: this opinion, too, philosophic as it is, compared with those which we before considered, though, in truth, it only assumes the point in question, without attempting to solve any difficulty supposed to be connected with it, we have yet found to be as little tenable as the opinions that suppose the mental notion of figure to depend on the peculiar figure of the compressed material organ. The consideration which, as I stated in my last Lecture, seems to me decisive on this point, is, that if touch inform us of extension immediately, as smell informs us of fragrance, sight of colour, and hearing of sound; it must do this in every instance, without relation to particular figure, as smell, sight, and hearing extend to all odours, hues, and sounds; for it would certainly be, as I said, a very strange abuse of the license of supposition, to imagine that we perceive a square immediately by touch, but not a circle; or a circle, but not a square; or any one figure, but not any other figure. In short, if figure be the direct primary object of touch, as sight is of vision, we should feel immediately every form impressed, as we see immediately every colour. It is only when the figures are very simple and regular, however, such as we might be supposed to have easily learned, in the same manner as we learn, visually, to judge of distances, that we are able to discover them, as it were, immediately, by touch; and, even when we are able, in this manner, to determine the species of figure, that is to say, the mere outline of a body, we are rarely able to determine the exact magnitude which that outline comprehends; yet, as our organ must be affected by each part of the compressing surface, by the central parts as much as by the exterior parts which form its outline, and by these as much as by the central parts; and as every feeling which the organ directly affords must be immediate, when there is no change of the position, or other circumstances of the object, that might vary the sensation,—we should, if mere touch communicated to us the knowledge supposed, be able to determine, exactly and instantly, the magnitude and figure; or it is evident that the determination of magnitude and figure must depend wholly, or in part, on something that is different from touch. The magnitude we are far from being able to discover exactly, even of simple figures; and, when the form is very irregular, and we know nothing more than that a certain body is pressed against our hand,—the magnitude and figure are alike difficult to be discovered; so difficult, that I may safely say that no one, who makes the experiment, will find, on opening his eyes, that his tactual or intellectual measurement has, in any one case, been exact, or his notion of the figure half so distinct as it is now, after a single glance. Can we then think that it is by mere touch we discover figure, as exactly as by the glance of our mature vision,—that we discover it, in all its varieties, originally by touch, and as accurately at first as after innumerable trials,—when we discover it, only in a few cases that are previously familiar to us, and even in these very imperfectly? The determination of the form impressed, in which we are almost conscious of a sort of intellectual measurement, has surely a much greater resemblance to the perceptions, which we term acquired, than to those which are immediate. In vision, for example, when the original power of that sense has been strengthened and enriched by the acquisitions which it is capable of receiving from other sources, we see a long line of distance before us; and the small distances, with which we are familiar, we distinguish with sufficient accuracy; but, in our mere visual measurement of greater distances, we

are almost certain to err, taking often the less for the greater, and the greater for the less. It is precisely the same in touch. When a small body, which we have never seen, is pressed upon our hand, we are able, if its surface be square, or circular, or of any other form with which we are well acquainted, to determine its figure, without much hesitation; because we have learned, tactually, to distinguish these regular figures. But, in endeavouring to determine, in this manner, by touch alone, the figure of any irregular body, less familiar to us, though, as a direct object of sense, if touch be the sense of figure, it should be equally and as immediately tangible as the most regular form, we feel a hesitation of the same sort as when we attempt to ascertain, by our eye, the exact distance of a remote object. To know extension or figure, is to know, not one point merely in the surface of a body, but many continuous points; and if, when the surface is circular, we know these continuous points, and their relation to each other, immediately on pressure, we must know, as immediately, the same points and their relations, though the surface comprehending them, instead of being circular, should be of an outline more irregular. We certainly cannot know this irregular surface to have any extension at all, unless we know some parts of it; and, when the pressure is uniform from every point, and the organ of touch uniform, on which the pressure is made, it would be absurd to suppose, that we know fifty, or eighty, of the hundred points which form the impressing surface, but cannot determine its figure, because we are ignorant of the twenty or fifty remaining points when these remaining points are acting on our organ of touch, in exactly the same manner as the fifty or eighty which we know, and when, if the surface containing merely the same number of points, had been circular, or of any other simple form, as familiar to us, the whole hundred points would have been known to us equally and at once.

When our perceptions of form, then, are so various and irregular, and are more or less quick and precise, exactly as the shape, which we endeavour to determine, has more or less resemblance to shapes that are familiar to us, it does not seem too bold an inference to conclude that the knowledge of figure,—which, as all extension that is capable of being perceived by us, must have some boundary, is nothing more than the knowledge of extension,—is not the state of mind originally and immediately subsequent to affections of our organs of touch, any more than the perception of distance is the state of mind originally and immediately subsequent to affections of our organ of sight; and the very striking analogy of these two cases it will be of great importance for you to have constantly in view, as it will render it less difficult for you to admit many circumstances, with respect to touch, which you might otherwise have been slower to conceive. That we should seem to perceive extension immediately by touch, though touch, originally and of itself, could not have afforded this perception, will not then appear more wonderful, than the apparently immediate perception of distance by the eye, which of itself, originally, afforded no perception of that sort; nor the impossibility of feeling a body, without the notion of it, as extended, be more wonderful than the similar impossibility of separating colour from extension in the case of distant vision. Above all, the analogy is valuable, as showing the closeness and indissolubleness of the union which may be formed of feelings that have in themselves no resemblance. What common properties could we have conceived in vision, and that absolute blindness which has never had a single sensation from light! and yet it is worthy of remark, that the perceptions of the blind, in consequence of this singular power of association, form truly the most important part of those very perceptions of vision, of which, as a whole, they are unfortunately deprived. We do not merely see with our eyes what we may have felt with our hands; but our eyes, in the act of vision, have borrowed, as it were, those very sensations.

The proof that our perception of extension by touch is not an original and immediate perception of that sense, is altogether independent of the success of any endeavour which may be made to discover the elements of the compound perception. It would not be less true that touch does not afford it, though we should be incapable of pointing out any other source from which it can be supposed to be derived. Of the difficulty of the attempt, and the caution with which we should venture to form any conclusion on the subject, I have already spoken. But the analysis, difficult as it is, is too interesting not to be attempted, even at the risk, or perhaps I should rather say, with the very great probability of failure.

In such an analysis, however, though we are to proceed with the greatest caution, it may be necessary to warn you that it is a part of this very caution not to be easily terrified by the appearance of paradox, which the result of our analysis may present. This appearance we may be certain that any analysis which is at all accurate must present, because the very object of the analysis is to show, that sensations, which appear simple and direct, are not simple,—that our senses, in short, are not fitted, of themselves, to convey that information which they now appear, and through the whole course of our memory have appeared to us, instantly to convey. It is very far, indeed, from following, as a necessary consequence, that every analysis of our sensations which affords a paradoxical result, is, therefore, a just one—for error may be extravagant in appearance as well as in reality. But it

may truly be regarded as a necessary consequence, that every accurate and original analysis of our sensations must afford a result, that, as first stated, will appear paradoxical.

To those who are wholly unacquainted with the theory of vision, nothing certainly can seem, as first stated, more absurd than the assertion that we see, not with our eyes merely, but chiefly by the medium of another organ, which the blind possess in as great perfection as ourselves, and which, at the moment of vision, may perhaps be absolutely at rest. It must not surprise you, therefore, though the element which seems to me to form the most important constituent of our notion of extension, should in like manner, as first stated to you, seem a very unlikely one.

This element is our feeling of succession, or time,—a feeling which necessarily involves the notion of divisibility or series of parts, that is so essential a constituent of our more complex notion of matter,—and to which notion of continuous divisibility, if the notion of resistance be added, it is scarcely possible for us to imagine that we should not have acquired, by this union, the very notion of physical extension,—that which has parts, and that which resists our effort to grasp it.

That memory is a part of our mental constitution, and that we are thus capable of thinking of a series of feelings, as successive to each other, the experience of every moment teaches us sufficiently. This succession, frequently repeated, suggests immediately, or implies the notion of length, not metaphorically, as is commonly said, but as absolutely as extension itself; and the greater the number of the successive feelings may have been, the greater does this length appear. It is not possible for us to look back on the years of our life, since they form truly a progressive series, without regarding them as a sort of length, which is more distinct, indeed, the nearer the succession of feelings may be to the moment at which we consider them, but which, however remote, is still felt by us as one continued length; in the same manner as when, after a journey of many hundred miles, we look back, in our memory, on the distance over which we have passed, we see, as it were, a long track, of which some parts, particularly the nearer parts, are sufficiently distinct, but of which the rest seems lost in a sort of distant obscurity. The line of our long journeying,—or, in other words, that almost immeasurable line of plains, hills, declivities, marshes, bridges, woods,—to endeavour to comprehend which in our thought, seems an effort as fatiguing as the very journey itself—we know well can be divided into those various parts:—and, in like manner, the progressive line of time—or, in other words, the continued succession, of which the joy, the hope, the fragrance, the regret, the melody, the fear, and innumerable other affections of the mind, were parts,—we feel that we can mentally divide into those separate portions of the train. Continuous length and divisibility, those great elementary notions of space, and of all that space contains, are thus found in every succession of our feelings. There is no language in which time is not described as long or short,—not from any metaphor—for no mere arbitrary metaphor can be thus universal and inevitable as a form of human thought,—but because it is truly impossible for us to consider succession, without this notion of progressive divisibility attached to it: and it appears to us as absurd to suppose, that, by adding to our retrospect of a week the events of the month preceding, we do not truly lengthen the succession, as it would be to suppose that we do not lengthen the line of actual distance, by adding to the few last stages of a long journey the many stages that preceded it.

It is this spreading out of life into a long expanse which allows man to create, as it were, his own world. He cannot change, indeed, the scene of external things. But this may be said, in one sense, to be the residence only of his corporeal part. It is the moral scene in which the spirit truly dwells; and this adapts itself, with harmonious loveliness, or with horror as suitable, to the character of its pure or guilty inhabitant. If but a single moment of life—a physical point, as it were, of the long line—could be reviewed at once, conscience would have little power of retribution. But he who has lived, as man should live, is permitted to enjoy that best happiness which man can enjoy,—to behold, in one continued series, those years of benevolent wishes, or of heroic suffering, which are at once his merit and his reward. He is surrounded by his own pure thoughts and actions, which, from the most remote distance, seem to shine upon him wherever his glance can reach; as in some climate of perpetual summer, in which the inhabitant sees nothing but fruits and blossoms, and inhales only fragrance, and sunshine, and delight. It is in a moral climate as serene and cloudless, that the destined inhabitant of a still nobler world moves on in that glorious track which has heaven before, and virtue and tranquillity behind;—and in which it is scarcely possible to distinguish, in the immortal career, when the earthly part has ceased and the heavenly begins.

Is it in metaphor only, that a youth and maturity, and old age of guilt, seem to stretch themselves out in almost endless extent, to that eye which, with all its shuddering reluctance, is still condemned to gaze on them,—when, after the long retrospect seems finished, some fraud, or excess, or oppression, still rises and adds to the dreadful line—and when eternity itself, in all the horrors which it pre-

sents, seems only a still longer line of the same dreadful species that admits of no other measure than the continued sufferings, and remembrances, and terrors that compose it!

It is a just and beautiful observation of an ancient Stoic, that time which is past is like something consecrated to the gods, over which fortune and mortality have no longer any power; and that, dreadful as it must be to the wicked, to whom their own memory is an object of terror, it still, to the virtuous, offers itself as consolation or joy,—not in single moments like the present hour, but in all that long series of years which rises before us, and remains with us at our bidding. "Ille qui multa ambitiose cupiit, superbe contempsit, insidiose decepit, avare rapuit, prodige effudit,—necesse est memoriam suam timeat. Atqui haec est pars temporis nostri *sacra ac dedicata*, omnes humanos casus supergressa, extra regnum fortunæ subducta; quam non inopia, non metus, non morborum incursus exagitat. Hæc nec turbari nec eripi potest; perpetua ejus et intrepida possessio est. Singuli tantum dies, et hi per momenta, præsentis sunt: at præteriti temporis omnes, cum jusseris aderunt, ad arbitrium tuum se inspici ac detineri patientur."

By those who can look back on years that are long past, and yet say that the continued progress, or the length and the shortness of time are only metaphorical expressions, it might be said, with equal justness, that the roundness of a sphere is a metaphor, or the angularity of a cube. We do not more truly consider the one as angular and the other as round, than we consider the time to be continuously progressive, in which we considered, first the one figure, and then the other, and inquired into the properties of each. That which is progressive must have parts. Time, or succession, then, involves the very notions of longitudinal extension and divisibility, and involves these, without the notion of any thing external to the mind itself;—for, though the mind of man had been susceptible only of joy, grief, fear, hope, and the other varieties of internal feeling, without the possibility of being affected by external things, he would still have been capable of considering these feelings as successive to each other, in a long continued progression, divisible into separate parts. The notions of length, then, and of divisibility, are not confined to external things, but are involved in that very memory by which we consider the series of the past,—not in the memory of distant events only, but in those first successions of feeling by which the mind originally became conscious of its own permanence and identity. The notion of time, then, is precisely coeval with that of the mind itself; since it is implied in the knowledge of succession, by which alone, in the manner formerly explained to you, the mind acquires the knowledge of its own reality, as something more than the mere sensation of the present moment.

Conceiving the notion of time, therefore, that is to say, of feelings past and present, to be thus one of the earliest notions which the infant mind can form, so as to precede its notions of external things, and to involve the notions of length and divisibility, I am inclined to reverse exactly the process commonly supposed; and, instead of deriving the measure of time from extension, to derive the knowledge and the original measure of extension from time. That one notion of feeling of the mind may be united indissolubly with other feelings, with which it has frequently co-existed, and to which, but for this co-existence, it would seem to have no common relation, is sufficiently shown by those phenomena of vision to which I have already so frequently alluded.

In what manner, however, is the notion of time peculiarly associated with the simple sensation of touch, so as to form, with it, the perception of extension? We are able, in the theory of vision, to point out the co-existence of sensations which produce the subsequent union, that renders the perception of distance apparently immediate. If a similar co-existence of the original sensations of touch, with the notion of continued and divisible succession, cannot be pointed out in the present case, the opinion which asserts it must be considered merely as a wild and extravagant conjecture.

The source of such a co-existence is not merely to be found, but is at least as obvious as that which is universally admitted in the case of vision.

Before I proceed, however, to state to you in what way I conceive the notion to be acquired, I must again warn you of the necessity of banishing, as much as possible, from your view of the mind of the infant in this early process, all those notions of external things which we are so apt to regard as almost original in the mind, because we do not remember the time when they arose in our own. As we know well that there are external things of a certain form acting on our organs, which are also of a certain form, it seems so very simple a process to perceive extension—that is to say, to know that there exist without us those external forms which really exist—that to endeavour to discover the mode in which extension, that now appears so obvious a quality of external things, is perceived by us, seems to be a needless search, at a distance, for what is already before our very eyes. And it will be allowed, that all this would, indeed, be very easy to a mind like ours, after the acquisitions of knowledge which it has made; but the difficulty of the very question is, how the mind of the infant makes these acquisitions, so as to become like ours. You must not think of a mind,

that has any knowledge of things external, even of its own bodily organs, but of a mind simply affected with certain feelings, and having nothing but these feelings to lead it to the knowledge of things without.

To proceed, then,—The hand is the great organ of touch. It is composed of various articulations, that are easily moveable, so as to adapt it readily to changes of shape, in accommodation to the shape of the bodies which it grasps. If we shut our hand gradually, or open it gradually, we find a certain series of feelings, varying with each degree of the opening or closing, and giving the notion of succession of a certain length. In like manner, if we gradually extend our arms, in various directions, or bring them nearer to us again, we find, that each degree of the motion is accompanied with a feeling that is distinct, so as to render us completely conscious of the progression. The gradual closing of the hand, therefore, must necessarily give a succession of feelings,—a succession which, of itself, might, or rather must, furnish the notion of length, in the manner before stated, the length being different, according to the degree of the closing; and the gradual stretching out of the arm gives a succession of feelings, which, in like manner, must furnish the notion of length,—the length being different according to the degree of the stretching of the arm. To those who have had opportunities of observing infants, I need not say how much use, or rather what constant use, the future inquirer makes of his little fingers and arms; by the frequent contraction of which, and the consequent renewal of the series of feelings involved in each gradual contraction, he cannot fail to become so well acquainted with the progress, as to distinguish each degree of contraction, and, at last, after innumerable repetitions, to associate with each degree the notion of a certain length of succession. The particular contraction, therefore, when thus often repeated, becomes the representative of a certain length, in the same manner as shades of colour in vision become ultimately representative of distance,—the same principle of association which forms the combination in the one case operating equally in the other.

In these circumstances of acquired knowledge,—after the series of muscular feelings, in the voluntary closing of the hand, has become so familiar that the whole series is anticipated and expected as soon as the motion has begun,—when a ball, or any other substance, is placed for the first time in the infant's hand, he feels that he can no longer perform the usual contraction,—or, in other words, since he does not fancy that he has muscles which are contracted, he feels that the usual series of sensations does not follow his will to renew it,—he knows how much of the accustomed succession is still remaining; and the notion of this particular length, which was expected and interrupted by a new sensation, is thus associated with the particular tactual feeling excited by the pressure of the ball,—the greater or less magnitude of the ball preventing a greater or less portion of the series of feelings in the accustomed contraction. By the frequent repetition of this tactual feeling, as associated with that feeling which attends a certain progress of contraction, the two feelings at last flow together, as in the acquired perceptions of vision; and when the process has been repeated with various bodies innumerable times, it becomes, at last, as impossible to separate the mere tactual feeling from the feeling of length, as to separate the whiteness of a sphere, in vision, from that convexity of the sphere which the eye, of itself, would have been for ever incapable of perceiving.

As yet, however, the only dimension of the knowledge of which we have traced the origin, is mere length; and it must still be explained how we acquire the knowledge of the other dimensions. If we had had but one muscle, it seems to me very doubtful whether it would have been possible for us to have associated with touch any other notion than that of mere length. But nature has made provision for giving us a wider knowledge, in the various muscles which she has distributed over different parts, so as to enable us to perform motions in various directions at the same instant, and thus to have co-existing series of feelings, each of which series was before considered as involving the notion of length. The infant bends one finger gradually on the palm of his hand; the finger, thus brought down, touches one part of the surface of the palm, producing a certain affection of the organ of touch, and a consequent sensation; and he acquires the notion of a certain length, in the remembered succession of the muscular feelings during the contraction:—He bends another finger; it, too, touches a certain part of the surface of the palm, producing a certain feeling of touch that co-exists and combines, in like manner, with the remembrance of a certain succession of muscular feelings. When both fingers move together, the co-existence of the two series of successive feelings, with each of which the mind is familiar, gives the notion of co-existing lengths, which receive a sort of unity from the proximity in succession of the tactual feelings in the contiguous parts of the palm which they touch,—feelings which have before been found to be proximate, when the palm has been repeatedly pressed along a surface, and the tactual feelings of these parts, which the closing fingers touch at the same moment, were always immediately successive,—as immediately successive as any of the muscular feelings in the series of contraction. When a

body is placed in the infant's hand, and its little fingers are bent by it as before, sometimes one finger only is impeded in its progress, sometimes two, sometimes three,—and he thus adds to the notion of mere length, which would have been the same whatever number of fingers had been impeded, the notion of a certain number of proximate and co-existing lengths, which is the very notion of breadth; and with these, according as the body is larger or smaller, is combined always the tactual affection produced by the pressure of the body, on more or fewer of the interior parts of the palm and fingers, which had before become, of themselves, representative of certain lengths, in the manner described; and the concurrence of these three varieties of length, in the single feeling of resistance in which they all seem to meet, when an incompressible body is placed within the sphere of the closing fingers,—however rude the notions of concurring dimensions may be, or rather must be, as at first formed,—seems at least to afford the rude elements from which, by the frequent repetition of the feeling of resistance, together with the proximate lengths of which it has become representative, clearer notions of the kind may gradually arise.

The progressive contractions of the various muscles which move the arms, as affording similar successions of feelings, may be considered in precisely the same light as sources of the knowledge of extension; and by their motion in various directions, at the same time with the motion of the fingers, they concur powerfully in modifying and correcting the information received from these. The whole hand is brought, by the motion of the arm, to touch one part of the face or body: it is then moved so as to touch another part, and, with the frequent succession of the simple feelings of touch, in these parts, is associated the feeling of the intervening length, derived from the sensations that accompanied the progressive contraction of the arm. But the motion is not always the same; and, as the same feeling of touch, in one part, is thus followed by various feelings of touch in different parts, with various series of muscular feelings between, the notion of length in various directions, that is to say, of length in various series commencing from one point, is obtained in another way. That the knowledge of extension, or, in other words, the association of the notion of succession with the simple feelings of touch, will be rude and indistinct at first, I have already admitted; but it will gradually become more and more distinct and precise; as we can have no doubt that the perception of distance by the eye, is, in the first stages of visual association, very indistinct, and becomes clearer after each repeated trial. For many weeks or months, all is confusion in the visual perceptions, as much as in the tactual and muscular. Indeed, we have abundant evidence of this continued progress of vision, even in mature life, when, in certain professions that require nice perceptions of distance, the power of perception itself, by the gradual acquisitions which it obtains from experience, seems to unfold itself more and more, in proportion to the wants that require it.

The theory of the notion of extension, of which I have now given you but a slight outline, might, if the short space of these Lectures allowed sufficient room, be developed with many illustrations which it is now impossible to give to it. I must leave you, in some measure, to supply these for yourselves.

It may be thought, indeed, that the notion of time, or succession, is, in this instance, a superfluous incumbrance of the theory, and that the same advantage might be obtained by supposing the muscular feelings themselves, independently of the notion of their succession, to be connected with the notion of particular lengths. But this opinion, it must be remarked, would leave the difficulty precisely as before; and sufficient evidence, in confutation of it, may be found in a very simple experiment, which it is in the power of any one to make. The experiment I cannot but consider as of the more value, since it seems to me—I will not say decisive, for that is too presumptuous a word—but strongly corroborative of the theory which I have ventured to propose; for it shows that, even after all the acquisitions which our sense of touch has made, the notion of extension is still modified in a manner the most striking and irresistible by the mere change of accustomed time. Let any one, with his eyes shut, move his hand with moderate velocity along a part of a table or any other hard smooth surface, the portion over which he passes will appear of a certain length: let him move his hand more rapidly, the portion of the surface pressed will appear less; let him move his hand very slowly, and the length, according to the degree of the slowness, will appear increased in a most wonderful proportion. In this case there is precisely the same quantity of muscular contraction, and the same quantity of the organ of touch compressed, whether the motion be rapid, moderate, or slow. The only circumstance of difference is the time occupied in the succession of the feelings; and this difference is sufficient to give complete diversity to the notion of length.

If any one, with his eyes shut, suffer his hand to be guided by another, very slowly, along any surface unknown to him, he will find it impossible to form any accurate guess as to its length. But it is not necessary that we should be previously unacquainted with the extent of surface along which the motion is performed; for the illusion will be nearly the same, and the experiment, of course, be still more striking, when the motion is along

a surface with which we are perfectly familiar, as a book which we hold in our hand, or a desk at which we are accustomed to sit.

I must request you not to take for granted the result which I have now stated, but to repeat for yourselves an experiment which it is so very easy to make, and which, I cannot but think, is so very important as to the influence of mere difference of time on our estimation of longitudinal extent. It is an experiment, tried, unquestionably, in most unfavourable circumstances, when our tactual feelings, representative of extension, are so strongly fixed by the long experience of our life; and yet, even now, you will find, on moving your hand slowly and rapidly along the same extent of surface, though with precisely the same degree of pressure in both cases, that it is as difficult to conceive the extent, thus slowly and rapidly traversed, to be the same, as it is difficult to conceive the extent of visual distance to be exactly the same when you look alternately through the different ends of an inverted telescope. If, when all other circumstances are the same, the different visual feelings arising from difference of the mere direction of light, be representative of length in the one case,—the longer or shorter succession of time, when all other circumstances are the same, has surely as much reason to be considered as representative of it in the other case.

Are we, then, to believe that the feeling of extension, or, in other words, of the definite figure of bodies, is a simple feeling of touch, immediate, original, and independent of time; or is there not rather reason to think, as I have endeavoured to show, that it is a compound feeling, of which time, that is to say, our notion of succession, is an original element?

LECTURE XXIV.

THE SAME SUBJECT CONTINUED.

Gentlemen, having stated, in a former Lecture, the reasons which seem to show, that the origin of our notion of extension, and of the notions which it involves of figure, magnitude, divisibility, is not to be found in our sense of touch, I endeavoured, in my last Lecture, to trace these to their real source,—cautioning you, at the same time, with respect to the great difficulty of the inquiry, and the very humble reliance, therefore, which we can have any title to put on the results of our investigation of a subject so very obscure.

In our present circumstances, when we attempt such an investigation, it is impossible for us to derive even the slightest aid from remembrance of our original feelings; since memory,—which afterwards can look back through so many long and busy years, and comprehend all of life but the very commencement of it,—sees yet, in this dawn of being, a darkness which it cannot penetrate. We have already formed,—spontaneously, and without the aid of any one,—our little system of physical science, and have, in truth, enriched ourselves with acquisitions, far more important than any which we are afterwards to form, with all the mature vigour of our faculties, and all the splendid aids of traditionary philosophy,—at a time when we seem scarcely capable of more than of breathing and moving, and taking our aliment, and when the faculties that leave us so much invaluable knowledge, are to leave us no knowledge of the means by which we have acquired it.

To the period of our first sensations, therefore, we cannot look back; and hence, all which remains for us, in an inquiry of this kind, is to consider the circumstances in which the infant is placed, and to guess, as nearly as general analogy will allow us, the nature and the order of the feelings which, in such circumstances, would arise in a being possessing the powers and susceptibilities of man, but destitute of all the knowledge which man possesses.

In these first circumstances of life, the infant, of course, cannot know that he has a bodily frame, or a single organ of that frame, more than he can know that there are other bodies in nature that act upon his own; and we are not entitled to suppose,—however difficult it may be for us to accommodate our supposition to the true circumstances of the case,—that because we, the inquirers, know that external bodies are pressing on his organ of touch, the little sensitive being is to have any knowledge but of the mental affections which these external bodies excite. How the knowledge of any thing more than his own mind is acquired, is, in truth, the very difficulty which it is our labour to solve.

In conformity with this view, then,—when we look on the infant,—one of the most remarkable circumstances which strike us, is its tendency to use its muscles with almost incessant exercise, particularly the muscles of those parts which are afterwards its principal organs of measurement. Its little fingers are continually closing and opening, and its little arms extending and contracting. The feelings, therefore,—whatever these may be,—which attend the progressive contraction of those parts,—and some feeling unquestionably attends the contraction in all its stages,—must be continually arising in its mind, beginning and finishing, in regular series, and varying exactly with the quantity of the contraction.

A succession of feelings, however, when remembered by the mind which looks back upon them, we found to involve, necessarily, the notion of divisibility into separate parts, and, therefore, of length, which is only another name for continued divisibility. Time, in short, is, to our conception, a series in constant onward progress, and cannot be conceived by us but as a progressive series, of which our separate feelings are parts; the remembrance of the events of our life, whenever we take any distant retrospect of them, being like the remembrance of the space which we have traversed in a journey, an indistinct continuity of length,—as truly divisible, in our conception, into the separate events which we remember, as the space which we remember to have traversed, into its separate variety of scenes.

Time, then, or remembered succession, we found to involve, not metaphorically, as is commonly said, but truly and strictly, in its very essence, the notions of length and divisibility,—the great elements of extension; and whatever other feelings may be habitually and uniformly associated with these, will involve, of course, these elementary notions.

The series of muscular feelings, of which the infant is conscious,—in incessantly closing and opening his little hand,—must, on these principles, be accompanied with the notion, —not, indeed, of the existence of his hand, or of any thing external,—but of a certain length of succession; and each stage of the contraction, by frequent renewal, gradually becomes significant of a particular length, corresponding with the portion of the series. When any hard body, therefore, is placed in the infant's hand,—though he cannot, indeed, have any knowledge of the object, or of the hand,—he yet feels that he can no longer perform the accustomed contraction,—or, to speak more accurately,—since he is unacquainted with any parts that are contracted, he feels that he can no longer produce his accustomed series of feelings; and he knows the quantity of contraction which remained to be performed, or rather the length of the series which remained to be felt. The place of this remaining length is now supplied by a new feeling, partly muscular, and partly the result of the affection of the compressed organ of touch,—and is supplied by the same feeling, at the same point of the series, as often as he attempts to renew the contraction while the body remains within his hand. The tactual feeling, therefore,—whatever it may be,—becomes, by this frequent repetition, associated with the notion of that particular progressive series, or length, of which it thus uniformly supplies the place; and at last becomes representative of this particular length, precisely in the same manner as, in the acquired perceptions of vision, certain shades of colour become representative of distance, to which they have of themselves no resemblance or analogy whatever; and we thus learn to feel length as we learn to see length, —not directly by the mere affections of our tactual or visual organs, but by the associated notions which they suggest.

If time,—as perceived by us in the continued series of our feelings,—do involve conceptual length and divisibility, it seems, indeed, scarcely possible, that, in the circumstances supposed, the notions supposed should not arise,—that the infant should be conscious of a regular series of feelings in the contraction of its fingers and arms, and yet that portions of this series should not become significant of various proportional lengths;—and, if the notion of certain proportional lengths do truly accompany certain degrees of progressive contraction, it seems equally impossible, according to the general principles of our mental constitution, that the compound tactual and muscular feeling, which must arise in every case in which any one of these degrees of contraction is impeded, should not become associated with the notion of that particular length, of which it supplies the place, so as at last to become truly representative of it.

In this manner I endeavoured to explain to you how our knowedge of the mere length of bodies may have been acquired, from varieties of length that are recognized as co-existing and proximate, and are felt to unite, as it were, and terminate in our sensation of resistance, which interrupts them equally, and interrupts always a greater number of the coexisting lengths, in proportion to the size of the body compressed; and in a similar manner, our notions of the other dimensions of bodies, which are only these varieties of length in different directions. I cannot conclude this summary, however, without recalling to your attention a very simple experiment which I requested you to make for yourselves,—an experiment, that, even in the unfavourable circumstances in which it must now be tried, is yet, I conceive, demonstrative of the influence of mere time, as an element of that complex notion which we have been examining, when the more rapid measurements of vision,—which are confessedly not original, but acquired,—are excluded. If, in passing our finger, with different degrees of slowness or rapidity, along the same surface, with our eyes shut,—even though we should previously know the exact boundaries of the extent of surface,—we feel it almost impossible not to believe,—and, but for the contrary evidence of vision, could not have hesitated a single moment in believing,— that this extent is greater or less, according as the time employed in performing exactly the same quantity of motion, with exactly the same force of pressure, on the same quantity of our organ of touch, may have been greater or less, —it must surely be admitted, that the notion of the length, which thus uniformly varies with

the time, when all other circumstances are the same, is not absolutely independent of the time,—or it must in like manner be believed, that our notion of visual distance, which varies with the distribution of a few rays of light on the small expanse of the optic nerve, is yet independent of those faint shades of colouring, according to the mere varieties of which it seems at one time to lay open to our view a landscape of many miles, and at another time to present to us, as it were before our very eyes, an object of scarcely an inch in diameter. The greater dimness and diminished size of a few objects in the back ground of a picture, which is in itself one coloured plane of light, does not more truly seem to increase the line of distance of those objects, than, in the other case, the increased slowness of the motion of our hand along any surface seems to lengthen the line which separates one of its boundaries from the other.

Though the notion of extension, however, may arise in the manner which I have supposed, this, it may be said, is not the notion of external existence. To what, then, are we to ascribe the belief of external reality, which now accompanies our sensations of touch? It appears to me to depend on the feeling of resistance,—the origin of which, as a muscular feeling, I before explained to you, which, breaking in, without any known cause of difference, on an accustomed series, and combining with the notion of extension, and consequently of divisibility, previously acquired, furnishes the elements of that compound notion which we term the notion of matter. Extension, resistance; —to combine these simple notions in something which is not ourselves, and to have the notion of matter, are precisely the same thing; as it is the same thing to have combined the head and neck of a man with the body and legs of a horse, and to have the notion of that fabulous being which the ancients denominated a centaur. It certainly, at least, would not be easy for any one to define matter more simply, than as that which has parts, and that which resists our effort to grasp it; and, in our analysis of the feelings of infancy, we have been able to discover how both these notions may have arisen in the mind, and arisen too in circumstances which must lead to the combination of them in one complex notion.

The infant stretches out his arm for the first time, by that volition, without a known object, which is either a mere instinct, or very near akin to one: This motion is accompanied with a certain feeling,—he repeats the volition which moves his arm fifty or one thousand times, and the same progress of feeling takes place during the muscular action. In this repeated progress he feels the truth of that intuitive proposition which, in the whole course of the life that awaits him, is to be the source of all his expectations, and the guide of all his actions,—the simple proposition, that what has been as an antecedent, will be followed by what has been as a consequent. At length he stretches out his arm again, and, instead of the accustomed progression, there arises, in the resistance of some object opposed to him, a feeling of a very different kind, which, if he persevere in his voluntary effort, increases gradually to severe pain, before he has half completed the usual progress. There is a difference, therefore, which we may, without any absurdity, suppose to astonish the little reasoner; for the expectation of similar consequents, from similar antecedents, is observable even in his earliest actions, and is probably the result of an original law of mind, as universal as that which renders certain sensations of sight and sound the immediate result of certain affections of our eye or ear. To any being who is thus impressed with belief of similarities of sequence, a different consequent necessarily implies a difference of the antecedent. In the case at present supposed, however, the infant, who as yet knows nothing but himself, is conscious of no previous difference; and the feeling of resistance seems to him, therefore, something unknown, which has its cause in something that is not himself.

I am aware that the application, to an infant, of a process of reasoning expressed in terms of such grave and formal philosophic nomenclature, has some chance of appearing ridiculous. But the reasoning itself is very different from the terms employed to express it, and is truly as simple and natural as the terms, which our language obliges us to employ in expressing it, are abstract and artificial. The infant, however, in his belief of similarity of antecedents and consequents, and of the necessity, therefore, of a new antecedent, where the consequent is different, has the reasoning but not the terms. He does not form the proposition as universal and applicable to cases that have not yet existed; but he feels it in every particular case as it occurs. That he does truly reason, with at least as much subtlety as is involved in the process now supposed, cannot be doubted by those who attend to the manifest results of his little inductions, in those acquisitions of knowledge which show themselves in the actions, and, I may say, almost in the very looks of the little reasoner,—at a period long before that to which his own remembrance is afterwards to extend, when, in the maturer progress of his intellectual powers, the darkness of eternity will meet his eye alike, whether he attempt to gaze on the past or on the future; and the wish to know the events with which he is afterwards to be occupied and interested, will not be more unavailing than the wish to retrace events that were the occupation and interest of the most important years of his existence.

Then,—

"So,—when the mother, bending o'er his charms,
Clasps her fair nurseling in delighted arms:—
With sparkling eye the blameless plunderer owns
Her soft embraces and endearing tones,
Seeks the salubrious fount with opening lips,
Spreads his inquiring hands, and smiles, and sips,"*—

Even then, many a process of ratiocination is going on, which might have served as an example of strict logic to Aristotle himself, and which affords results far more valuable to the individual reasoner than all the contents of all the folios of the crowd of that great logician's scholastic commentators.

That the notions of extension and external resistance, which are thus supposed to be acquired from the progressive contraction of muscles, and the difficulty opposed to their accustomed contraction, which introduces suddenly a new feeling, when all the antecedent feelings had been the same, should be directly combined only with the sensations of touch, cannot appear wonderful, when we reflect, that it is only in the case of touch there is that frequent co-existence or immediate succession which is necessary to the subsequent union. In the case of the acquired perceptions of vision, it might, in like manner, be asked, why is it that we do not smell the exact distance of a rose, as we see its exact distance as soon as we have turned our eye on the bush on which the rose is growing? And the only answer which can be given, is, that there has not been in smell that exact and frequent co-existence of feelings which has occurred in vision. It surely is not more wonderful, therefore, that the same argument should hold in the acquired perceptions of touch, in which the co-existence is still more frequent and exact. When we listen to a flute, our muscles may be contracted as before, or quiescent as before; when the odour of a rose is wafted to us, not a single muscle may be more or less affected. But without the action of muscles we cannot grasp a ball, or press against a resisting body, nor move our hand along its surface. Whatever feelings, therefore, are involved in muscular contraction, may be, or rather I may say, if the common laws of association operate, must be associated with the simple feelings thus constantly co-existing, whatever they may be, which the organ of touch originally affords. To suppose that, in a case of such frequent co-existence or succession, no association takes place, and that our feelings of touch are, at this moment, as simple as they were originally, would surely be to suppose the universal influence of the associating principle to be suspended in this particular case.

I have already explained the manner in which I suppose the infant to obtain the notion of something external and separate from himself, by the interruption of the usual train of antecedents and consequents, when the painful feeling of resistance has arisen, without any change of circumstances of which the mind is conscious in itself; and the process by which he acquires this notion is only another form of the very process which, during the whole course of his life, is involved in all his reasonings, and regulates, therefore, all his conclusions with respect to every physical truth. In the view which I take of the subject, accordingly, I do not conceive that it is by any peculiar intuition we are led to believe in the existence of things without. I consider this belief as the effect of that more general intuition by which we consider a new consequent, in any series of accustomed events, as the sign of a new antecedent, and of that equally general principle of association, by which feelings that have frequently co-existed, flow together, and constitute afterwards one complex whole. There is something which is not ourself, something which is representative of length—something which excites the feeling of resistance to our effort; and these elements combined are matter. But whether the notion arise in the manner I have supposed, or differently, there can be no doubt that it has arisen long before the period to which our memory reaches; and the belief of an external world, therefore, whether founded directly on an intuitive principle of belief, or, as I rather think, on associations as powerful as intuition in the period which alone we know, may be said to be an essential part of our mental constitution, at least as far back as that constitution can be made the subject of philosophic inquiry. Whatever it may have been originally, it is now as impossible for us to disbelieve the reality of some external cause of our sensations, as it is impossible for us to disbelieve the existence of the sensations themselves. On this subject scepticism may be ingenious in vain; and equally vain, I may say, would be the attempted confutation of scepticism, since it cannot affect the serious internal belief of the sceptic, which is the same before as after argument;—unshaken by the ingenuity of his own reasonings, or rather, as I have before remarked, tacitly assumed and affirmed in that very combat of argument which professes to deny it.

It is in vain that Berkeley asserts his system with a zeal and acuteness which might, perhaps, have succeeded in convincing others, if they could only have previously succeeded in convincing himself, not as a speculative philosopher merely, but as a human being, conversant with his kind, acting, and suffering, and remembering, and hoping and fearing. This, however, was more than mere ingenuity of argument could perform. Even in publishing his work with the sincere desire of in-

* Darwin's Botanic Garden, Canto III. v. 353—4, and 357—360.

structing and converting others, the great and primary convert was yet to be made in the converter himself.

In the Life of Berkeley, prefixed to the edition of his collected works, an account is given of a visit which he paid, at Paris, to Malebranche, the celebrated author of a system in many respects similar to his own. He found him in a weak state of health, but abundantly eager to enter into disputation on a science which he loved, and especially on his own doctrines, which he loved still more; but the discussion was at last carried on with more vehemence than the feeble bodily frame of Malebranche could bear; and his death was said to be occasioned, or at least hastened, by this unfortunate intellectual combat. When we consider this interview of two illustrious men, each of whom, in accordance with his own system, must have been incapable of any direct knowledge of the existence of the other, the violent reciprocal action of these mutual nonentities might seem ludicrous, if there were not, in the death of any one, and especially of a philosopher so estimable in every respect as the author of The Search of Truth, something too serious to be consistent with any feeling of levity. It is more suitable, both to the occasion itself and to our own intellectual weakness, to regard this accidental interview of two philosophers contending so strenuously against each other for the truth of doctrines, which rendered the real existence of each, at best, very problematical, as only a striking instance of the readiness with which all the pride of human reason yields itself, as it were, spontaneously and humbly, to the sway of those more powerful principles, which He, who has arranged our mental constitution, has so graciously accommodated to the circumstances in which He has placed us. The gift of reason itself, that most inestimable of our intellectual gifts, would have been truly, if nothing more had been added to it, a perilous acquisition to beings not absolutely incapable of error; since there are points on which a single mistake, if there had been no opportunity of repairing it, might have been fatal, not to our happiness merely, but to our very existence. On these points, however, Nature has not left us to a power so fallible, and to indolence, which might forget to exercise even this feeble power. She has given us principles which do not err, and which operate without the necessity of any effort on our part. In the wildest speculative errors into which we may be led, there is a voice within which speaks, indeed, only in a whisper, but in a whisper of omnipotence, at which the loud voice that led us astray is still,—thus operating on our mind as the secret irresistible influence of gravitation operates on our body, preserving it, amid all the disorder and irregularity of its spontaneous motions, still attached to that earthly home which has been prepared with every bountiful provision for our temporary residence.

If there were, indeed, any sceptic as to the existence of an external world, who could seriously profess that his practical conduct was in accordance with his speculative disbelief, we might very justly exercise, with respect to his own profession, that philosophic doubt or disbelief which he recommends. Pyrrho, the great founder of this philosophy, is, indeed, said to have acted so truly on his principles, that if a cart ran against him, or a dog attacked him, or if he came upon a precipice, he would not stir a foot to avoid the danger. "But his attendants," says Dr Reid, "who, happily for him, were not so great sceptics, took care to keep him out of harm's way, so that he lived till he was ninety years of age."* In all these cases, we may safely take for granted that this venerable sceptic, when he exhibited himself with his domestics, knew, at least, as well as the spectator, the nature of the comedy which he was acting, for their entertainment and his own imagined glory;—that he could discriminate, with perfect accuracy, the times when it would be safe, and the times when it would be unsafe, for him to be consistent;—and that he would never feel, in so strong and lively a manner, the force of his own principles, as when he was either absolutely alone, or with attendants within a very few inches of the ground on which he was philosophizing. We are told, accordingly, that when his passions were too strongly roused to allow him to remember the part which he was acting, he entered with sufficient readiness into his native character of a mere human being. Of this, one ludicrous instance is recorded, in which his anger against his cook so completely got the better, both of his moral and physical philosophy, that, with the spit in his hand, and the meat on it, which had been roasting, he pursued him to the very market-place. Many stories of this sort, however, we may well suppose would be invented against philosophers of a class that at once challenged the opposition of the whole mob of mankind, and afforded subjects of that obvious and easy ridicule which the mob of mankind, even without the provocation of such a challenge, are always sufficiently ready to seize.

Into a detail of the sceptical system of Berkeley it is unnecessary to enter at any length; since, notwithstanding the general acuteness which its truly illustrious author has displayed in this, and in all his works, I cannot but consider his ideal system as presenting a very imperfect and inaccurate view, not merely of the real phenomena of the mind,

* Reid's Inquiry into the Human Mind, chap. i. sect. 5.

but even of the sceptical argument against the existence of matter. It was not as a sceptic however that this most devout and amiable of philosophers, to whom Pope scarcely paid a higher compliment than was strictly due, in ascribing to him "every virtue under heaven,"*—it was not as a sceptic that he was desirous of being ranked. On the contrary, I have no doubt that his system seemed to him valuable, chiefly for being, as he conceived, an antidote to scepticism, and that he was far less anxious to display acuteness than to expose the sophistry of materialism, and to present, as he thought, an additional argument for the existence of a divine omnipresent mind, which unquestionably it would have afforded, and an argument, too, it must be owned, completely irresistible, if our mere ideas were what he conceived them to be. These he evidently considered not as states of the individual mind, but as separate things existing in it, and capable of existing in other minds, but in them alone; and it is in consequence of these assumptions that his system, if it were to be considered as a system of scepticism, is chiefly defective. But having, as he supposed, these ideas, and conceiving that they did not perish when they ceased to exist in his mind, since the same ideas recurred at intervals, he deduced, from the necessity which there seemed for some omnipresent mind, in which they might exist during the intervals of recurrence, the necessary existence of the Deity; and if, indeed, as he supposed, ideas be something different from the mind itself, recurring only at intervals to created minds, and incapable of existing but in mind, the demonstration of some infinite omnipresent mind, in which they exist during these intervals of recurrence to finite minds, must be allowed to be perfect. The precise nature of the argument, and its demonstrative force, if the hypothetical circumstances, which Berkeley himself was far from considering as hypothetical, be admitted, have not been sufficiently regarded by philosophers, when they express their astonishment that a system, which, if not scepticism, is at least so much akin to it, or so favourable, at least, to the general sceptical spirit, should yet have been brought forward, as its truly pious author informs us, for the express purpose of combating scepticism. He is not, indeed, always a very perspicuous unfolder of his own opinions; but, in a passage of his third Dialogue, the series of propositions which I have now stated as constituting his demonstration, are delivered by himself with great distinctness and brevity. "When I deny," says Philonous to Hylas, "when I deny sensible things, an existence out of the mind, I do not mean my mind in particular, but all minds. Now, it is plain they have an existence exterior to my mind, since I find them, by experience, to be independent of it. There is therefore some other mind wherein they exist during the intervals between the times of my perceiving them as likewise they did before my birth, and would do after my supposed annihilation. And, as the same is true with regard to all other finite created spirits, it necessarily follows there is an Omnipresent Eternal Mind, which knows and comprehends all things, and exhibits them to our view in such a manner, and according to such rules, as he himself hath ordained, and are by us all termed the Laws of Nature."*

The existence of ideas as separate from the mind, and the permanent existence of these, when they have ceased to exist in the individual mind, are evidently assumptions as gratuitous as the assumption of the external existence of matter itself could have been; or rather, the permanent and independent ideas are truly matter, under another name; and to believe that these foreign independent substances, which pass from mind to mind, exist in the mind, is not to intellectualize matter, but to materialize intellect. A mind containing, or capable of containing, something foreign within itself, and not merely one foreign substance, but a multitude of foreign substances, at the same moment, is no longer that simple indivisible existence, which we termed spirit. Any of the elementary atoms of matter is, indeed, more truly spiritual; the very notion of recipiency of any kind being as little consistent with our notion of mind as the notion of hardness or squareness.

The whole force of the pious demonstration, therefore, which Berkeley flattered himself with having urged irresistibly, is completely obviated, by the simple denial that ideas are any thing more than the mind itself affected in a certain manner; since, in this case, our ideas exist no longer than our mind is affected, in that particular manner which constitutes each particular idea; and, to say that our ideas exist in the divine mind, would thus be to say, only, that our mind itself exists in the divine mind. There is not the sensation of colour, in addition to the mind, nor the sensation of fragrance in addition to the mind; but, according to that juster view of the mental phenomena, which I have repeatedly endeavoured to impress on you, the sensation of colour is the mind existing in a certain state, and the sensation of fragrance is the mind existing in a different state.

The most philosophic scepticism, as to the

* *Epilogue to the Satires*, Dial. II. v. 73.

* Three Dialogues, &c. p. 109—110.

existence of external things, is unquestionably that which is founded on this very view of the phenomena of the mind. All the terms, which we use to express our knowledge, sensations, perceptions, ideas, notions, propositions, judgments, intuitions, conclusions,—or whatever other terms we may employ to express particular varieties of thought, are significant, it may be said, and truly said, of states or affections of the mind, and of nothing more. What I term my perception of the colour, or softness, or shape, or fragrance, or taste of a peach, is a certain state of my own mind, for my mind surely can be conscious only of its own feelings; or rather, as the consciousness of present feelings is a redundancy of language, my mind, affected in a certain manner, whether it be with what is termed sensation or knowledge, or belief, can still be nothing more than my mind itself affected in a certain manner,—my mind itself existing in a certain state. Against this argument, I confess that I know no mere argument which can be adduced in opposition,—any more than I know any mere argument which can be adduced against the strange conclusions that are most legitimately drawn from the doctrine of the infinite divisibility of matter, and various other physical and mathematical applications of the notion of infinity. In no one of these cases, however, do we feel our belief shaken;—because it is founded either on associations so early, and strong, and indissoluble, as those which we have been endeavouring to trace, or, if not in those, or in principles of direct intuition, in that species of internal revelation which gives to reason itself, in the primary truths on which every argument proceeds, its divine authority; and we only smile at conclusions, in which it is impossible for us to find a single logical error, but which, from the constitution of our nature, it is physically impossible for us to admit, or to admit, at least, without an instant dissent, which renders our momentary logical admission as nugatory as if the direct existence of an external world had been established by the clearest logical demonstration.

In one of the Anniversary Orations of Sir William Jones, of which the subject is the philosophy of the Asiatics, he informs us that a system of idealism, very similar to that of Berkeley, is to be found in the metaphysics of Hindostan. The fundamental tenet of one great school of the philosophers of that ancient land of philosophy, is the disbelief of the existence of matter—the phenomena of the seeming material universe being conceived by them to be only an illusive representation which the Deity presents to the mind, (and which they distinguish by the name of *Maja:*) —while the opposite species of scepticism is to be found in another sect of the philosophers, who disbelieve the existence of mind, and reduce all the phenomena of thought to material organization. The same subtlety and refinement of scepticism, which have led to the systems of materialism and idealism in our Western World, are to be found, we are told, in the corresponding systems of the East. *

Why is it that we are struck with no common emotion on finding, in the metaphysics of that distant country, systems of opinions so similar to our own? Is it that the notion of the immense space which separates us, unites with our conception, and impresses us, as it were, with the omnipresence of our own intellectual nature,—when we recognize, on scenes so remote, and in circumstances of society so different, the same thoughts, and doubts, and errors, which have perplexed, and occupied, and delighted ourselves? This recognition, in whatever circumstances it may occur, gives to us a feeling of more than kindred,—a sort of identity with the universal nature of man, in all its times and places. The belief which others share with us seems to be our own belief, which has passed from each to each, or is present to all, like those permanent ideas of which Berkeley speaks, that quit one intellect to exist in another. We cannot separate the thought which we remember from the notion of the mind which we remember to have conceived it;—and it seems to us, therefore, not as if similar doubts and errors, but almost as if the very doubts and errors of our own mind, and its ardour of inquiry, and frequent disappointments, and occasional, but rare felicities of discovery, had spread and renewed themselves in a remote existence. It is this recognition of our common nature, which gives the chief interest to scenes that have been occupied with the passions of beings like ourselves. The mountains, which the Titans were fabled to have heaped up in their war against Jupiter, must have excited, even in the most devout believers of Grecian mythology, emotions far less ardent and immediate, than the sight of the humbler cliffs, at which the small Spartan host, and their gallant leader, devoted themselves in the defensive war against the Persian invader. The races of men may perish, but the remembrance of them still lives imperishable, and seems to claim kindred with us, as often as we tread the same soil, or merely think of those who have trod it.

"Turn thy sight eastward, o'er the time-hush'd plains,
Now graves of vanish'd empire, once gleam'd o'er
From flames on hallow'd altars, hail'd by hymns
Of seers, awakeners of the worshipp'd Sun!
Ask silent Tigris—Bid Euphrates tell
Where is the grove-crown'd Baal, to whose stern frown
Bow'd haughty Babylon?—Chaldea, famed
For star-taught sages,—hard Phenicia's sons,
Fierce, fear-surmounting curbers of the deep,

* The substance of this reference occurs in the Eleventh Anniversary Discourse.—*Works*, v. i. p. 165—6. 4to edit.

Who stretch'd a floating sceptre o'er the seas,
And made mankind one empire?—Where is now
Egypt's wide-homag'd Isis? where the Thors,
That shook the shakers of the Roman world?"*

The very gods of all these countries have perished, but the mortals who bent the knee before them still survive them in the immortality of our common nature,—in that universal interest which gives to us a sort of intellectual existence in scenes and times the most remote, and makes the thoughts and emotions of others as it were a part of our own being,—uniting the past, the present, and the future, and blending man with man wherever he is to be found.

LECTURE XXV.

EXAMINATION OF DR REID'S SUPPOSED CONFUTATION OF IDEALISM.

My last Lecture, Gentlemen, brought to a conclusion the remarks which I had to offer on the Sense of Touch, and particularly on the manner in which I supposed the mind to acquire its knowledge of external things.

With this very important question of the existence of matter the name of Dr Reid is intimately connected, to whom the highest praise is usually given for his supposed confutation of all scepticism on the subject; as if he had truly established, by argument, the existence of a material world. And yet, I confess, that, with all my respect for that excellent philosopher, I do not discover, in his reasonings on the subject, any ground for the praise which has been given. The evidence for a system of external things,—at least, the sort of evidence for which he contends,—was not merely the same, but was felt also to be precisely the same, before he wrote as afterwards. Nay, I may add, that the force of the evidence,—if that term can be justly applied to this species of belief,—was admitted, in its fullest extent, by the very sceptic against whom chiefly his arguments were directed.

That Dr Reid was a philosopher of no common rank, every one, who has read his works with attention, and with candour, must admit. It is impossible to deny, that, to great power of patient investigation, in whatever inquiries he undertook, he united great caution in discriminating the objects of legitimate inquiry, together with considerable acuteness, of the same sage and temperate kind, in the prosecution of such inquiries as appeared to him legitimate. And,—which is a praise, that, unfortunately for mankind, and still more unfortunately for the individual, does not always attend mere intellectual renown,—it is impossible to deny to him the more covetable glory, that his efforts, even when he erred speculatively, had always in view those great interests, to which, and to which alone, philosophy itself is but a secondary consideration,—the primary and essential interests of religion and morality.

These praises are certainly not higher than his merits. But, at the same time, while, by philosophers in one part of the island, his merits seem to have been unjustly undervalued, I cannot but think, also, that, in his own country, there has been an equal, or rather a far greater tendency to over-rate them,—a tendency arising in part from the influence of his academic situation and his amiable personal character,—partly, and in a very high degree, from the general regard for the moral and religious objects which he uniformly had in view, as contrasted with the consequences that were supposed to flow from some of the principles of the philosopher whose opinions he particularly combated,—and partly also, I may add, from the eloquence of his illustrious Pupil, and Friend, and Biographer, whose understanding, so little liable to be biassed by any prejudices but those of virtue and affectionate friendship, has yet, perhaps, been influenced in some degree by those happy and noble prejudices of the heart, and who, by the persuasive charms both of his Lectures and of his Writings, could not fail to cast, on any system of opinions which he might adopt and exhibit, some splendour of reflection from the brilliancy of his own mind.

The genius of Dr Reid does not appear to me to have been very inventive, nor to have possessed much of that refined and subtle acuteness, which,—capable as it is of being abused,—is yet absolutely necessary to the perfection of metaphysical analysis.

It is chiefly on his opinions, in relation to the subject at present under our view, that his reputation as an original thinker rests. Indeed, it is on these that he is inclined himself to rest it. In a part of a letter to Dr Gregory, preserved in Mr Stewart's Memoir, he considers his confutation of the ideal system of perception as involving almost every thing which is truly his. "I think there is hardly any thing that can be called mine," he says, "in the philosophy of mind, which does not follow with ease from the detection of this prejudice."* Yet there are few circumstances connected with the fortune of modern philosophy, that appear to me more wonderful, than that a mind, like Dr Reid's, so learned in the history of metaphysical science,—and far too honour-

* Aaron Hill's Free Thoughts on Faith, 220—227.

* Account of the Life, &c. p. xci. prefixed to Reid's Works. Edin. 1803.

able to lay claim to praise to which he did not think himself fairly entitled,—should have conceived, that, on the point of which he speaks, any great merit—at least any merit of originality—was justly referable to him particularly. Indeed, the only circumstance, which appears to me more wonderful, is that the claim thus made by him should have been so readily and generally admitted.

His supposed confutation of the ideal system is resolvable into two parts—first, his attempt to overthrow what he terms "the common theory" of ideas or images of things in the mind, as the immediate objects of thought —and secondly, the evidence which the simpler theory of perception may be supposed to yield, of the reality of an external world. The latter of these inquiries would, in order, be more appropriate to our late train of speculation; but we cannot understand it fully, without some previous attention to the former.

That Dr Reid did question the theory of ideas or images, as separate existences in the mind, I readily admit; but I cannot allow, that, in doing this, he questioned the common theory. On the contrary, I conceive, that, at the time at which he wrote, the theory had been universally, or at least almost universally, abandoned; and that, though philosophers might have been in the habit of speaking of ideas or images in the mind, —as we continue to speak of them at this moment,—they meant them to denote nothing more then, than we use them to denote now. The phraseology of any system of opinions, which has spread widely, and for a length of time, does not perish with the system itself. It is transmitted from the system which expires, to the system which begins to reign,—very nearly, as the same crown and sceptre pass, through a long succession, from monarch to monarch. To tear away our very language, as well as our belief, is more than the boldest introducer of new doctrines can hope to be permitted, for it would be to force our ignorance or error too glaringly on our view. He finds it easier to seduce our vanity, by leaving us something which we can still call our own, and which it is not very difficult for him to accommodate to his own views; so that, while he allows us to pronounce the same words, with the same confidence, we are sensible only of what we have gained, and are not painfully reminded of what we have been forced to discard. By this, too, he has the advantage of adding, in some measure, to his own novelties the weight and importance of ancient authority; since the feelings, associated with the name as formerly used, are transferred, secretly and imperceptibly, with the name itself. There is scarcely a term in popular science which has not gone through various transmutations of this sort. It is not wonderful, therefore, that the phrase *image in the mind*, which was no metaphor as used by the Peripatetics, should have been retained, in a figurative sense, in metaphysical discussions, long after the authority of Aristotle had ceased, and when one who could maintain, with a square cap on his head, "a thesis on the universal *a parte rei*," was no longer, as Voltaire says, "considered as a prodigy." At the time of Dr Reid's publication, the image in the mind was as truly a mere relic of an obsolete theory of perception, as the rising and setting of the sun were relics of that obsolete astronomy, in which this great luminary was supposed to make his daily journey round the atom which he enlightened.

Before proceeding to the proof of this assertion, however, with respect to the originality and importance of Dr Reid's remarks on this subject, some previous observations will be necessary.

In the discussions, which, as yet, have engaged our attention, you may, perhaps, have remarked that I have made little, if any, use of the word *idea*,—a word of very frequent occurrence, in the speculations of philosophers, with respect to the phenomena of perception, and the intellectual phenomena in general. I have avoided it, partly on account of its general ambiguity, but, more especially, with a view to the question at present before us, that, on examining it, you might be as free as possible from any prejudice arising from our former applications of the term.

The term, I conceive, though convenient for its brief expression of a variety of phenomena, which might otherwise require a more paraphrastic expression, might yet be omitted altogether, in the metaphysical vocabulary, without any great inconvenience,—certainly without inconvenience equal to that which arises from the ambiguous use of it, with different senses, by different authors. But, whatever ambiguity it may have had, the notion of it, as an image in the mind separate and distinct from the mind itself, had certainly been given up long before Dr Reid had published a single remark on the subject. In its present general use, it is applied to many species of the mental phenomena, to our particular sensations or perceptions, simple or complex, to the remembrances of these, either as simple or complex, and to the various compositions or decompositions of these, which result from certain intellectual processes of the mind itself. The presence of certain rays of light, for example, at the retina, is followed by a certain affection of the sensorial organ, which is immediately followed by a certain affection of the sentient mind. This particular affection, which is more strictly and definitely termed the sensation or perception of redness, is likewise sometimes termed, when we speak more in reference to the external light, which causes the sensation, than to ourselves, as sentient of it, an idea of redness;

and when, in some train of internal thought, without the renewed presence of the rays, a certain state of the mind arises, different, indeed, from the former, but having a considerable resemblance to it, we term this state the conception or remembrance of redness; or the idea of redness; or, combining this particular idea with others, which have not co-existed with it as a sensation, we form, what we term the complex idea, of a red tree, or a red mountain, or some other of those shadowy forms, over which Fancy, in the moment of creating them, flings, at pleasure, her changeful colouring. An idea, however, in all these applications of the term, whether it be a perception, a remembrance, or one of those complex or abstract varieties of conception, is still nothing more than the mind affected in a certain manner, or, which is the same thing, the mind existing in a certain state. The idea is not distinct from the mind, or separable from it, in any sense, but is truly the mind itself, which, in its very belief of external things, is still recognizing one of the many forms of its own existence.

"Qualis Hamadryadum, quondam, si forte sororum
Una novos peragrans saltus et devia rura,
(Atque illam in viridi suadet procumbere ripa
Fontis pura quies et opaci frigoris umbra)
Dum prona in latices speculi de margine pendet,
Mirata et subitam venienti occurrere Nympham:
Mox eosdem quos ipsa artus, eadem ora gerentem
Una inferre gradus, una succedere sylvæ,
Aspicit a ludens, seseque agnoscit in undis.
Sic sensu interno rerum simulacra suarum
Mens ciet, et proprios observat conscia vultus."*

In sensation, there is, as we have seen, a certain series,—the presence of the external body, whatever this may be in itself, independently of our perception,—the organic affection, whatever it may be, which attends the presence of this body,—and the affection of mind that is immediately subsequent to the organic affection. I speak only of one organic affection; because, with respect to the mind, it is of no consequence whether there be one only, or a series of these, prior to the new mental state induced. It is enough, that, whenever the immediate sensorial organ has begun to exist in a certain state, whether the change which produces this state be single, or second, third, fourth, or fifth, of a succession of changes, the mind is instantly affected in a certain manner. This new mental state induced is sensation.

But, says Dr Reid, the sensation is accompanied with a perception, which is very different from it; and on this difference of sensation and perception is founded the chief part of his system. The distinction thus made by him, has been commonly, though very falsely, considered as original; the radical difference itself, whether accurate or inaccurate, and the minor distinctions founded upon this, being laid down with precision in some of the common elementary works of logic, of a much earlier period.

"When I smell a rose," he says, "there is in this operation both sensation and perception. The agreeable odour I feel, considered by itself, without relation to any external object, is merely a sensation. It affects the mind in a certain way; and this affection of the mind may be conceived, without a thought of the rose, or any other object. This sensation can be nothing else than it is felt to be. Its very essence consists in being felt; and when it is not felt, it is not. There is no difference between the sensation and the feeling of it; they are one and the same thing. It is for this reason that we before observed, that, in sensation, there is no object distinct from that act of the mind by which it is felt; and this holds true with regard to all sensations.

"Let us next attend to the perception which we have in smelling a rose. Perception has always an external object; and the object of my perception, in this case, is that quality in the rose which I discern by the sense of smell. Observing that the agreeable sensation is raised when the rose is near, and ceases when it is removed, I am led, by my nature, to conclude some quality to be in the rose, which is the cause of this sensation. This quality in the rose is the object perceived; and that act of my mind, by which I have the conviction and belief of this quality, is what in this case I call perception."*

That the reference to an external object is, in this case, something more than the mere sensation itself, is very evident: the only question is, whether it be necessary to ascribe the reference to a peculiar power termed perception, or whether it be not rather the result of a common and more general principle of the mind.

When I smell a rose, that is to say, when certain odorous particles act on my organ of smell, a certain state of mind is produced, which constitutes the sensation of that particular fragrance; and this is all which can justly be ascribed to the mind as simply sentient. But the mind is not sensitive merely, in the strict sense of that term, for there are many states of it which do not depend on the immediate presence of external objects. Those feelings, of any kind, which have before existed, together, or in trains of succession, arise afterwards, as it were spontaneously, in consequence merely of the existence of some other part of the train. When the fragrance of a rose, therefore, has been frequently accompanied with the sensations of

* Gray de Princip. Cogit. Lib. 1. v. 142—153.

* On the Intellectual Powers, Essay II. c. 16.

vision that arise when a rose is before us, or with the muscular and tactual sensations that arise on handling it, the mere fragrance, of itself, will afterwards suggest these sensations; and this suggestion is all which, in the case of smell, instanced by Dr Reid, is termed the perception, as distinguished from the mere sensation. We ascribe the fragrance to the unseen external rose, precisely in the same manner as we ascribe smoke and ashes to previous combustion; or, from a portrait, or a pictured landscape, infer the existence of some artist who painted it. Yet, in inferring the artist from the picture, it is surely not to any mere power of sense that we ascribe the inference, and as little should we trace, to any such simple power, what is in this instance termed perception. The perception is a suggestion of memory, combined with the simple sensation. There are not, in ascribing the smell to odorous particles of a rose, as its cause, sensation, perception, and association or suggestion, as three powers or general principles of the mind. But there are sensation and the associate suggestion; and, when these co-exist, perception exists, because perception is the name which we give to the union of the former two. There is, indeed, the belief of some cause of the sensation, as there is a belief of some cause of every feeling of the mind, internal as well as external; but the cause, in the case of smell, is supposed to be external, and corporeal, merely because the presence of an external rose has been previously learned from another source, and is suggested when the sensation of fragrance recurs, in intimate association.

In the case of taste, to proceed to our other senses,—the perception, as it is termed by Dr Reid, is precisely of the same kind—a mere reference of association. We have previously learned, from other sources, to believe in things without, and these, as sapid bodies acting on our tongue, are suggested by the mere sensation, which, but for the means of this suggestion, would have been a sensation alone, of which the cause would have been as little conceived to be corporeal as the causes of any of the internal affections of the mind. The melody of a flute, if we had had no sense but that of hearing—the redness of a rose, if we had no sense but that of vision, would as little, as the sensation of smell when considered as a transient state of the mind, have involved, or given occasion to, the notion of corporeal substance. We refer the melody to the external flute, and redness to the external rose, because we have previously acquired the notions of extension and resistance—of a flute and of a rose as external substances—and this reference of mere suggestion is all, which, in these cases, distinguishes the perception from the sensation. Without the suggestions of memory, in short, we could not in these cases have had, in Dr Reid's sense of the term, any perceptions whatever, to distinguish the causes of our sensations as external, more than the causes of any of our other feelings. The great source of perception, then, in the sense in which he understands the term, is that by which we primarily form the complex notion of extension and resistance—that which has parts, and that which resists our attempt to grasp it—since all the other perceptions, of which he speaks, in contradistinction from mere sensations, are only these complex notions, suggested by the particular sensations, and combined with them in consequence of former association, and the general reference to a cause of some sort, which may be supposed to attend our feelings of every kind, internal as well as external, when considered as changes or new phenomena. It is not, however, from any peculiar power, to be distinguished by the name of perception, that this complex notion of extended resistance appears to me to arise, but from the union of our notion of extension, acquired by the mere remembrance of various progressive series of feelings, with the notion of resistance, when an accustomed series of muscular feelings without any change of circumstances, in the mind itself, is interrupted by that peculiar and very different muscular feeling which arises from impeded effort. Perception, in short, in all our senses, is nothing more than the association of this complex notion with our other sensations—the notion of something extended and resisting, suggested by these sensations, when the sensations themselves have previously arisen; and suggested in the same manner, and on the same principle, as any other associate feeling suggests any other associate feeling.

It is very evident that perception, in Dr Reid's sense, is not the mere reference to a cause of some sort, for it would then be as comprehensive as all the feelings or changes of the mind,—our hope, fear, anger, pity,—which we ascribe to some cause or antecedent, as much as our tastes and smells; it is the reference of certain feelings to a corporeal cause, that is to say, to a cause extended and resisting. If, for example, without any previous knowledge of external things, on the first sensation of fragrance, or sweetness, or sound, or colour, we could be supposed to be capable of believing that there was some cause of this new state of our being, this would not be perception in the sense in which he uses that term; and yet, but for our organ of touch, or at least but for feelings which are commonly ascribed to that organ, it would be manifestly impossible for us to make more than this vague and general inference. When a rose is present, we find, and have uniformly found, that a certain sensation of fragrance arises, which ceases when the rose is removed. The influence of association, therefore, operates in this as in every other case of ordinary co-existence. We do not merely suppose that the

sensation has some cause, as we believe that our joys and sorrows have a cause, but we ascribe the fragrance to the external substance, the presence of which we have found to be so essential to the production of it. Perception, in every case, as I have said, in which it is to be distinguished from the prior sensation, is a reference of this prior sensation to a material cause;—and this complex notion of a material cause,—that is to say, of something extended and resisting,—mere smell, mere taste, mere hearing, mere vision, never could have afforded. I have already explained how this notion of matter, as it appears to me, is produced, or may be imagined to be produced. A train of muscular feelings has been frequently repeated, so that the series has become familiar to the infant, constituting in its remembrance the notion of a certain progressive length.—When all the known antecedent circumstances have been the same, the well-known series is suddenly broken, so as to excite in the mind of the infant the notion of a cause which is not in itself;—this cause, which is something foreign to itself, is that which excites the particular muscular feeling of resistance,—and it is combined with the notion of a certain length, because it uniformly supplies the place of what has been felt as a certain length, so as at last, by the operation of the common laws of association, to become truly representative of it, or rather to involve it in one complex feeling, in the same manner as colour, in vision, seems to involve whole miles of distance. Such is all that seems to me to constitute what Dr Reid would term perception, even with respect to the feelings commonly termed tactual;—and in all the other classes of sensations it is obviously nothing more than the suggestion of these associate feelings, in the same way as any other feelings, in our trains of thought and emotions, are suggested by those conceptions or other feelings which have frequently accompanied them.—It is sufficient to think of a mind, possessing all the other susceptibilities of sensation, but those which give us the perceptions commonly ascribed to touch, to be sensible how truly what we term perception in the other senses, is the mere suggestion of these. If we were capable only of smelling,—or had no other sensations than those of mere taste, mere sound, mere colour,—what perception could we have had of a material cause of these sensations?—and if it be to the mere suggestion of the object of another sense that we owe what is termed perception in all these sensations,—in what circumstance does the reference of these to a resisting and extended substance differ from any other of the common references which the principle of association enables us to make?

"Sensation," says Dr Reid, "can be nothing else than it is felt to be. Its very essence consists in being felt; and when it is not felt, it is not. There is no difference between the sensation and the feeling of it; they are one and the same thing."* But this is surely equally true, of what he terms perception, which, as a state of mind, it must be remembered, is, according to his own account of it, as different from the object perceived as the sensation is. We may say of the mental state of perception too, in his own language, as indeed we must say of all our states of mind, whatever they may be, that it can be nothing else than it is felt to be. Its very essence consists in being felt; and when it is not felt, it is not. There is no difference between the perception and the feeling of it; they are one and the same thing. The sensation, indeed, which is mental, is different from the object exciting it, which we term material; but so also is the state of mind which constitutes perception; for Dr Reid was surely too zealous an opponent of the systems, which ascribe every thing to mind alone, or to matter alone, to consider the perception as itself the object perceived. That in sensation, as contradistinguished from perception, there is no reference made to an external object, is true; because, when the reference is made, we then use the new term of perception; but that in sensation there is no object distinct from that act of the mind by which it is felt,—no object independent of the mental feeling, is surely a very strange opinion of this philosopher; since what he terms perception, is nothing but the reference of this very sensation to its external object. The sensation itself he certainly supposes to depend on the presence of an external object, which is all that can be understood in the case of perception, when we speak of its objects, or, in other words, of those external causes to which we refer our sensations; for the material object itself he surely could not consider as forming a part of the perception, which is a state of the mind alone. To be the object of perception, is nothing more than to be the foreign cause or occasion, on which this state of the mind directly or indirectly arises; and an object, in this only intelligible sense, as an occasion, or cause of a certain subsequent effect, must, on his own principles, be equally allowed to sensation. Though he does not inform us what he means by the term *object*, as peculiarly applied to perception,—(and, indeed, if he had explained it, I cannot but think that a great part of his system, which is founded on the confusion of this single word, as something different from a mere external cause of an internal feeling, must have fallen to the ground,)—he yet tells us, very explicitly, that to be the object of

* See before, p. 54.

perception, is something more than to be the external occasion on which that state of the mind arises which he terms perception; for, in arguing against the opinion of a philosopher, who contends for the existence of certain images or traces in the brain, and yet says, "that we are not to conceive the images or traces in the brain to be perceived, as if there were eyes in the brain; these traces are only occasions, on which, by the laws of the union of soul and body, ideas are excited in the mind; and, therefore, it is not necessary that there should be an exact resemblance between the traces and the things represented by them, any more than that words or signs should be exactly like the things signified by them:"*—He adds, "These two opinions, I think, cannot be reconciled. For, if the images or traces in the brain are perceived, they must be the objects of perception, and not the occasions of it only. On the other hand, if they are only the occasions of our perceiving, they are not perceived at all."†—Did Dr Reid, then, suppose that the feeling, whatever it may be, which constitutes perception as a state of the mind, or, in short, all of which we are conscious in perception, is not strictly and exclusively mental, as much as all of which we are conscious in remembrance, or in love, or hate;—or did he wish us to believe that matter itself, in any of its forms, is, or can be, a part of the phenomena or states of the mind—a part, therefore, of that mental state or feeling which we term a perception? Our sensations, like our remembrances or emotions, we refer to some cause or antecedent. The difference is, that in the one case we consider the feeling as having for its cause some previous feeling or state of the mind itself; in the other case we consider it as having for its cause something which is external to ourselves, and independent of our transient feelings,—something which, in consequence of former feelings suggested at the moment, it is impossible for us not to regard as extended and resisting.—But still what we thus regard as extended and resisting is known to us only by the feelings which it occasions in our mind. What matter, in its relation to the percipient mind, can be, but the cause or occasion, direct or indirect, of that class of feelings which I term sensations or perceptions, it is absolutely impossible for me to conceive.

The percipient mind, in no one of its affections, can be said to be the mass of matter which it perceives, unless the separate existence, either of matter or of mind, be abandoned by us, the existence of either of which, Dr Reid would have been the last of philosophers to yield. He acknowledges that our perceptions are consequent on the presence of external bodies, not from any necessary connexion subsisting between them, but merely from the arrangement which the Deity, in his wisdom, has chosen to make of their mutual phenomena; which is surely to say, that the Deity has rendered the presence of the external object the occasion of that affection of the mind which is termed perception; or, if it be not to say this, it is to say nothing. Whatever state of mind perception may be; whether a primary result of a peculiar power, or a mere secondary reference of association that follows the particular sensation, of which the reference is made, it is itself, in either view of it, but a state of the mind; and to be the external occasion or antecedent of this state of mind, since it is to produce, directly or indirectly, all which constitutes perception, is surely, therefore, to be perceived, or there must be something in the mere word perceived, different from the physical reality which it expresses.

The confusion of Dr Reid's notions on this subject seems to have arisen from a cause which has been the chief source of the general confusion that prevails in intellectual science; and, indeed, it was principally with the view of exhibiting this confusion, and its source, to you strongly, that I have dwelt so long on a criticism, which, to those among you who are not acquainted with the extensive and important applications that have been made of this doctrine, may, perhaps, have appeared of very little interest. Dr Reid, it is evident, was not sufficiently in the habit of considering the phenomena of the mind,—its perceptions, as well as its remembrances, judgments, passions, and all its other affections, whatever these may be,—in the light in which I have represented them to you, merely as the mind affected, in a certain manner, according to certain regular laws of succession, but as something more mysterious than the subject of this sequence of feelings; for, but for this notion of something more mysterious, the object of perception, and the external occasion of that state of mind which we term perception, must have conveyed precisely the same notion. To have a clear view of the phenomena of the mind, as mere affections or states of it, existing successively, and in a certain series, which we are able, therefore, to predict, in consequence of our knowledge of the past, is, I conceive, to have made the most important acquisition which the intellectual inquirer can make. To say, merely, that it is to have learned to distinguish that which may be known from that which never can be known, and which it therefore would be an idle waste of labour to attempt to discover,—would be to say far too little. It is to see the mind, in a great measure, as it is in nature, divested of every thing foreign, passing instantly from thought to thought,

* On the Intellectual Powers, Essay II. c. 8.
† Ibid.

from sensation to sensation, in almost endless variety of states, and differing as completely from that cumbrous representation of it which philosophers are fond of representing to us, as the planets, revolving freely in the immense space of our solar system, differ from those mimic orbs which, without any principle of motion in themselves, are, as it were, dragged along, in the complex mechanism of our orreries.

In objecting, however, to Dr Reid's notion of perception, I am far from wishing to erase the word from our metaphysical vocabulary. On the contrary, I conceive it to be a very convenient one, if the meaning attached to it be sufficiently explained by an analysis of the complex state of mind which it denotes, and the use of it confined rigidly to cases in which it has this meaning. Sensation may exist, without any reference to an external cause, in the same manner as we may look at a picture, without thinking of the painter; or read a poem, without thinking of the poet,—or it may exist with reference to an external cause; and it is convenient, therefore, to confine the term sensation to the former of these cases, and perception to the latter. But, then, it must be understood, that the perception is nothing but the suggestion of ideas associated with the simple SENSATION, as it originally took place,—or is only another name for the original simple sensation itself, in the cases, if any such there be, in which sensation involves, immediately in itself, the belief of some existence external to the sentient mind, —or is only a mere inference, like all our other inferences, if it arise, in the manner in which I have endeavoured to explain to you how the notions of extension and resistance in an external cause of our feelings might arise, and be afterwards suggested in association with other feelings that had frequently accompanied it.

To give a brief summary, however, of the argument which I have urged;—in that state of acquired knowledge, long after the first elementary feelings of infancy, in which modified state alone the phenomena of the mind can become to us objects of reflective analysis, certain feelings are referred by us to an external material cause. The feelings themselves, as primarily excited, are termed sensations, and, when followed by the reference to an external cause, receive the name of perceptions; which marks nothing more in addition to the primary sensations, than this very reference. But what is the reference itself, in consequence of which the new name is given? It is the suggestion of some extended resisting object, the presence of which had before been found to be attended with that particular sensation which is now again referred to it. If we had had no sense but that of smell; no sense but that of taste; no sense but that of sound; no sense but that of sight; we could not have known the existence of extended resisting substances, and, therefore, could not have referred the pleasant or painful sensations of those classes to such external causes, more than we refer directly, to an external cause, any painful or pleasing emotion, or other internal affection of the mind. In all but one class of our sensations, then, it is evident that what Dr Reid calls perception, as the operation of a peculiar mental faculty, is nothing more than a suggestion of memory or association, which differs in no respect from other suggestions, arising from other coexistences or successions of feelings, equally uniform or frequent. It is only in a single class of sensations, therefore,—that which Dr Reid ascribes to touch,—that perception, which he regards as a peculiar faculty, extending to all our sensations, can be said to have any primary operation, even though we should agree with him in supposing that our belief of extended resistance is not reducible, by analysis, to any more general principles. If, however, my analysis of the complex notion of matter be just, perception, in its relation to our original sensations of touch, as much as in relation to the immediate feelings which we derive from smell, taste, sight, and hearing, is only one of the many operations of the suggesting or associating principle. But, even on his own principles, I repeat, it must be confined to the single class of feelings, which he considers as tactual, and is not an original principle, co-extensive with all the original varieties of sensation. Even in the single class, to which it is thus, on his own principles, to be confined, it is not so much what he would term a faculty, as an intuitive belief, by which we are led irresistibly, on the existence of certain sensations, to ascribe these to causes that are external and corporeal; or, if we give the name of faculty to this peculiar form of intuition, we should give it equally to all our intuitions, and rank, among our faculties, the belief of the continued order of Nature, or the belief of our own identity, as much as our belief of external things, if our senses themselves are unable to give us any information of them.

LECTURE XXVI.

THE SAME SUBJECT, CONTINUED.

My last Lecture, Gentlemen, was chiefly employed in considering the nature of that complex process which takes place in the mind, when we ascribe the various classes of our sensations to their various external objects,—to the analysis of which process we were led, by the importance which Dr Reid

has attached to the distinction of sensation and perception;—a sensation, as understood by him, being the simple feeling that immediately follows the action of an external body on any of our organs of sense, considered merely as a feeling of the mind; the corresponding perception being the reference of this feeling to the external body as its cause.

The distinction I allowed to be a convenient one, if the nature of the complex process which it expresses be rightly understood. The only question that seemed, philosophically, of importance, with respect to it, was, whether the perception in this sense,—the reference of the sensation to its external corporeal cause,—implies, as Dr Reid contends, a peculiar mental power, co-extensive with sensation, to be distinguished by a peculiar name in the catalogue of our faculties, or be not merely one of the results of a more general power, which is afterwards to be considered by us,—the power of association,—by which one feeling suggests, or induces, other feelings that have formerly co-existed with it.

It would be needless to recapitulate the argument minutely, in its relation to all the senses. That of smell, which Dr Reid has himself chosen as an example, will be sufficient for our retrospect.

Certain particles of odorous matter act on my nostrils,—a peculiar sensation of fragrance arises,—I refer this sensation to a rose. This reference, which is unquestionably something superadded to the original sensation itself, is what Dr Reid terms the perception of the fragrant body. But what is the reference itself, and to what source is it to be ascribed? That we should have supposed our sensations to have had a cause of some sort, as we suppose a cause of all our feelings internal as well as external, may indeed be admitted. But if I had had no other sense than that of smell,—if I had never seen a rose,—or, rather, since the knowledge, which vision affords, is chiefly of a secondary kind, if I had no mode of becoming acquainted with the compound of extension and resistance, which the mere sensations of smell, it is evident, are incapable of affording,—could I have made this reference of my sensation to a quality of a fragrant body? Could I, in short, have had more than the mere sensation itself, with that general belief of a cause of some sort, which is not confined to our sensations, but is common to them with all our other feelings?

By mere smell, as it appears to me, I could not have become acquainted with the existence of corporeal substances,—in the sense in which we now understand the term corporeal,—nor, consequently, with the qualities of corporeal substances; and, if so, how could I have had that perception of which Dr Reid speaks,—that reference to a fragrant body, of which, as a body, I was before in absolute ignorance? I should, indeed, have ascribed the sensation to some cause or antecedent, like every other feeling; but I could as little have ascribed it to a bodily cause, as any feeling of joy or sorrow. I refer it now to a rose; because, being endowed with other sensitive capacities, I have previously learned, from another source, the existence of causes without, extended and resisting,—because I have previously touched or seen a rose, when the sensation of fragrance co-existed with my visual or tactual sensation; and all which distinguishes the perception from the mere sensation, is this suggestion of former experience, which reminds me now of other feelings, with the continuance or cessation of which, in innumerable former instances, the fragrance itself also continued or ceased. The perception, in short, in smell, taste, hearing, is a sensation suggesting, by association, the notion of some extended and resisting substance, fragrant, sapid, vibratory,—a notion which smell alone, taste alone, hearing alone, never could have afforded; but which, when once received from any other source, may be suggested by these as readily as any other associate feeling that has frequently co-existed with them. To the simple primary sensations of vision the same remark may be applied. A mere sensation of colour could not have made me acquainted with the existence of bodies that would resist my effort to grasp them. It is only in one sense, therefore,—that which affords us the knowledge of resistance,—that any thing like original perception can be found, and even in this, the process of perception, as I formerly explained to you, implies no peculiar power, but only common sensations, with associations and inferences of precisely the same kind as those which are continually taking place in all our reasonings and trains of thought.

Extension and resistance, I need scarcely repeat, are the complex elements of what we term matter; and nothing is matter to our conception, or a body, to use the simpler synonymous term, which does not involve these elements. If we had no other sense than that of smell, and, therefore, could not have referred the sensations to any fragrant body, what, in Dr Reid's meaning of this term, would the supposed power of perception, in these circumstances, have been? What would it have been, in like manner, if we had had only the sense of taste in sweetness and bitterness,—or of hearing in melody,—or of vision in colour,—without the capacity of knowing light as a material substance, or the bodies that vibrated, or the bodies of another kind that were sweet or bitter? It is only by the sense of touch, or, at least, by that class of perceptions which Dr Reid ascribes to touch,—and which therefore, though traced by us, in part, to another source, I, for brevity's sake, comprehend under that term in our present discussion,—it is only by touch that we become acquainted

with those elements which are essential to our very notion of a body; and to touch, therefore, in his own view of it, we must be indebted, directly or indirectly, as often as we refer the sensations of any other class to a corporeal cause. Even in the supposed perceptions of touch itself, however, as we have seen, the reference of our feelings to an external cause is not demonstrative of any peculiar power of the mind to be classed separately from its other faculties. But when a body is first grasped, in infancy, by fingers that have been accustomed to contract without being impeded, we learn to consider the sensation as the result of a cause that is different from our own mind, because it breaks an accustomed series of feelings, in which all the antecedents, felt by us at the time, were such as were before uniformly followed by a different consequent, and were expected, therefore, to have again their usual consequent. The cause of the new sensation, which is thus believed to be something different from our sentient self, is regarded by us as something which has parts, and which resists our effort, that is to say, as an external body;—because the muscular feeling, excited by the object grasped, is, in the first place, the very feeling of that which we term resistance; and, secondly, because, by uniformly supplying the place of a definite portion of a progressive series of feelings, it becomes ultimately representative of that particular length of series, or number of parts, of which it thus uniformly supplies the place. Perception, then, even in that class of feelings by which we learn to consider ourselves as surrounded by substances extended and resisting, is only another name, as I have said, for the result of certain associations and inferences that flow from other more general principles of the mind; and, with respect to all our other sensations, it is only another name for the suggestion of these very perceptions of touch, or at least of the feelings, tactual and muscular, which are, by Dr Reid, ascribed to that single sense. If we had been unsusceptible of these tactual and muscular feelings, and, consequently, had never conceived the existence of any thing extended and resisting till the sensation of fragrance, colour, sweetness, or sound had arisen, we should, after any one or all of these sensations, have still known as little of bodies without, as if no sensation whatever had been excited.

The distinction, then, on which Dr Reid has founded so much, involves, in his view of it, and in the view that is generally taken of it, a false conception of the nature of the process which he describes. The two words, *sensation* and *perception*, are indeed, as I have already remarked, very convenient for expressing, in one case, the mere existence of an external feeling,—in the other case, the reference which the percipient mind has made of this feeling to an external cause. But this reference is all which the perception superadds to the sensation;—and the source of the reference itself we are still left to seek in the other principles of our intellectual nature. We have no need, however, to invent a peculiar power of the mind for producing it; since there are other principles of our nature, from which it may readily be supposed to flow,—the principle by which we are led to believe that every new consequent, in a train of changes, must have had a new antecedent of some sort in the train, and the principle of association, by which feelings, that have usually co-existed, suggest or become representative of each other. With these principles, it certainly is not wonderful, that, when the fragrance of a rose has uniformly affected our sense of smell, as often as the flower itself was presented to us, we should ascribe the fragrance to the flower which we have seen and handled;—But though it would not be wonderful that we should make it, it would indeed be wonderful, if, with these principles, we did not make that very reference, for which Dr Reid thinks it necessary to have recourse to a peculiar faculty of perception.

Such, then, is the view which I would take of that distinction of sensation and perception which Dr Reid, and the philosophers who have followed him, and many of the philosophers, too, that preceded him,—for the distinction, as I have said, is far from being an original one,—have understood in a different sense; in consequence, as I cannot but think, of a defective analysis of the mental process, which constitutes the reference of our feelings of this class to causes that are without.

There is another distinction, which he has adopted from the philosophers that preceded him, and which forms an important part of his system of perception,—a distinction that is just to a certain extent, though not to the full extent, and in the precise manner, in which he and other writers have maintained it:—and with respect to which, therefore, it will be necessary to point out to you how far I conceive it to be safely admissible. I allude to the division which has been formed of the primary and secondary qualities of matter.

"Every one knows that extension, divisibility, figure, motion, solidity, hardness, softness, and fluidity, were by Mr Locke called primary qualities of body; and that sound, colour, taste, smell, and heat or cold, were called secondary qualities. Is there a just foundation for this distinction? Is there any thing common to the primary, which belongs not to the secondary? And what is it?

"I answer, That there appears to me to be a real foundation for the distinction; and it is this: That our senses give us a direct and a distinct notion of the primary qualities, and inform us what they are in themselves; but, of the secondary qualities, our senses give us only a relative and obscure notion. They

inform us only, that they are qualities that affect us in a certain manner, that is, produce in us a certain sensation; but as to what they are in themselves, our senses leave us in the dark.

"The notion we have of primary qualities is direct, and not relative only. A relative notion of a thing is, strictly speaking, no notion of the thing at all, but only of some relation which it bears to something else.

"Thus gravity sometimes signifies the tendency of bodies towards the earth; sometimes it signifies the cause of that tendency. When it means the first, I have a direct and distinct notion of gravity: I see it, and feel it, and know perfectly what it is; but this tendency must have a cause. We give the same name to the cause; and that cause has been an object of thought and of speculation. Now what notion have we of this cause, when we think and reason about it? It is evident we think of it as an unknown cause, of a known effect. This is a relative notion, and it must be obscure; because it gives us no conception of what the thing is, but of what relation it bears to something else. Every relation which a thing unknown bears to something that is known, may give a relative notion of it; and there are many objects of thought, and of discourse, of which our faculties can give no better than a relative notion.

"Having premised these things, to explain what is meant by a relative notion, it is evident that our notion of primary qualities is not of this kind; we know what they are, and not barely what relation they bear to something else.

"It is otherwise with secondary qualities. If you ask me, what is that quality or modification in a rose which I call its smell, I am at a loss to answer directly. Upon reflection I find, that I have a distinct notion of the sensation which it produces in my mind. But there can be nothing like to this sensation in the rose, because it is insentient. The quality in the rose is something which occasions the sensations in me; but what that something is, I know not. My senses give me no information upon this point. The only notion, therefore, my senses give is this, That smell in the rose is an unknown quality or modification, which is the cause or occasion of a sensation which I know well. The relation which this unknown quality bears to the sensation with which nature hath connected it, is all I learn from the sense of smelling; but this is evidently a relative notion. The same reasoning will apply to every secondary quality.

"Thus I think it appears, that there is a real foundation for the distinction of primary from secondary qualities; and that they are distinguished by this, that of the primary we have by our senses a direct and distinct notion; but of the secondary only a relative notion, which must, because it is only relative, be obscure; they are conceived only as the unknown causes or occasions of certain sensations with which we are well acquainted."*

Though, as I have explained to you fully, in my former Lectures, we should not, at least in far the greater number of our sensations, have considered them, originally, as proceeding from external causes, we yet, after the acquisitions of knowledge, with which the first years of our life enrich us, believe, that there is an external cause of all our sensations,—of smells and tastes, as much as of those feelings of the mind which constitute our notions of extension and resistance. But the difference, in these cases, is, that though we learn, by experience, of certain successions or co-existences of feelings, to refer to a corporeal cause our sensations of fragrance, and various other species of sensations, there is nothing in the sensation of fragrance itself, or in the other analogous sensations, of which I speak, that might not indicate as much a cause directly spiritual as a cause like that to which we at present give the name of body, while the very notion of extension and resistance combined, seems necessarily to indicate a material cause, or rather is truly that which constitutes our very notion of matter.

We believe, indeed, that our sensations of fragrance, sweetness, sound, have causes of some sort, as truly as we believe that our feelings of extension and resistance have a cause, or causes of some sort; but if we have previously given the name of matter, with direct reference to the one set of effects, and not with direct reference to the other, it necessarily follows, that, in relation to matter, as often as we speak or think of it, the qualities which correspond with the one set of effects, that have led us to use that name, must be regarded by us as primary, and the others, which may or may not co-exist with these, only as secondary. An external body may or may not be fragrant, because fragrance is not one of the qualities previously included by us in our definition of a body; but it must be extended, and present an obstacle to our compressing force, because these are the very qualities which we have included in our definition, and without which, therefore, the definition must cease to be applicable to the things defined.

If, originally, we had invented the word *matter* to denote the cause, whatever it might be, of our sensations of smell, it is very evident that fragrance would then have been to us the primary quality of matter, as being that which was essential to our definition of matter,—and all other qualities, by which the cause of smell might, or might not at the

* On the Intellectual Powers, Essay II. c. 17.

same time affect our other senses, would then have been secondary qualities only,—as being qualities compatible with our definition of matter, but not essential to it.

What we now term matter, however, I have repeatedly observed, is that which we consider as occupying space, and resisting our effort to compress it; and those qualities of matter may well be said to be primary, by which matter itself, as thus defined, becomes known to us, or by the union of which, in our conception, we form the complex notion of matter, and give or withhold that name according as these qualities are present or absent. Extension and resistance are the distinguishing qualities that direct us in all our applications of the word which comprehends them. They are truly primary qualities therefore; since, without our consideration of them, we never could have formed the complex notion of the substance itself, to which we afterwards, in our analysis of that complex notion, ascribe them separately as qualities; and all the other qualities, which we may afterwards find occasion to refer to an extended resisting substance, must evidently be secondary, in reference to those qualities, without which, as previously combined in our thought, we could not have had the primary notion of the substance to which we thus secondarily refer them. If, in the case which we have already frequently imagined, of the single sense of smell, we had been absolutely unsusceptible of every other external feeling, we might, indeed, have considered our sensation as the effect of some cause, and even of a cause that was different from our mind itself; but it is very evident that we could not have considered it as the effect of the presence of matter, at least as that term is now understood by us. If, in these circumstances, after frequent repetition of the fragrance, as the only quality of bodies with which we could be acquainted, we were to acquire in an instant all the other senses which we now possess, so as to become capable of forming that complex notion of things extended and resisting, which is our present notion of matter, we should then, indeed, have a fuller notion of the rose, of the mere fragrance of which we before were sensible, without knowing of what it was the fragrance, and might learn to refer the fragrance to the rose, by the same co-existences of sensations which have led us, in our present circumstances, to combine the fragrance with other qualities, in the complex conception of the flower. Even then, however, though the fragrance, which was our first sensation, had truly been known to us before the other qualities, and though the sensation itself, therefore, as a mere sensation, would deserve the name of primary, the reference of this earlier feeling to the external rose, as its cause, would still truly be secondary to the earlier reference, or rather to the earlier combination of other qualities, in one complex whole, by which we had formed to ourselves the notion of the extended and resisting rose, as a body that admitted the subsequent reference of the delightful sensation of fragrance to be made to it, as the equal cause of these different effects.

In this sense, then, the distinction of the primary and secondary qualities of matter is just, that, whatever qualities we refer to a material cause must be, in reference, secondary to those qualities that are essential to our very notion of the body to which the subsequent reference of the other qualities is made. We have formed our definition of matter; and, as in every other definition of every sort, the qualities included in the definition must always, in comparison of other qualities, be primary and essential, relatively to the thing defined.

Nor is this all.—It will be admitted likewise, that the qualities termed primary, which alone are included in our general definitions of matter, and which are all, as we have seen, modifications of mere extension and resistance, are, even after we have learned to consider the causes of all our sensations as substances external to the mind, still felt by us to be external, with more clearness and vividness than the other qualities which we term secondary. The difference is partly, and chiefly, in the nature of the sensations themselves, as already explained to you, but depends also, I conceive, in no inconsiderable degree, on the permanence and universality of the objects which possess the primary qualities, and the readiness with which we can renew our feeling of them at will, from the constant presence of our own bodily frame, itself extended and resisting, and of the other causes of these feelings of extension and resistance, that seem to be everywhere surrounding us. Tastes, smells, sounds, even colours, though more lasting than these, are not always before us; but there is not a moment at which we cannot, by the mere stretching of our hand, produce at pleasure the feeling of something extended and resisting. It is a very natural effect of this difference, that the one set of causes which are always before us, should seem to us, therefore, peculiarly permanent, and the other set, that are only occasionally present, should seem almost as fugitive as our sensations themselves.

In these most important respects there is, then, a just ground for the distinction of the primary from the secondary qualities of bodies. They are primary in the order of our definition of matter; and they are felt by us as peculiarly permanent, independently of our feelings, which they seem at every moment ready to awake. The power of affecting us with smell, taste, sight, or hearing, may or may not be present; but the power of exciting the feelings of extension and resistance

is constantly present, and is regarded by us as essential to our very notion of matter; or, in other words, we give the name of matter only where this complex perception is excited in us. We seem, therefore, to be constantly surrounded with a material world of substances extended and resisting, that is to say, a world of substances capable of exciting in us the feelings which are ascribed to the primary quality of matter; but still the feeling of these primary qualities, which we regard as permanent, is, not less than the feeling of the secondary qualities, a state or affection of the mind, and nothing more;—and in the one case, as much as in the other, in the perception of the qualities termed secondary, as much as of the qualities termed primary, the feeling, when it occurs, is the direct or immediate result of the presence of the external body with the quality of which it corresponds; or, if there be any difference in this respect, I conceive that our feeling of fragrance, or sweetness, was, originally at least, a more immediate result of the presence of odorous or sapid particles, than any feeling of extension, without the mind, was the effect of the first body which we touched.

To the extent which I have now stated, then, the difference of these classes of qualities may be admitted. But, as to the other differences asserted, they seem to be founded on a false view of the nature of perception. I cannot discover any thing in the sensations themselves, corresponding with the primary and secondary qualities, which is direct, as Dr Reid says, in the one case, and only relative in the other. All are relative, in his sense of the term, and equally relative,—our perception of extension and resistance as much as our perception of fragrance or bitterness. Our feeling of extension is not itself matter, but a feeling excited by matter. We ascribe, indeed, our sensations, as effects, to external objects that excite them; but it is only by the medium of our sensations that these, in any case, become known to us as objects. To say that our perception of extension is not relative, to a certain external cause of this perception, direct or indirect, as our perception of fragrance is relative to a certain external cause, would be to say that our perception of extension, induced by the presence of an external cause, is not a mental phenomenon, as much as the perception of fragrance, but is something more than a state of the mind; for, if the perception of extension be, as all our perceptions and other feelings must surely be, a mental phenomenon, a state of mind, not of matter, the reference made of this to an external cause must be only to something which is conceived relatively as the cause of this feeling. What matter is independently of our perception, we know not, and cannot know, for it is only by our sensations that we can have any connexion with it; and even though we were supposed to have our connexion with it enlarged, by various senses additional to those which we possess at present, and our acquaintance with it, therefore, to be far more minute, this very knowledge, however widely augmented, must itself be a mental phenomenon, in like manner, the reference of which, to matter, as an external cause, would still be relative only like our present knowledge. That the connexion of the feeling of extension, with a corporeal substance really existing without, depends on the arbitrary arrangement made by the Deity; and that all of which we are conscious might, therefore, have existed, as at present, though no external cause had been,—Dr Reid, who ascribes to an intuitive principle our belief of an external universe, virtually allows; and this very admission surely implies that the notion does not, directly and necessarily, involve the existence of any particular cause, but is relative only to that particular cause, whatever it may be in itself, by which the Deity has thought proper to produce the corresponding feeling of our mind. It is quite evident that we cannot, in this case, appeal to experience to inform us what sensations or perceptions are more or less direct; for experience, strictly understood, does not extend beyond the feelings of our own mind, unless in this very relative belief itself, that there are certain external causes of our feelings—causes which it is impossible for us not to conceive as really existing, but of which we know nothing more than that our feelings, in all that wide variety of states of mind, which we express briefly by the terms *sensations* or *perceptions*, are made to depend on them. In the series of states in which the mind has existed, from the first moment of our life to the present hour, the feelings of extension, resistance, joy, sorrow, fragrance, colour, hope, fear, heat, cold, admiration, resentment, have often had place; and some of these feelings it has been impossible for us not to ascribe to a direct external cause; but there have not been in the mental series, which is all of which we can be conscious, both that feeling of the mind, which we term the perception of extension, and also body itself, as the cause of this feeling; for body, as an actual substance, cannot be a part of the consciousness of the mind, which is a different substance. It is sufficient for us to believe, that there are external causes of this feeling of the mind, permanent and independent of it, which produce, in regular series, all those phenomena that are found by us in the physical events of the universe, and with the continuance of which, therefore, our perceptions also will continue: we cannot truly suppose more, without conceiving our very notion of extension, a mental state, to be itself a body extended, which we have as little reason to suppose, as that our sensation of

fragrance, another mental state, is itself a fragrant body. It is needless to prolong this discussion, by endeavouring to place the argument in new points of view. The simple answer to the question, "Is our notion of extension, or of the other primary qualities of matter, a phenomenon or affection of matter or of mind?" would be of itself sufficient; for if it be a state of the mind, as much as our feeling of heat or of fragrance, and a state produced by the presence of an external cause, as our sensations of heat or fragrance are produced, then there is no reason to suppose that the knowledge is, in one case, more direct than in the other. In both, it is the effect of the presence of an external cause, and in both it must be relative only, to adopt Dr Reid's phrase, to that particular cause which produced it; the knowledge of which cause, in the case of extension, as much as in the case of fragrance, is nothing more than the knowledge that there is, without us, something which is not our mind itself, but which exists, as we cannot but believe, permanently, and independently of our mind, and produces, according to its own varieties, in relation to our corporeal frame, at one time, that affection of the mind which we denominate the perception of extension; at another time, that different affection of the mind, which we denominate the perception of fragrance. What it is, as it exists in absolute independence of our perceptions, we, who become acquainted with it only by those very perceptions, know not, in either case; but we know it at least,—which is the only knowledge important for us,—as it exists relatively to us; that is to say, it is impossible for us, from the very constitution of our nature, not to regard the variety of our perceptions as occasioned by a corresponding variety of causes external to our mind; though, even in making this reference, we must still believe our perceptions themselves to be altogether different and distinct from the external causes, whatever they may be, which have produced them; to be, in short, phenomena purely mental, and to be this equally, whether they relate to the primary or the secondary qualities of matter; our notion of extension, in whatever way the Deity may have connected it with the presence of external things, being as much a state of the mind itself as our notion of sweetness or sound.

These observations, on the process of suggestion, which, in the reference to an external cause, distinguishes our perceptions from our simpler sensations,—and on the real and supposed differences of the primary and secondary qualities of matter,—will have prepared you, I trust, for understanding better the claim which Dr Reid has made to the honour of overthrowing what he has termed the ideal system of perception. It is a claim, as I have said, which appears to me truly wonderful, both as made by him and as admitted by others; the mighty achievement which appeared to him to be the overthrow of a great system, being nothing more than the proof that certain phrases are metaphorical, which were intended by their authors to be understood only as metaphors.

In perception there is, as I have already frequently repeated, a certain series—the presence of an external object—the affection of the sensorial organ,—the affection of the sentient mind. As the two last, however, belong to one being—the being called self—which continues the same, while the external objects around are incessantly changing; —it is not wonderful, that, in speaking of perception, we should often think merely of the object as one, and of ourself, (this compound of mind and matter,) as also one, uniting the organic and mental changes, in the single word which expresses our perception. To see and to hear, for example, are single words, expressive of this whole process the bodily as well as the mental part,—for we do not consider the terms as applicable, in strict philosophic propriety, to cases in which the mere mental affection is the same, but the corporeal part is believed by us to be different,—as in sleep, or reverie, when the castle, the forest, the stream, rise before us as in reality, and we feel as if we were truly listening to voices which we love. That we feel *as if* we were listening, and feel *as if* we saw, is our language, when, in our waking hours, we speak of these phenomena of our dreams,—not that we actually saw and heard; thus evidently showing that we comprehend, in these terms, when used without the qualifying words, *as if*, not the mental changes of state only, but the whole process of perception, corporeal as well as mental. The mere organic part of the process, however, being of importance only as it is followed by the mental part, and being always followed by the mental part, scarcely enters into our conception, unless in cases of this sort, when we distinguish perception from vivid imagination, or when the whole compound process of perception is a subject of our philosophic inquiry. As sight, hearing, perception, involve, in a single word, a process both mental and corporeal, so, I have no doubt, the word *idea*, though now confined more strictly to the feeling of the mind, was long employed with a more vague signification, so as sometimes to mean the mental affection, sometimes the organic affection, sometimes both;—in the same manner as at present we speak of sight, sometimes as mental, sometimes as organic, sometimes as both. It comprehends both, when we distinguish the mountain or forest which we see, from the mountain or forest of which we dream. It is mental only, when we speak of the pleasure of sight. It is organic only, when we say of an eye, in which

the passage of the rays of light has become obstructed, that its sight is lost, or has been injured by disease.

The consideration of this double sense of the term *idea*, in some of the older metaphysical writers, corresponding with our present double sense of the word perception, as involving both the corporeal and mental parts of the process, removes, I think, much of that apparent confusion which is sometimes to be found in their language on the subject; when they combine, with the term, expressions which can be understood only in a material sense, after combining with it, at other times, expressions which can be understood only of the mind; as it is not impossible that a period may arrive, when much of our reasoning, that involves no obscurity at present, may seem obscure and confused, to our successors, in that career of inquiry, which, perhaps, is yet scarcely begun; merely because they may have limited, with stricter propriety, to one part of a process, terms which we now use as significant of a whole process. In the same manner, as we now exclude wholly from the term *idea* every thing organic, so may every thing organic hereafter be excluded from the term *sight*; and from the simple phrase, so familiar at present, that an eye has lost its sight, some future philosopher may be inclined to assert, that we, who now use that phrase, consider the perception of vision as in the material organ; and, if he have the talents of Dr Reid, he may even form a series of admirable ratiocinations, in disproof of an opinion which nobody holds, and may consider himself, and perhaps, too, if he be as fortunate as the author of the Inquiry into the Human Mind, may be considered by others, as the overthrower of a mighty system of metaphysical illusion.

How truly this has been the case, in the supposed overthrow of the ideal system, I shall proceed to show in my next Lecture.

LECTURE XXVII.

DR REID'S SUPPOSED CONFUTATION OF THE IDEAL SYSTEM CONTINUED; HYPOTHESIS OF THE PERIPATETICS REGARDING PERCEPTION; AND OPINIONS OF VARIOUS PHILOSOPHERS ON THE SAME SUBJECT.

THE remarks which I offered, in my last Lecture, in illustration of what have been termed the primary and secondary qualities of matter, were intended chiefly to obviate that false view of them, in which the one set of these qualities is distinguished, as affording us a knowledge that is direct, and the other set a knowledge that is relative only; —as if any qualities of matter could become known to the mind but as they are capable of affecting the mind with certain feelings, and as relative, therefore, to the feelings which they excite. What matter is, but as the cause of those various states of mind, which we denominate our sensations or perceptions, it is surely impossible for us, by perception, to discover. The physical universe, amid which we are placed, may have innumerable qualities that have no relation to our percipient mind,—and qualities which, if our mind were endowed with other capacities of sensation, we might discover as readily as those which we know at present; but the qualities that have no relation to the present state of the mind, cannot, to the mind, in its present state, be elements of its knowledge. From the very constitution of our nature, indeed, it is impossible for us not to believe that our sensations have external causes which correspond with them, and which have a permanence that is independent of our transient feelings,—a permanence that enables us to predict, in certain circumstances, the feelings which they are again to excite in our percipient mind; and to the union of all these permanent external causes, in one great system, we give the name of the material world. But the material world, in the sense in which alone we are entitled to speak of it, is still only a name for a multitude of external causes of our feelings,—of causes which are recognized by us as permanent and uniform in their nature, but are so recognized by us only because, in similar circumstances, they excite uniformly in the mind the same perceptions, or at least are supposed by us to be uniform in their own nature, when the perceptions which they excite in us are uniform. It is according to their mode of affecting the mind, then, with various sensations that we know them,—and not according to their absolute nature, which it is impossible for us to know, —whether we give the name of primary or secondary to the qualities which affect us. If our sensations were different, our perceptions of the qualities of things, which induce these sensations in us, would instantly have a corresponding difference. All the external existences which we term matter,—and all the phenomena of their motion or their rest, —if known to us at all, are known to us only by exciting in us, the percipients of them, certain feelings :—and qualities, which are not more or less directly relative to our feelings as sentient or percipient beings, are, therefore, qualities which we must be for ever incapable even of divining.

This, and some other discussions which have of late engaged us, were in part intended as preparatory to the inquiry on which we entered in the close of my Lecture,—the inquiry into the justness of the praise which

has been claimed and received by Dr Reid, as the confuter of a very absurd theory of perception, till then universally prevalent:—and if, indeed, the theory which he is said to have confuted, had been the general belief of philosophers till confuted by him, there can be no question that he would have had a just claim to be considered as one of the chief benefactors of the Philosophy of Mind. At any rate, since this glory has been ascribed to him, and his supposed confutation of the theory of perception, by little images of objects conveyed to the mind, has been considered as forming one of the most important eras in intellectual science, it has acquired, from this universality of mistake with respect to it, an interest which, from its own merits, it would certainly be far from possessing.

In the philosophy of the Peripatetics, and in all the dark ages of the scholastic followers of that system, ideas were truly considered as little images derived from objects without; and, as the word idea still continued to be used after this original meaning had been abandoned, (as it continues still in all the works that treat of perception,) it is not wonderful that many of the accustomed forms of expression, which were retained together with it, should have been of a kind that, in their strict etymological meaning, might have seemed to harmonize more with the theory of ideas as images, which prevailed when these particular forms of expression originally became habitual, than with that of ideas as mere states of the mind itself; since this is only what has happened with respect to innumerable other words, in the transmutations of meaning which they have received during the long progress of scientific inquiry. The idea, in the old philosophy, had been that of which the presence immediately preceded the mental perception,—the direct external cause of perception; and, accordingly, it may well be supposed that, when the direct cause of perception was believed to be not a foreign phantasm but a peculiar affection of the sensorial organ, that word which had formerly been applied to the supposed object would still imply some reference to the organic state, which was believed to supply the place of the shadowy film, or phantasm, in being, what it had been supposed to be, the immediate antecedent of perception. *Idea*, in short, in the old writers, like the synonymous word *perception* at present, was expressive not of one part of a process, but of two parts of it. It included, with a certain vague comprehensiveness, the organic change as well as the mental,—in the same way as perception now implies a certain change produced in our organs of sense, and a consequent change in the state of the mind; and hence it is surely not very astonishing, that, while many expressions are found in the works of these older writers, which, in treating of ideas, have a reference to the mental part of the process of perception, other expressions are occasionally employed which relate only to the material part of the process,—since both parts of the process, as I have said, were, to a certain degree, denoted by that single word. All this might very naturally take place, though nothing more were meant to be expressed by it than these two parts of the process,—the organic change, whatever it might be, and the subsequent mental change,—without the necessary intervention of something distinct from both, such as Dr Reid supposes to have been meant by the term Idea.

It is this application, to the bodily part of the process, of expressions, which he considered as intended to be applied to the mental part of perception, that has sometimes misled him in the views which he has given of the opinions of former philosophers. But still more frequently has he been misled, by understanding in a literal sense phrases which were intended in a metaphorical sense, and which seem so obviously metaphorical that it is truly difficult to account for the misapprehension. Indeed, the same metaphors, on the mere use of which Dr Reid founds so much, continue still to be used in the same manner as before he wrote. We speak of impressions on the mind—of ideas bright or obscure, permanent or fading—o. senses that are the inlets to our knowledge of external things—and of memory in which this knowledge is stored—precisely as the writers and speakers before us used these phrases; without meaning any thing more than that certain organic changes, necessary to perception, are produced by external objects,—and that certain feelings, similar to those originally excited in this manner, are afterwards renewed, with more or less permanence and vivacity, without the recurrence of the objects that originally produced them;—and to arrange all the moods and figures of logic in confutation of mere metaphors, such as I cannot but think the *images in the mind* to have been, which Dr Reid so powerfully assailed, seems an undertaking not very different from that of exposing, syllogistically and seriously, all the follies of Grecian paganism as a system of theological belief, in the hope of converting some unfortunate poetaster or poet, who still talks, in his rhymings to his mistress, of Cupid and the Graces.

There is, however, one very important practical inference to be drawn from this misapprehension—the necessity of avoiding, as much as possible, in philosophic disquisition, the language of metaphor, especially when the precise meaning has not before been pointed out, so as to render any misconception of the intended meaning, when a metaphor is used, as nearly impossible as the condition of our intellectual nature will allow. In calculating the possibility of this future

misconception, we should never estimate our own perspicuity very highly; for there is always in man a redundant facility of mistake, beyond our most liberal allowance. As has been truly said,—

> "The difference is as great between
> The optics seeing, as the objects seen;"*

and, unfortunately, it is the object only which is in our power. The fallible optics that are to view it, are beyond our control; and whatever opinion, therefore, the most cautious philosopher may assert, he ought never to flatter himself with the absolute certainty that, in the course of a few years, he may not be exhibited and confuted, as the assertor of a doctrine, not merely different from that which he has professed, but exactly opposite to it.

The true nature of the opinions really held by philosophers is, however, to be determined by reference to their works. To this, then, let us proceed.

The language of Mr Locke,—to begin with one of the most eminent of these,—is unfortunately so very figurative, when he speaks of the intellectual phenomena, (though I have no doubt that he would have avoided these figures if he could have foreseen the possibility of their being interpreted literally,) that it is not easy to show, by any single quotation, how very different his opinions as to perception were, from those which Dr Reid has represented them to be. The great question is, whether he believed the existence of ideas as things in the mind, separate from perception, and intermediate between the organic affection, whatever it might be, and the mental affection; or whether the idea and the perception were considered by him as the same. "In the perception of external objects," says Dr Reid, "all languages distinguish three things,—the mind that perceives,—the operation of that mind, which is called perception,—and the object perceived. Philosophers have introduced a fourth thing in this process, which they call the idea of the object."† It is the merit of showing the nullity of this supposed fourth thing which Dr Reid claims, and which has been granted to him without examination. The perception itself, as a state of the mind, or, as he chooses to call it, an operation of the mind, he admits, and he admits also the organic change which precedes it. Did Mr Locke then contend for any thing more, for that fourth thing, the idea, distinct from the perception,—over which Dr Reid supposes himself to have triumphed? That he did *not* contend for any thing more, nor conceive the *idea* to be any thing different from the *perception itself*, is sufficiently apparent from innumerable passages both of his Essay itself, and of his admirable defence of the great doctrines of his Essay, in his controversy with Bishop Stillingfleet. He repeatedly states, that he uses the word *idea* as synonymous with conception or notion, in the common use of those terms; his only reason for preferring it to notion, (which assuredly Dr Reid could not suppose to mean any thing distinct from the mind,) being, that the term *notion* seems to him better limited to a particular class of ideas, those which he technically terms mixed modes. That ideas are not different from perceptions is clearly expressed by him. "To ask at what time a man has first any ideas," he says, "is to ask when he begins to perceive; having ideas and perception being the same thing."* If he speaks of our senses as the inlets to our ideas, the metaphor is surely a very obvious one; or, if any one will still contend, that what is said metaphorically must have been intended really, it must be remembered, that he uses precisely the same metaphor in cases in which the real application of it is absolutely impossible; as, for example, with respect to our perceptions or sensations, and that, if we are to understand, from his use of such metaphors, that he believed the ideas, thus introduced, to be distinct from the mind, we must understand, in like manner, that he believed our sensations and perceptions, introduced in like manner, to be also things self-existing, and capable of being admitted, at certain inlets, into the mind as their recipient. "Our senses, conversant about particular sensible objects, do convey," he says, "into the mind, several distinct perceptions of things, according to those various ways wherein those objects do affect them."† "The senses are avenues provided by nature for the reception of sensations."‡ I cannot but think that these, and the similar passages that occur in the Essay, ought, of themselves, to have convinced Dr Reid, that he who thus spoke of *perceptions* conveyed into the mind, and of avenues provided for the reception of *sensations*, might also, when he spoke of the conveyance of ideas into the mind, and of avenues for the reception of ideas, have meant nothing more than the simple external origin of those notions, or conceptions, or feelings, or affections of mind, to which he gave the name of ideas; especially when there is not a single argument in his Essay, or in any of his works, that is founded on the substantial reality of our ideas, as separate and distinct things in the mind. I

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* Pope.
† On the Intellectual Powers, Essay II. chap. xii.

* Essay concerning Human Understanding, B. ii. chap. i sect. 9.
† Sect. 3. ‡ Sect. 12.

shall refer only to one additional passage, which I purposely select, because it is, at the same time, very full of the particular figures that have misled Dr Reid, and shows, therefore, what the true meaning of the author was, at the time at which he used these figures.

"The other way of retention, is the power to revive again in our minds those ideas, which, after imprinting, have disappeared, or have been, as it were, laid aside out of sight; and thus we do, when we conceive heat or light, yellow or sweet, the object being removed. This is memory, which is, as it were, the store-house of our ideas. For, the narrow mind of man not being capable of having many ideas under view and consideration at once, it was necessary to have a repository to lay up those ideas, which at another time it might have use of. But our ideas being nothing but actual perceptions in the mind, which cease to be any thing when there is no perception of them, this laying up of our ideas in the repository of the memory signifies no more but this, that the mind has a power in many cases to revive perceptions which it has once had, with this additional perception annexed to them, that it has had them before. And in this sense it is, that our ideas are said to be in our memories, when indeed they are actually nowhere, but only there is an ability in the mind, when it will, to revive them again, and, as it were, paint them anew on itself, though some with more, some with less difficulty; some more lively, and others more obscurely."*

The doctrine of this truly eminent philosopher, therefore, is, that the presence of the external object, and the consequent organic change, are followed by an idea, "which is nothing but the actual perception;" and that the laying up of these ideas in the memory signifies nothing more, than that the mind has, in many cases, a power to revive perceptions which it has once had. All this, I conceive, is the very doctrine of Dr Reid on the subject; and to have confuted Mr Locke, therefore, if it had been possible for him, must have been a very unfortunate confutation, as it would have been also to have confuted as completely the very opinions on the subject which he was disposed himself to maintain.

I may now proceed further back, to another philosopher of great eminence, whose name, unfortunately for its reputation, is associated more with his political and religious errors, than with his analytical investigations of the nature of the phenomena of thought. The author to whom I allude is Hobbes, without all question one of the most acute intellectual inquirers of the country and age in which he lived. As the physiology of the mind, in Britain at least, seemed at that time to be almost a new science, he was very generally complimented by his contemporary poets, as the discoverer of a *new land*. Some very beautiful Latin verses, addressed to him, I quoted to you in a former lecture, in which it was said, on occasion of his work on Human Nature, that the mind, which had before known all things, was now, for the first time, made known to itself,—

"Omnia hactenus
Quæ nosse potuit, nota jam primum est sibi;"

and in which he was said, in revealing the mind, to have performed a work, next in divinity to that of creating it:

"Divinum est opus
Animum creare, proximum huic ostendere."

By Cowley, who styles him "the discoverer of the golden lands of new philosophy," he is compared to Columbus, with this difference, that the world, which that great navigator found, was left by him rude and neglected, to the culture of future industry; while that which Hobbes discovered might be said to have been at once explored by him and civilized. The eloquence of his strong and perspicuous style, I may remark by the way, seems to have met with equal commendation, from his poetical panegyrists, with whom, certainly not from the excellence of his own verses, he appears to have been in singular favour. His style is thus described, in some verses of Sheffield, Duke of Buckingham:

"Clear as a beautiful transparent skin,
Which never hides the blood, yet holds it in;
Like a delicious stream it ever ran,
As smooth as woman, but as strong as man."*

The opinions of Hobbes, on the subject which we are considering, are stated at length, in that part of his Elements of Philosophy which he has entitled *Physica*; and, far from justifying Dr Reid's assertion, with respect to the general ideal system of philosophers, may be considered in this important respect, as far, at least, as relates to the unity of the idea and the perception itself, as similar to his own. Sensation or perception he traces to the impulse of external objects, producing a motion along the nerves towards the brain, and a consequent reaction outwards, which he seems to think, very falsely indeed, may account for the reference to the object as external. This hypothesis, however, is of no

* Essay concerning Human Understanding, B. ii. chap. x. sect. 2.

* On Hobbes and his Writings, v. 37—40.—Works, p. 180, 4to edit.

consequence. The only important point, in reference to the supposed universality of the system of ideas, is whether this philosopher of another age asserted the existence of ideas as intermediate things, distinct from the mere perception; and on this subject he is as explicit as Dr Reid himself could be. The idea, or *phantasma*, as he terms it, is the very perception or *actus sentiendi*. "Phantasma enim est sentiendi actus; neque differt a sensione aliter quam *fieri* differt a *factum esse*."* The same doctrine, and I may add also, the same expression of the unity of the *actus sentiendi* and the *phantasma*, are to be found in various other parts of his works.

I may, however, proceed still further back, to an author of yet wider and more varied genius, one of those extraordinary men whom Nature gives to the world for her mightiest purposes, when she wishes to change the aspect, not of a single science merely, but of all that can be known by man; that illustrious rebel, who, in overthrowing the authority of Aristotle, seemed to have acquired, as it were by right of conquest, a sway in philosophy as absolute, though not so lasting, as that of the Grecian despot. "Time," says one of the most eloquent of his countrymen, "has destroyed the opinions of Des Cartes. But his glory subsists still. He appears like one of those dethroned monarchs, who, on the very ruins of their empire, still seem born for the sovereignty of mankind."†

On the opinions of Des Cartes, with respect to perception, Dr Reid has dwelt at great length, and has not merely represented him as joining in that belief of ideas, distinct from perception, which he represents as the universal belief of philosophers, but has even expressed astonishment, that Des Cartes, whose general opinions might have led him to a different conclusion, should yet have joined in the common one. "The system of Des Cartes," he says, "is with great perspicuity and acuteness explained by himself, in his writings, which ought to be consulted by those who would understand it."‡ He probably was not aware, when he wrote these few lines, how important was the reference which he made, especially to those whom he was addressing; since the more they studied the view which he has given of the opinions of Des Cartes, the more necessary would it become for them to consult the original author.

"It is to be observed," he says, "that Des Cartes rejected a part only of the ancient theory concerning the perception of external objects by the senses, and that he adopted the other part. That theory may be divided into two parts,—the first, that images, species, or forms of external objects, come from the object, and enter by the avenues of the senses to the mind; the second part is, that the external object itself is not perceived, but only the species or image of it in the mind. The first part Des Cartes and his followers rejected, and refuted by solid arguments; but the second part, neither he nor his followers have thought of calling in question; being persuaded that it is only a representative image, in the mind, of the external object that we perceive, and not the object itself. And this image, which the Peripatetics called a species, he calls an idea, changing the name only, while he admits the thing."*—"Des Cartes, according to the spirit of his own philosophy, ought to have doubted of both parts of the Peripatetic hypothesis, or to have given his reasons, why he adopted one part, as well as why he rejected the other part; especially since the unlearned, who have the faculty of perceiving objects by their senses, in no less perfection than philosophers, and should therefore know, as well as they, what it is they perceive, have been unanimous in this, that the objects they perceive are not ideas in their own minds, but things external. It might have been expected, that a philosopher, who was so cautious as not to take his own existence for granted, without proof, would not have taken it for granted, without proof, that every thing he perceived was only ideas in his own mind."†

All this might certainly have been expected, as Dr Reid says, if the truth had not been, that the opinions of Des Cartes are precisely opposite to the representation which he has given of them,—that, far from believing in the existence of images of external objects, as the immediate causes or antecedents of perception, he strenuously contends against them. The presence of the external body,—the organic change, which he conceives to be a sort of motion of the small fibrils of the nerves and brain,—and the affection of the mind, which he expressly asserts to have no resemblance whatever to the motion that gave occasion to it,—these are all which he conceives to constitute the process of perception, without any idea, as a thing distinct,—a fourth thing intervening between the organic and the mental change. And this process is exactly the process which Dr Reid himself supposes, with this only difference,—an unimportant one for the present argument,—that Dr Reid, though he admits *some* intervening organic change, does not state, positively, what he conceives to

* Elementa Philosophiæ, pars IV. c. xxv. sect. 3.
† Thomas.
‡ On the Intellectual Powers, Essay II. c. 8.

* On the Intellectual Powers, Essay II. c. 8.
† Ibid.

be its nature, while the French philosopher supposes it to consist in a motion of the nervous fibrils. The doctrine of Des Cartes is to be found, very fully stated, in his *Principia Philosophiæ*, in his *Dioptrics*, and in many passages of his small controversial works. He not merely rejects the Peripatetic notion of images or shadowy films, the resemblances of external things, received by the senses,—contending, that the mere organic affection—the motion of the nervous fibrils—is sufficient, without any such images, "diversos motus tenuium uniuscujusque nervi capillamentorum sufficere ad diversos sensus producendum;" and proving this by a very apposite case, to which he frequently recurs, of a blind man determining the dimensions of bodies by comprehending them within two crossed sticks,—in which case, he says, it cannot be supposed that the sticks transmit, through themselves, any images of the body; but he even proceeds to account for the common prejudice, with respect to the use of images in perception, ascribing it to the well-known effect of pictures in exciting notions of the objects pictured. "Such is the nature of the mind," he says, "that, by its very constitution, when certain bodily motions take place, certain thoughts immediately arise, that have no resemblance whatever, as images, to the motions in consequence of which they arise. The thoughts which words, written or spoken, excite, have surely no resemblance to the words themselves. A slight change in the motion of a pen may produce, in the reader, affections of mind the most opposite; nor is it any reply to this to say, that the characters traced by the pen are only occasions that excite the mind itself to form opposite images,—for the case is equally striking when no such image can be formed, and the feeling is the immediate result of the application of the external body. When a sword has pierced any part, is not the feeling excited as different altogether from the mere motion of the sword, as colour, or sound, or smell, or taste; and since we are sure, in the case of the mere pain from the sword, that no image of the sword is necessary, ought we not to extend the same inference, by analogy, to all the other affections of our senses, and to believe these also to depend, not on any images, or things transmitted to the brain, but on the mere constitution of our nature, by which certain thoughts are made to arise in consequence of certain corporeal motions?" The passage is long, indeed, but it is so clear, and so decisive, as to the misrepresentation by Dr Reid of the opinion which he strangely considered himself as confuting, that I cannot refrain from quoting the original, that you may judge for yourselves, of the real meaning, which a translation might be supposed to have erred in conveying.

"Probatur deinde, talem esse nostræ mentis naturam, ut ex eo solo quod quidam motus in corpore fiant ad quaslibet cogitationes, nullam istorum motuum imaginem referentes, possit impelli; et speciatim ad illas confusas, quæ sensus, sive sensationes dicuntur. Nam videmus, verba, sive ore prolata sive tantum scripta, quaslibet in animis nostris cogitationes et commotiones excitare. In eadem charta, cum eodem calamo et atramento, si tantum calami extremitas certo modo supra chartam ducatur, literas exarabit, quæ cogitationes præliorum, tempestatum, furiarum, affectusque indignationis et tristitiæ in lectorum animis concitabunt; si vero alio modo fere simili calamus moveatur, cogitationes valde diversas, tranquillitatis, pacis, amœnitatis, affectusque plane contrarios amoris et lætitiæ efficiet. Respondebitur fortasse, scripturam vel loquelam nullos affectus, nullasque rerum a se diversarum imaginationes immediate in mente excitare, sed tantummodo diversas intellectiones; quarum deinde occasione anima ipsa variarum rerum imagines in se efformat. Quid autem dicetur de sensu doloris et titillationis? Gladius corpori nostro admovetur; illud scindit; ex hoc solo sequitur dolor; qui sane non minus diversus est à gladii, vel corporis quod scinditur, locali motu, quam color, vel sonus, vel odor, vel sapor. Atque ideo cum clare videamus, doloris sensum in nobis excitari ab eo solo, quod aliquæ corporis nostri partes contactû alicujus alterius corporis localiter moveantur, concludere licet, mentem nostram esse talis naturæ, ut, ab aliquibus etiam motibus localibus, omnium aliorum sensuum affectiones pati possit.

"Præterea non deprehendimus ullam differentiam inter nervos, ex qua liceat judicare, aliud quid per unos, quam alios, ab organis sensuum externorum ad cerebrum pervenire, vel omnino quidquam eo pervenire præter ipsorum nervorum motum localem."*

It is scarcely possible to express more strongly, or illustrate more clearly, an opinion so exactly the reverse of that doctrine of perception, by the medium of representative ideas or images, ascribed by Dr Reid to its illustrious author. It would not be more unjust, ever after all his laborious writings on the subject, to rank the supposed confuter of the ideal system, as himself one of its most strenuous champions, than to make this charge against Des Cartes, and to say of him, in Dr Reid's words, that "the image which the Peripatetics called a species, he calls an idea, changing the name only, while he admits the thing."†

To these authors, whose opinions, on the subject of perception, Dr Reid has miscon-

* Principia Philosophiæ, Pars IV. Sect. 196.—p. 190, 191. *Amst.* 1664.

† On the Intellectual Powers, Essay II. chap. viii.

ceived, I may add one, whom even he himself allows to have shaken off the ideal system, and to have considered the idea and the perception, as not distinct, but the same, a modification of the mind, and nothing more. I allude to the celebrated Jansenist writer, Arnauld, who maintains this doctrine as expressly as Dr Reid himself, and makes it the foundation of his argument in his controversy with Mallebranche. But, if I were to quote to you every less important writer, who disbelieved the reality of ideas or images, as things existing separately and independently, I might quote to you almost every writer, British and foreign, who, for the last century, and for many years preceding it, has treated of the mind. The narrow limits of a Lecture have forced me to confine my notice to the most illustrious.

Of all evidence, however, with respect to the prevalence of opinions, the most decisive is that which is found, not in treatises read only by a few, but in the popular elementary works of science of the time, the general text-books of schools and colleges. I shall conclude this long discussion, therefore, with short quotations from two of the most distinguished and popular authors, of this very useful class.

The first is from the logic or rather the pneumatology of Le Clerc, the friend of Locke. In his chapter on the nature of ideas, he gives the history of the opinions of philosophers on this subject, and states among them the very doctrine which is most forcibly and accurately opposed to the ideal system of perception. "Others," he says, "hold that ideas and the perception of ideas are absolutely the same in themselves, and differ merely in our relative applications of them: that same feeling of the mind, which is termed an idea, in reference to the object which the mind considers, is termed a perception, when we speak of it relatively to the percipient mind; but it is only of one modification of the mind that we speak, in both cases." According to these philosophers, therefore, there are, in strictness of language, no ideas distinct from the mind itself. "Alii putant ideas et perceptiones idearum easdem esse, licet relationibus differant. Idea, uti censent, propriè ad objectum refertur, quod mens considerat;—perceptio, verò, ad mentem ipsam quæ percipit; sed duplex illa relatio ad unam modificationem mentis pertinet. Itaque secundùm hosce philosophos, nullæ sunt, propriè loquendo, ideæ à mente nostra distinctæ."* What is it, I may ask, which Dr Reid considers himself as having added to this very philosophic view of perception? and, if he added nothing, it is surely too much to ascribe to him the merit of detecting errors, the counter statement to which had long formed a part of the elementary works of the schools.

In addition to these quotations,—the number of which may perhaps already have produced at least as much weariness as conviction,—I shall content myself with a single paragraph, from a work of De Crousaz, the author, not of one merely, but of many very popular elementary works of logic, and unquestionably one of the most acute thinkers of his time. His works abound with many sagacious remarks on the sources of the prejudice involved in that ideal system, which Dr Reid conceived himself the first to have overthrown; and he states, in the strongest language, that our ideas are nothing more than states or affections of our mind itself. "Cogitandi modi—quibus cogitatio nostra modificatur, quos induit alios post alios, sufficiunt, ut per eos ad rerum cognitionem veniat; nec sunt fingendæ ideæ, ab illis modificationibus diversæ."* I may remark, by the way, that precisely the same distinction of sensations and perceptions, on which Dr Reid founds so much, is stated and enforced in the different works of this ingenious writer. Indeed so very similar are his opinions, that if he had lived after Dr Reid, and had intended to give a view of that very system of perception which we have been examining, I do not think that he could have varied in the slightest respect from that view of the process which he has given in his own original writings.

It appears, then, that, so far is Dr Reid from having the merit of confuting the universal, or even general illusion of philosophers, with respect to ideas in the mind, as images or separate things, distinct from the perception itself, that his own opinions as to perception, on this point at least, are precisely the same as those which generally prevailed before. From the time of the decay of the Peripatetic Philosophy, the process of perception was generally considered as involving nothing more than the presence of an external object, an organic change or series of changes, and an affection of the mind immediately subsequent, without the intervention of any idea as a fourth separate thing between the organic and the mental affection. I have no doubt that, with the exception of Berkeley and Mallebranche, who had peculiar and very erroneous notions on the subject, all the philosophers, whom Dr Reid considered himself as opposing, would, if they had been questioned by him, have admitted, before they heard a single argument on his part, that their opinions, with respect to ideas, were precisely the same as his own; and what then

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* Clerici Pneumatologia, sect i. cap. v. subsect. 10.

* Tentamen Novum Metaphysicum, sect. xxxvii.—*Groningæ*, 1725.

would have remained for him to confute? He might, indeed, still have said, that it was absurd, in those who considered perception as a mere state or modification of the mind, to speak of ideas in their mind: but the very language, used by him for this purpose, would probably have contained some metaphor as little philosophic. We must still allow men to speak of ideas in their mind, if they will only consent to believe that the ideas are truly the mind itself variously affected; as we must still allow men to talk of the rising and setting of the sun, if they will only admit that the motion which produces those appearances is not in that majestic and tranquil orb, but in our little globe of earth, which, carrying along with it, in its daily revolution, all our busy wisdom, and still busier folly, is itself as restless as its restless inhabitants.

That a mind, so vigorous as that of Dr Reid, should have been capable of the series of misconceptions which we have traced, may seem wonderful, and truly is so; and equally, or rather still more wonderful, is the general admission of his merit in this respect. I trust it will impress you with one important lesson, —which could not be taught more forcibly, than by the errors of so great a mind,—that it will always be necessary for you to consult the opinions of authors,—when their opinions are of sufficient importance to deserve to be accurately studied,—in their own works, and not in the works of those who profess to give a faithful account of them. From my own experience, I can most truly assure you, that there is scarcely an instance in which, on examining the works of those authors whom it is the custom more to cite than to read, I have found the view which I had received of them to be faithful. There is usually something more or something less, which modifies the general result; some mere conjecture represented as an absolute affirmation, or some limited affirmation extended to analogous cases, which it was not meant to comprehend. And, by the various additions or subtractions, thus made, in passing from mind to mind, so much of the spirit of the original doctrine is lost, that it may, in some cases, be considered as having made a fortunate escape, if it be not at last represented as directly opposite to what it is. It is like those engraved portraits of the eminent men of former ages, the copies of mere copies, from which every new artist, in the succession, has taken something, or to which he has added something, till not a lineament remains the same. If we are truly desirous of a faithful likeness, we must have recourse once more to the original painting.

LECTURE XXVIII.

ON DR REID'S SUPPOSED PROOF OF A MATERIAL WORLD—ON VISION—AND ANALYSIS OF THE FEELINGS ASCRIBED TO IT.

In my Lecture of yesterday, Gentlemen, we were engaged in considering the grounds of Dr Reid's claim to the honour of detecting and exposing the fallacy of the hypothesis of ideas, as images, or things, in the mind, distinct from the mind itself,—a claim which, though made by one who has many other indubitable titles to our respect and gratitude, we found, in this particular instance, to be inadmissible.

It appeared, on an examination of the original works of the eminent philosophers who preceded him for more than a century, and even of the common elementary treatises of the schools, that, though, after the Peripatetic hypothesis of species had been universally or generally abandoned, the language of that hypothesis continued to subsist metaphorically, —as it continues with equal force at this moment,—it was only metaphorically that it did thus continue; and that when Dr Reid, therefore, conceived,—in proving ideas not to be self-existing things, separate and distinct from the percipient mind itself,—that he was confuting what every body believed, he merely assumed as real what was intended as metaphorical, and overthrew opinions which the authors, to whom he ascribes them, would themselves have been equally eager to overthrow. But there is yet another point, connected with the theory of perception, on which he is believed to have made an important addition to our metaphysical knowledge. I allude to his supposed proof of the existence of a material world. In this, too, we shall find, that he has truly added nothing to our former knowledge; that he has left us, in short, our belief as originally felt by us, but has not supplied us with the slightest evidence in addition to the force of that original belief itself, nor given any additional strength to that very belief, which before was confessedly irresistible.

The confutation of the scepticism on this subject, it is evident, may be attempted in two ways; by showing the arguments urged by the sceptic to be logically false, or by opposing to them the belief itself, as of evidence either directly intuitive, or the result, at least, of other intuitions, and early and universal associations and inferences, so irresistible after the first acquisitions of infancy, as to have then all the force of intuition itself. As long as Dr Reid confines himself to the latter of these pleas, he proceeds on safe ground; but his footing is not so firm when he assails the mere logic of the sceptic;

for the sceptical argument, as a mere play of reasoning, admits of no reply. It is vain for him to say, that the scepticism proceeding, as he thinks, on the belief of ideas in the mind, as the direct objects of perception, must fall with these ideas; for, though the scepticism may be consistent with the belief of ideas as separate existences in the mind, it does not depend, in the slightest degree, on their existence or non-existence. We have only to change the term *ideas* into the synonymous phrase *affections or states of the mind*, and the scepticism, if not stronger, is at least in strength exactly what it was before. In the one case the sceptic will say, that we are sensible of ideas only, not of external objects, which may have no resemblance to our ideas; in the other case, that perception is but a state of the mind as much as any of our other feelings, and that we are conscious only of this, and other states or affections of our mind, which have variously succeeded each other, and not of external objects, which themselves can be no parts of that train of mental consciousness. Whatever weight there may be in the former of these sceptical theories, exists, I may say, even with greater force, because with greater simplicity, in the second; and the task, therefore, of proving by logic, if logical proof were requisite for our belief, the existence of a material world, would remain as laborious as before, after the fullest confutation of the systems which might suppose perception to be carried on by the medium of little images of bodies in the mind.

So far, indeed, would the confutation of this hypothesis as to perception, even if Dr Reid had truly overthrown it, be from lessening the force of the scepticism as to the existence of matter, that, of two sceptics, one believing every thing with respect to ideas which Dr Reid supposed himself to have confuted, and the other believing ideas to be mere states of his mind, there can be no question that the former would be the more easy to be overcome, since his belief would already involve the existence of *something* separate from the mind; while the other might maintain, that all of which he was conscious, was the mere series of affections of his own mind, and that beyond this consciousness he could know nothing.

Against the argument of one, who founds his very argument on his consciousness merely, and professes to have no knowledge either of little images, or of any thing else beyond his consciousness, it would be as idle to urge, that ideas are not little images in the mind, as it would have been for a Cartesian to attempt to confute the Newtonian system of attraction, by a denial of the Ptolemaic spheres.

All that remains, then, to supply the place of logical demonstration, which would be needless where the belief is as strong as that of demonstration itself, is the paramount force of this universal and irresistible belief; and there is no fear that this can be weakened by any argument, or be less felt by him who denies it than by him who asserts it. We are conscious, indeed, only of the feelings that are the momentary states of our own mind; but some of these it is absolutely impossible for us not to ascribe to causes that are external, and independent of us; and the belief of a system of external things is one of these very states of the mind which itself forms, and will ever form, a part of the train of our consciousness. This Mr Hume himself, the great sceptic whom Dr Reid opposes, admits as readily as Dr Reid himself:—"A Copernican or Ptolemaic, who supports each his different system of astronomy, may hope to produce a conviction which will remain constant and durable with his audience. A Stoic or Epicurean displays principles which may not only be durable, but which have an effect on conduct and behaviour. But a Pyrrhonian cannot expect that his philosophy will have any constant influence on the mind; or, if it had, that its influence would be beneficial to society. On the contrary, he must acknowledge, if he will acknowledge any thing, that all human life must perish were his principles universally and steadily to prevail. All discourse, all action would immediately cease; and men remain in a total lethargy, till the necessities of nature, unsatisfied, put an end to their miserable existence. It is true, so fatal an event is very little to be dreaded. Nature is always too strong for principle; and, though a Pyrrhonian may throw himself, or others, into a momentary amazement and confusion by his profound reasonings, the first and most trivial event in life will put to flight all his doubts and scruples, and leave him the same, in every point of action and speculation, with the philosophers of every other sect, or with those who never concerned themselves in any philosophical researches. When he awakes from his dream, he will be the first to join in the laugh against himself."* In what respect does this differ from the language of Dr Reid himself, when he says that "the belief of a material world is older, and of more authority, than any principles of philosophy. It declines the tribunal of reason, and laughs at all the artillery of the logician."† Surely, if it decline the tribunal of reason, it is not by reasoning that it is to be supported,—even though the reasoner should have the great talents which Dr Reid unquestionably possessed.

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* Essays—Inquiry concerning Human Understanding, Sect. xii. Part 2.

† Inquiry into the Human Mind, &c. Chap. v. Sect. 7.

The sceptic and the orthodox philosopher of Dr Reid's school thus come precisely to the same conclusion. The creed of each, on this point, is composed of two propositions, and of the same two propositions; the first of which is, that the existence of a system of things, such as we understand when we speak of an external world, cannot be proved by argument; and the second, that the belief of it is of a force which is paramount to that of argument, and absolutely irresistible. The difference, and the only difference is, that, in asserting the same two propositions, the sceptic pronounces the first in a loud tone of voice, and the second in a whisper,—while his supposed antagonist passes rapidly over the first, and dwells on the second with a tone of confidence. The negation in the one case, and the affirmation in the other case are, however, precisely the same in both. To him, indeed, who considers the tone only and not the meaning, there may seem to be a real strife of sentiment; but, if we neglect the tone, which is of no consequence, and attend to the meaning only of what is affirmed and denied by both, we shall not be able to discover even the slightest discrepance. There is no argument of mere reasoning that can prove the existence of an external world; it is absolutely impossible for us not to believe in the existence of an external world. We may call these two propositions, then, a summary of the doctrine of Reid or of the doctrine of Hume, as we please; for it is truly the common and equal doctrine of the two.

Though we have thus seen reason to deny to Dr Reid the merit commonly ascribed to him on the points which we have been considering relative to the theory of perception, I trust you will not, on that account, be insensible to the merits which he truly possessed. He knows little, indeed, of the human mind, who does not know how compatible many errors and misconceptions are with the brightest and most active energies of intellect. On this "isthmus of a middle state," of which Pope speaks, man, though not "reasoning but to err," is yet subject to occasional error even in his proudest reasonings. With all his wisdom, he is still but "darkly wise;" and, with all the grandeur of his being, but "rudely great."

VISION.

Our inquiry into the nature of the sensations of touch,—or at least of those sensations which are truly, and of others which are commonly, though I think falsely, ascribed to this organ, has led us into speculations, in the course of which I have been obliged to anticipate many remarks that more peculiarly belong to the sense which still remains to be considered by us—the sense of sight, that to which we owe so much of our most valuable information with respect to nature, and so many of those pleasures which the bounty of Him, who has formed us to be happy as well as to be wise, has so graciously intermingled with all the primary means of our instruction.

The anticipations into which I have been led were necessary for throwing light on the subjects before considered, particularly on the complex feelings ascribed to touch,—the knowledge of which feelings, however, was still more necessary for understanding fully the complex perceptions of this sense. It is thus scarcely possible, in science, to treat of one subject without considering it in relation to some other subject, and often to subjects between which, on first view, it would be difficult to trace any relation. Every thing throws light upon every thing,—though the reflection, which is, in many cases, so bright as to force itself upon common eyes, may, in other cases, be so faint as to be perceptible only to eyes of the nicest discernment. It may almost be said that there is an universal affinity in truths,—like that universal attraction which unites to each other, as one common system, the whole masses which are scattered through the infinity of space, and by which, as I have before remarked, the annihilation of a single particle of matter in any one of these orbs, however inconceivably slight its elementary modification might be of the general sum of attraction, would, in that very instant, be productive of change throughout the universe. It is not easy to say what any one science would have been if any other science had not existed. How different did astronomy become, in consequence of the accidental burning of a few sea-weeds upon the sand, to which the origin of glass has been ascribed; and, when we think of the universal accessions which navigation has made to every department of knowledge, what infinity of truths may be considered as almost starting into existence at the moment when the polarity of the magnet was first observed!

> "True to the pole, by thee the pilot guides
> His steady helm, amid the struggling tides,
> Braves with broad sail the unmeasurable sea,
> Cleaves the dark air, and asks no star but thee."*

The anticipations which have been made in the present instance will be of advantage in abridging much of the labour which would have been necessary in treating of vision simply. I may now safely leave you to make, for yourselves, the application of many argu-

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* Darwin's Botanic Garden, Canto II. v. 203—6.

ments on which I have dwelt at length, in treating of the other senses.

The organ of sight, as you well know, is the eye,—a machine of such exquisite and obvious adaptation to the effects produced by it, as to be, of itself, in demonstrating the existence of the Divine Being who contrived it, equal in force to many volumes of theology. The atheist, who has seen and studied its internal structure, and yet continues an atheist, may be fairly considered as beyond the power of mere argument to reclaim. The minute details of its structure, however, belong to the anatomist. It is enough for our purpose to know, that, by an apparatus of great simplicity, all the light, which, from every quarter, strikes on the pellucid part of the ball of the eye,—and which, if it continued to pass in the same direction, would thus produce one mingled and indistinct expanse of colour,—is so refracted, as it is termed, or bent from its former direction, to certain focal points, as to be distributed again on the retina, in distinct portions, agreeing with the portions which come from each separate object, so exactly, as to form on it a miniature landscape of the scenery without. Nor is this all. That we may vary, at our pleasure, the field of this landscape, the ball of the eye is furnished with certain muscles, which enable us to direct it more particularly toward the objects which we wish to view; and, according as the light which falls from these may be more or less intense, there are parts which minister to the sensibility of the eye, by increasing or diminishing in proportion the transparent aperture at which the light is admitted. There are, then, in this truly wonderful and beautiful process, in the first place, as determining what objects, in the wide scene around us, are to be visible at the moment, the contraction of certain muscles, on which the particular field of our vision depends, and which may almost be said to enable us to increase the extent of our field of vision, by enabling us to vary it at will;—in the second place, the external light, emitted from all the objects within this radiant field, which, on its arrival at the retina, is itself the direct object of vision;—in the third place, the provision for increasing or diminishing the diameter of the pupil, in proportion to the quantity of that incident light;—in the fourth place, the apparatus, by which the dispersed rays of light are made to assume, within the eye, the focal convergence necessary for distinct vision;—and lastly, the expansion of the optic nerve, as a part of the great sensorial organ essential to sensation. The difference of the phenomena, produced by the varieties of the external light itself, is exhibited in almost every moment of our waking existence; and the diversities, arising from other parts of the process, are not less striking. There are peculiar diseases which affect the optic nerve, or other parts of the sensorial organ immediately connected with it,—there are other diseases which affect the refracting apparatus,—others which affect the iris, so as to prevent the enlargement or diminution of the pupil, when different quantities of light are poured on it,—others which affect the muscles that vary the position of the ball,—and, in all these cases, we find, as might be expected, a corresponding difference of the phenomena.

To open our eyes at present, is not to have a single simple feeling; it is, as it were, to have innumerable feelings. The colour, the magnitude, the figure, the relative position of bodies, are seen by us at once. It is not a small expanse of light which we perceive, equal merely to the surface of the narrow expansion of the optic nerve. It is the universe itself. We are present with stars which beam upon us, at a distance that converts to nothing the whole wide diameter of our planetary system. It is as if the tie, which binds us down to the globe on which we dwell, belonged only to our other senses, and had no influence over this, which, even in its union with the body, seems still to retain all the power and unbounded freedom of its celestial origin.

It is of importance, however, to remember, that, even in the perception of the most distant body, the true object of vision is not the distant body itself, but the light that has reached the expansive termination of the optic nerve; and the sense of vision, therefore, which seems so independent of the tie that binds us to our small spot of earth, is as truly limited to it as any of our other senses. If the light could exist in the same manner, moving in the same varieties of direction, as at present,—though no other bodies were in existence than the light itself and our sensorial organ,—all the sensations belonging to mere sight would be exactly the same as now; and accordingly we find, as light is, in a great measure, manageable by us, that we have it in our power to vary, at pleasure, the visual notions, which any one would otherwise have formed of bodies,—without altering the bodies themselves, or even their position with respect to the eye,—by merely interposing substances, to modify the light reflected or emitted from them. The same paper which we term white, when we observe it with our naked eye, seems blue or red when we look at it through glass of such a kind as absorbs all the light which enters it but the rays of those particular colours; and it seems larger or smaller, as we look at it through a concave or convex lens, which leaves the object precisely as it was, and affects only the direction of the rays that come from it:—the reason of all which diversities of perception is, that, though what we are accustomed to term the *object* continues the same, whatever substance may be inter-

posed between it and the eye, that which is really the object of vision is different; and our perceptions, therefore, correspond with the diversity of their real objects.

In treating of the distinction which has been made, of those objects of sense which act directly on our organs, and of those which act through a *medium*, as it has been termed, I before remarked to you the confusion into which we might be led, by this distinction, which forgets that the supposed medium is itself the real object, as truly as any of the objects, which, in their relations to other senses, are termed direct. In no instance, however, has it led to so much confusion as in the case of vision. It is the more important, therefore, for you to have precise notions on this subject, and to have constantly in mind, that, though indirectly, we may be said to perceive by sight distant objects, as truly as we perceive colour, still the direct object of vision is not the object existing permanently at a distance, but those rays of light, whose existence is independent of the object, and which have received, from the object that reflects them, nothing more than a change of their direction, in consequence of which they have come within the boundary of that small pellucid circle of the eye, which, insignificant as it may seem, comprehends in itself what is truly the whole sphere of our vision.

Sight, then, which comprehends all the varieties of colour, is the object, and the only object, of the sense which we are considering. But, simple as it is, of what instruction, and joy, and beauty, and ever-varying magnificence, is it the source!

"Carmine quo Dea te dicam, gratissima cœli
Progenies, ortumque tuum; gemmantia rore
Ut per prata levi lustras, et floribus halans
Purpureum Veris gremium, scenamque virentem
Pingis, et umbriferos colles, et cærula regna?
Gratia te, Venerisque lepos, et mille Colorum,
Formarumque chorus sequitur, motusque decentes.
At caput invisum Stygiis Nox atra tenebris
Abdidit, horrendæque simul Formidinis ora,
Pervigilesque æstus Curarum, atque anxius Angor:
Undique Lætitia florent mortalia corda,
Purus et arridet largis fulgoribus Æther."*

"Hail, holy light, offspring of Heaven, first born!
Or of the Eternal, co-eternal beam,
May I express thee unblam'd? since God is light,
And never but in unapproached light
Dwelt from eternity; dwelt then in Thee,
Bright Effluence of bright Essence increate!
—Or hear'st thou rather, pure ethereal Stream!
Whose fountain who shall tell? Before the Sun,
Before the Heavens, *Thou* wert, and at the voice
Of God, as with a mantle didst invest
The rising world of waters dark and deep,
Won from the void and formless infinite."†

How pathetic is the very beauty of this invocation, when we consider the feelings with which it must have been written by him, who,

"Like the wakeful bird,
Sung *darkling*,"*

and who seems to have looked back on that loveliness of nature, from which he was separated, with the melancholy readiness with which the thoughts of the unfortunate and the sorrowful still revert to past enjoyments; as the prisoner, even when fettered to his dungeon-floor, still turns his eye, almost involuntarily, to that single gleam of light, which reminds him only of scenes that exist no longer to him.

"Thus with the year
Seasons return;—but *not to me* returns
Day, or the sweet approach of even or morn,
Or sight of vernal bloom, or summer's rose,
Or flocks, or herds, or human face divine;
But cloud instead, and ever-during dark
Surround me."†

How often must he have felt, and how deeply must such a mind have felt, the force of that complaint which he puts into the mouth of Sampson,—a complaint which may surely be forgiven, or almost forgiven to the blind:—

"O why was sight
To such a tender ball as the eye confined,
So obvious, and so easy to be quench'd;
And not, as feeling, through all parts diffused,
That she might look at will through every pore?"‡

The immediate object of vision, we have seen, then, is light, which gives rise to all the various sensations of colour; and, since the days of Berkeley, philosophers have, with scarcely any exception, admitted, that the knowledge of the distance, magnitude, and real figure of objects, which seems at present to be immediately received by sight, is the result of knowledge acquired by the other senses:—though they have,—I think without sufficient reason,—as universally supposed, that the superficial extension, of length and breadth, becomes known to us by sight originally;—that there is, in short, a visible figure of objects, corresponding with the picture which they form on the retina, and changing, therefore, with their change of position relatively to the eye,—and a tangible figure of objects, permanent and independent of their change of place; the latter being the real figure suggested by the former, nearly in the same manner as the conception of objects is suggested, by the arbitrary sounds, or written character, which denote them. The inquiry, with respect to the truth of this visible figure,

* Gray, de Princip. Cogit. lib. i. v. 85—96.
† Paradise Lost, Book III. v. 1—12.

* Paradise Lost, Book III. v. 38, 39.
† Ibid. v. 40—46.
‡ Sampson Agonistes, v. 93—97.

as a sensation, may, however, be omitted, till we have considered the former opinion, which respects the visual perception of distance, and of the figure and magnitude which are termed tangible.

If it had been duly considered, that it is light which is the true object of vision, and not the luminous body, the question, as far as it depends on reasoning *a priori*, exclusively of any instinctive connexions that might be supposed, could not have admitted of very long discussion. From whatever distance light may come, it is but the point of the long line which terminates at the retina, of which we are sensible; and this terminating point must be the same, whether the ray has come from a few feet of distance, or from many miles. The rays, that beam from the adjacent meadow, or the grove, are not nearer to my eye, at the instant of vision, than those which have been reflected from the mountain, on the very verge of the horizon, or from the cloud that hangs at an immeasurable distance above my head. The light, that converges on our eye, from all the stars of heaven, within what we term the field of our vision, is collected in a space that cannot be larger than the retina on which it falls. A cube or a sphere is represented to us, by the two dimensions of a coloured plane, variously shaded, as truly as by the object itself with its triple dimensions; and, in the determination of the exact correspondence of these double and triple dimensions, in all their varieties of relation to the eye, the whole art of perspective consists. A coin, of a single inch in diameter, when placed before the eye, and, of course, intercepting only an extent of light equal to the extent of its own surface, is sufficient to hide from us, by actual eclipse, the fields, and villages, and woods, that seemed stretched in almost endless continuity before us.

Unless, therefore, there be some instinctive and immediate suggestion, of certain distances, magnitudes, and figures, by certain varieties of the sensation of colour, there is nothing in the mere light itself, or in its relation to the eye at the moment of vision, which seems fit to communicate the knowledge of these. Not of distance; for the rays from distant objects, when they produce vision, are as near to the retina as the rays from objects that are contiguous to the eye. Not of real magnitude; for an object, with which we are familiar, appears to us of the same size, at distances, at which every thing merely visual is so completely changed, that its magnitude, as far as it depends on mere radiation, may be demonstrated, from the laws of optics, to be equal only to a half, or a tenth part of its apparent magnitude, when nearer. Not of figure; for, without the knowledge of longitudinal distance, we could not distinguish a sphere or a cube from a plane surface of two dimensions; and an object, with the shape of which we are familiar, appears to us of the same form in all directions; though it may be demonstrated, optically, that the visual figure, as far as it depends on mere radiation must vary with every variety of position.

I have said, that the knowledge of the real magnitude, figure, and position of bodies, could not be obtained immediately from the diversities of the mere surface of light at the retina; unless it were the suggestion of some instinctive principle, by which the one feeling was, originally and inseparably, connected with the other: I have made this exception, to prevent you from being misled by the works on this subject, so as to think, that the original perception of distance implies, in the very notion of it, a physical impossibility. Some diversity there evidently must be of the immediate sensation of sight, or of other feelings co-existing with it, when a difference of magnitude or figure is suggested: the visual affection, which is followed by the notion of a mile, cannot be the same as that which is attended with the notion of half a foot; nor that which is attended with the perception of a sphere, be the same as that which suggests a plane circular surface. Whatever the number of the varied suggestions of this kind may be, there must be, at least, an equal variety of the immediate sensations that give rise to them; and these corresponding series of sensations and suggestions may originally be associated together by an instinctive principle, as much as any other pairs of phenomena, the connexion of which we ascribe to instinct; or, in other words, suppose an adaptation of them to each other, by the gracious provision of the Power which formed us, for a purpose unforeseen by us, and unwilled at the moment. It is not more wonderful, *a priori*, that a sensation of colour should be immediately followed by a notion of a mile of distance, than that the irritation of the nostril, by any very stimulant odour, should be, immediately and involuntarily, followed by the sudden contraction of a distant muscular organ, like the diaphragm, which produces, in sneezing, the violent expiration necessary for expelling the acrid matter;—or that an increase of the quantity of light poured on the eye should be instantly, and without our consciousness, followed by a contraction of the transparent aperture. I am far from saying, that there truly is such an instinctive association of our original visual feelings, with corresponding notions of distance and magnitude, in the present case; for, at least in man, I believe the contrary. I mean only, that the question has, *a priori*, only greater probability on one side, not absolute certainty; and that experience is necessary before we can decide it with perfect confidence.

In the case of the other animals, there seems to be little reason to doubt, that the

tedious process, by which man may be truly said to learn to see, is not necessary for their visual perceptions. The calf, and the lamb, newly dropt into the world, seem to measure forms and distances with their eyes, as distinctly, or at least almost as distinctly, as the human reasoner measures them, after all the acquisitions of his long and helpless infancy. Of these races of our fellow-animals, Nature is at once the Teacher and the great Protectress,—supplying to them, immediately, the powers which are necessary for their preservation,—as, in the long continued affection of the human parent, she far more than compensates to man the early instincts which she has denied to him. If the other animals had to learn to see, in the same manner with ourselves, it would be scarcely possible that their existence should be preserved to the period at which the acquisitions necessary for accurate perception could be made; even though the hoof had been an instrument of touch and measurement as convenient as the hand. For this difference in the relative circumstances of their situation, the Almighty Being,—to whose universal benevolence nothing which he has created is too humble for his care,—has made sufficient provision, in giving them that early maturity, which makes them, for many months, the superiors of him who is afterwards to rule them with a sway that is scarcely conscious of effort.

"Hale are their young, from human frailties freed,
Walk unsustained, and, unsupported, feed.
They live *at once*,—forsake the dam's warm side,—
Take the wide world, with nature for their guide,—
Bound o'er the lawn, or seek the distant glade,
And find a home in each delightful shade."*

This instinctive suggestion, which, however subsequent it may be to the primary visual sensation, seems like immediate perception in the young of other races of animals, is a very strong additional proof, if any such were necessary, that there is no physical impossibility, in the supposition that a similar original suggestion may take place in man. The question, as I before said, becomes truly a question of observation and experiment.

But, in man, there is not that necessity for the instinct, which exists in the peculiar situation of the other animals; and we find, accordingly, that there is no trace of the instinct in him. It is long before the little nurseling shows that his eye has distinguished objects from each other, so as to fix their place. We are able almost to trace in his efforts the progress which he is gradually making;—and, in those striking cases, which are sometimes presented to us, of the acquisition of sight, in mature life, in consequence of a surgical operation,—after vision had been obstructed from infancy,—it has been found, that the actual magnitude and figure, and position, of bodies, were to be learned like a new language,—that all objects seemed equally close to the eye,—and that a sphere and a cube, of each of which the tangible figure was previously known, were not so distinguishable in the mere sensation of vision, that the one could be said, with certainty, to be the cube, and the other the sphere. In short, what had been supposed, with every appearance of probability, was demonstrated by experiment,—that we learn to see,—and that vision is truly, what Swift has paradoxically defined it to be, the *art of seeing things that are invisible.*

* Young's Paraphrase on a part of the Book of Job, v. 235—240.

LECTURE XXIX.

ANALYSIS OF THE FEELINGS ASCRIBED TO VISION—CONTINUED.

THE chief part of my last Lecture was employed in considering the Phenomena of Vision, and particularly in proving, that vision, simple and immediate, as it now seems to us, even in its most magnificent results, is truly the application of an art, of long and tedious acquirement; of that art with which we learn to measure forms and distances, with a single glance, by availing ourselves of the information, previously received from other sources;—the mixed product of innumerable observations, and calculations, and detections of former mistakes, which were the philosophy of our infancy, and each of which, separately, has been long forgotten, recurring to the mind, in after-life, with the rapidity of an instinct.

Of all the arts which man can acquire, this is, without question, the richest, both in wonder and in value; so rich in value, that if the race of man had been incapable of acquiring it, the very possibility of their continued existence seems scarcely conceivable; and so rich in subjects of wonder, that to be most familiar with these, and to study them with most attention, is to find at every moment new miracles of nature, worthy of still increasing admiration.

"Per te quicquid habet mundus, mirabile nobis,
Panditur; acceptumque tibi decus omne refertur
Terrarum. Gentes nequicquam interluit æstu
Vicinas pelagus; tu das superare viarum
Ardua, et obtutu Seston conjungis Abydo.
Nec maris angusti tantum discrimina solers
Decipis, oceanique moras: Tu sidera Cœli
Subjicis humanis oculis, et dissita longe
Das spectare loca, et Dias invisere sedes.
Nativa hinc quamvis ferimur gravitate deorsum
Ad Stygias sedes, Ditisque inamabile regnum,—

Mente tamen sursum rapti ad sublimia: molem
Exuimus terrenam, animosque æquamus Olympo."*

On this subject the remarks of Dr Reid, which I am about to quote, are not less just than they are strikingly expressed. "If we shall suppose an order of beings, endued with every human faculty but that of sight, how incredible would it appear to such beings, accustomed only to the slow informations of touch, that, by the addition of an organ, consisting of a ball and socket of an inch diameter, they might be enabled in an instant of time, without changing their place, to perceive the disposition of a whole army, or the order of a battle, the figure of a magnificent palace, or all the variety of a landscape? If a man were by feeling to find out the figure of the peak of Teneriffe, or even of St Peter's Church at Rome, it would be the work of a lifetime.

"It would appear still more incredible to such beings as we have supposed, if they were informed of the discoveries which may be made by this little organ in things far beyond the reach of any other sense: That by means of it we can find our way in the pathless ocean; that we can traverse the globe of the earth, determine its figure and dimensions, and delineate every region of it: Yea, that we can measure the planetary orbs, and make discoveries in the sphere of the fixed stars.

"Would it not appear still more astonishing to such beings, if they should be further informed, That, by means of this same organ, we can perceive the tempers and dispositions, the passions and affections of our fellow-creatures, even when they want most to conceal them? That when the tongue is taught most artfully to lie and dissemble, the hypocrisy should appear in the countenance to a discerning eye; and that, by this organ, we can often perceive what is straight and what is crooked in the mind as well as in the body?—How many mysterious things must a blind man believe, if he will give credit to the relations of those that see! Surely he needs as strong a faith as is required of a good Christian."†

The same observation has been put in a strong light, by the supposition, that it had been as uncommon to be born with the power of sight as it is now to be born incapable of it; in which case it has been truly said, that "the few who had this rare gift would appear as prophets or inspired teachers to the many."‡ The very easy predictions, thus made, would be found, constantly, or almost constantly, fulfilled, by those who could form no conception of the means by which the effects predicted were foreseen; and, wonderful as the dreams and visions of prophetic inspiration may appear, they surely could not seem more wonderful, as a medium of communication, than that by which the very secrets of the mind, and events apparently the most distant, were made known, through the intervention of a small ball like the eye.

In showing the manner by which we learn to combine, with our visual sensations, the knowledge obtained by touch, or, as I am rather inclined to think, for reasons formerly stated, the knowledge falsely ascribed to mere touch, it will not be necessary to go over the different varieties of figure, magnitude, distance. The most striking of these is distance, which, indeed, may be truly said to involve the other two; since the distance of an object is merely the extension of the long line that intervenes between the object and our eye, and the consequent magnitude of the intervening objects, and that which we consider, regarded as one extended whole. Of this one great whole, what we term the distant object is nothing more than the boundary. The cottage, at the end of the field, is a part of that compound magnitude, of which the field and the cottage are separately parts, exactly in the same manner as the wing of a house is a part of the compound magnitude of the whole building. The line of field which connects our eye with the cottage, may, indeed, be a longer line, but it is a line of precisely the same sort as that which connects the wings of the house with our organ of sight, or with each other.

It is vain to think of ascribing the perception of distance to the measurement of the different angles subtended by objects at different distances, or to an equally nice measurement of the different degrees of inclination of the axes of the eyes, necessary for distinct vision, in particular cases,—as if all men were instinctively geometers, and the peasant and the very idiot were incessantly occupied in measuring angles; for, if this measurement were truly instinctive, it would occur in infancy as in maturity, and be immediate, in those who have acquired the power of vision by that surgical operation to which I alluded in my last Lecture. But the most decisive of all considerations, with respect to this supposed geometry, is, that the angles, subtended by the object at its different distances, and the inclination of the optic axis, in the spontaneous accommodation of the eyes to the distinct vision of the object at different distances, though truly existing, to the mere optical examiner of the object, and the light and the eye, as one compound phenomenon, have no real existence, as feelings of the mind of the individual who sees, and are known but to very few of the immense multitudes, who, without the slightest acquaintance with geo-

* Judicium Paridis, v. 146—158. Ap. Mus. Anglican. vol. II. p. 274, edit. 1741.
† Inquiry into the Human Mind, &c. c. 6. sect. 1.
‡ Ibid. sect. 2.

metry, or the slightest knowledge of the very lines whose angles they are supposed to measure, are yet able to distinguish the distances of objects as accurately as the most expert mathematician. How is it possible that the angles, which remote objects make relatively to the eye, should be known originally, when the remote objects themselves are not known, but merely the points of light on the retina? In relation to the eye as the organ, and to the mind as originally sentient in vision, these points of light were truly all that existed. The light, indeed, traversed a certain space in passing from the object to the eye, and the lines of direction of the different rays, in arriving at one focal point at the retina, formed truly different angles. But the angles could not be known unless the radiant lines themselves were known; and of these the mind could have no knowledge. During the whole time of their convergence, till they reached the expansion of the optic nerve, the rays of light were as little capable of producing vision as darkness itself; and, when they reached the retina, the lines, and consequently the angles, existed no more. Of whatever use, therefore, such angles may be to the optician in laying down and illustrating the principles of his science, they are of no use in the actual living measurements of sight. Man may reason, indeed,—but he must reason from what he knows; and, therefore, if the determination of distance be the result of any judgment, it must be of a judgment formed from feelings which truly have or have had existence.

Such feelings, the elements of our visual judgments, it is not very difficult to discover.

The great principle, in this case, is the principle of association, by which the notions derived from touch,—or at least the notions which are commonly supposed to be derived from that sense, are suggested immediately by the visual feelings which co-existed with the sensations of touch; in the same manner as the words of a language, when a language has been fully learned, suggest whatever the words may have been used to denote. A child, whose eye has already learned to distinguish objects, hears the word *cup* frequently repeated when a cup is held before him; and the word afterwards suggests the thing. This process every one understands. But we are not equally aware, that, in the prior stage of learning to distinguish the cup by the eye, the child went through a process exactly similar,—that the visual feeling, which the rays of light from the cup excited, co-existed with the tactual and muscular feeling when he handled the cup; and that the one feeling was thus associated, for ever after, with the other.

The means by which we acquire our knowledge of the distance of objects may be reduced to three,—the difference of the affections of the optic nerve,—the different affections of the muscles employed in varying the refracting power of each eye, according to the distance of objects, and in producing that particular inclination of the axes of the two eyes, which directs them both equally on the particular object,—and thirdly, the previous knowledge of the distance of other objects, which form, with that which we are considering, a part of one compound perception.

To begin, then, with the affections of the retina. These become signs of distance in two ways,—by the extent of the part of the retina affected, and by the more or less vivid affection of the part.

It is evident, from the laws of optics, that, according to the distance of the object from the eye, there must, when all other circumstances are the same, be a difference of the extent of the retina on which the light falls. This illuminated portion of the nervous expanse, as supposed to be instantly perceived, is what is termed the visible figure of an object; and, though I am disposed to question the knowledge which the mind is believed to acquire of this figure, from the mere sensation of colour, to which the affection of the retina gives rise, I am far from denying that the sensation itself, whatever it may originally be, will be different according to the extent of the retina affected, as the sensation of heat is different according to the extent of the surface, which has grown warmer or colder; or of fragrance, according as a small number of odorous particles have acted on a portion of the surface of the organ of smell, or a greater number of these on a greater portion of that surface. The different feelings, then, when more or less of the retina has been affected, are capable of being associated with other feelings which may co-exist with them. An object held at the distance of a foot from the eye affects one part of the retina,—held at arm's length, it affects less of the retina; and this difference, not, indeed, as perceived in figure, but as perceived in the variety, whatever that may originally be, of the resulting sensation, being found constant and uniform, becomes, of itself, significant of the distance.

Another mode, in which the affection of the retina becomes significant of distance, is by the brightness or dimness of the visible figure, and its distinctness or indistinctness of outline; or, as I would rather say, by the peculiar sensations, without regard to figure, which accompany those varieties of light. Since, at a distance, less light falls from objects on the eye, and their outline becomes less definite, a new measure is thus obtained, in addition to that which is derived from the mere difference in extent of the retina affected. In the illusion of this spontaneous measurement consists the chief magic of the painter's art. By different shades of colour he produces corresponding perceptions of dis-

tance; and thus, making one part of a plane surface seem more remote than another, converts it, as far as the mere eye can judge, into a cube or sphere, or any other solid which he chooses to present to us. By the indistinct outline which he gives to the small figures in the back ground of a landscape, he leads us to consider them not as diminutive in themselves, which we should conceive them to be, if, with equal smallness, their outline were clearer, but merely as less or more remote. He is thus able to vary his figures in three ways, to make them larger or smaller, more or less bright, and more or less precisely defined; and, by uniting these varieties in various proportions, to distinguish not merely what is large from what is small, but the diminutive from the distant, and the gigantic from the near.

Accordingly we find, that, in circumstances in which the medium of transmission of light from objects is much altered, our perception of distance and magnitude becomes less accurate. In a fog, objects appear to us greatly magnified; because the effect produced on the retina, in the extent of the visible figure, and its dimness and indefinite outline, is truly the same as when a larger object, in the common state of the atmosphere, is seen by us at a distance. From the same principle, objects seen under a brighter sky, and in purer air, seem nearer than they really are, to those whose notions of distance have been acquired in a less happy climate. This has been remarked by travellers in Italy, and particularly by one of the most illustrious of those who have visited that beautiful country,—a traveller, whose attention had been particularly turned to observations of this sort. The very acute observer, of whom I speak, is Berkeley, in whose Theory of Vision there is to be found a very interesting section, in which he at once describes this impression and accounts for it.

Our affections of the retina, then, both in the extent of the nervous expansion affected, and in the species of affection, afford one set of feelings, with which the notion of distance may be associated, in the same manner as the sounds or visual characters of a language may be associated with the conceptions which they denote, or any other feelings with any other feelings.

The next set of feelings which we have to consider, in relation to our perception of distance, belong to a class, of the importance of which I have had frequent occasion to speak, —*the muscular feelings*: in the contraction of those muscles which adapt the nice refracting apparatus in each eye to the degree of refraction necessary for distinct vision in the particular case, and produce that inclination of the axis of vision to each other, which is necessary for directing both eyes equally on the object. The muscular feeling may be slight indeed, but still it is sufficient to modify, in some degree, the whole compound sensation of the moment. One degree of contraction is attended with a particular feeling; another degree with a different feeling; and, as there are various muscles subservient to the motions of the eyes, some of which are exerted while others are quiescent,—the feeling, it is evident, must vary, not with the degree of contraction merely, but also with the muscles contracted. A certain muscular feeling, however simple or complex, accompanies the mere visual sensation, and blends with it; and it is with this compound feeling, muscular and visual, that the notion of distance is associated.

The muscular adaptation, however, it may be remarked, seems, in a great measure, to imply the very knowledge which it is supposed to give; since we cannot, instantly and voluntarily, adapt our eyes to the state necessary for distinct vision, at a particular distance, unless we have previously known that particular distance. The necessary adaptation, however, if it be not the result of a rapid change of various degrees of contraction in each particular case, may depend, not on our knowledge and will, but on an instinctive connexion of certain motions with certain feelings, in which there is as little consciousness of design, as in that very analogous instinct, or connexion of motions with feelings, which increases or diminishes the diameter of the pupil, according to the quantity of light which is poured upon the eye, when the individual, far from willing the contraction, does not know even that such a contraction has taken place.

A third element, in the calculation of the distance of an object, is the previous knowledge of the distance of other objects, which form together with it one compound perception. Thus, when we look along a road, and observe a man on horseback, who has nearly approached a house which we know, we have of course little difficulty in determining the distance of the rider. Every one must have felt how much easier his judgments of the distance of moving objects are, in scenes with which he is in some degree acquainted, than in a country which is new to him; and what aid the interposition of a variety of objects gives, even though we may not be well acquainted with the exact extent and distance of each. To an inexperienced eye, therefore, in a first voyage, a ship at a distance seems far nearer than it truly is, from the absence of varied intervening objects in the line between. Even in the case of a river, which is not so broad as to prevent us from distinguishing objects on the opposite side, it is with great difficulty that we attempt to guess the distance, with any approach to exactness. There is a constant tendency to

suppose the breadth of the river less than it is, and consequently the objects on the opposite bank nearer than they are. For the same reason, the horizontal line, in which innumerable objects intervene between the eye and the horizon, appears so much longer than the line of altitude of the meridian, that the vault of the sky does not seem a hemisphere, but a far smaller segment of a great sphere. On this subject, however, rich as it is in illustration, my time will not allow me to dwell longer. But I regret this the less, as the subject is one of those, which, in the department of optics, come under the consideration of one of my colleagues, whose happy genius has the art of describing fully what the narrow compass of his lectures may have obliged him to state briefly; and who leaves little for others to add, even on subjects to which he alludes only for incidental illustration.

These few very slight remarks, however, will be sufficient to show, in what manner the notion of distance may be associated with mere visual feelings, that in themselves originally involve no notion of distance, as the words of a language, which, in themselves, either as sounds or characters, involve no relation to one object more than to another, become instantly significant of particular objects, and excite emotions of love or joy, or hate, or indignation, like the very presence of some living friend or foe.

It has been very justly remarked, that, if all men had uniformly spoken the same language, in every part of the world, it would be difficult for us not to think that there is a natural connexion of our ideas and the words which we use to denote them; and it is not wonderful, therefore, that a similar illusion should take place with respect to what may be termed the universal language of vision; since, in the case of visual perception, all men may be truly said to have the same language; the same sensations of sight being to all significant of magnitude and distance. And it is well that the judgments which we form, on these important points, are thus prompt and spontaneous; for if we had to wait till we had calculated the distance and magnitude of every thing around us, by a measurement of angles, we should be cut off, in our optical career, before we could, with all our geometry, determine, with precision, whether the things which we needed most, or the objects of greatest peril to us, were ten or a thousand paces distant, and whether they were of the bulk of a molehill or of a mountain.

A miniature image of the objects which we see, is pictured on the retina in an inverted position; and though an image is pictured in each eye, we see not two objects but one. To philosophers, who are even more expert in finding mysteries than in solving them, this single vision of the erect object, from a double image of the object inverted, has usually seemed very mysterious; and yet there is really nothing in it at all mysterious to any one who has learned to consider how much of the visual perception is referable to association. If the light, reflected from a single object touched by us, had produced not two merely, but two thousand separate images in our eyes, erect or inverted, or in any intermediate degree of inclination, the visual feeling thus excited, however complex, would still have accompanied the touch of a single object; and if only it had accompanied it uniformly, the single object would have been suggested by it, precisely in the same manner as it is now suggested by the particular visual feeling that attends the present double inverted image. To this supposed anomaly in the language of vision, a perfect analogy is to be found in the most obvious cases of common language. The two words *he conquered*, excite exactly the same notion as the single Latin word *vicit*; and if any language were so paraphrastic as to employ ten words for the same purpose, there would be no great reason for philosophic wonder at the unity of the notion suggested by so many words. The two images of the single object, in the arbitrary language of visual perception, are, as it were, two words significant of one notion.

Whatever the simple original sensation of vision may be, then, it is capable of being associated with other notions, so as to become significant of them. But to what does the simple original sensation itself amount? Is it mere colour,—or is it something more?

The universal opinion of philosophers is, that it is not colour merely which it involves, but extension also,—that there is a visible figure, as well as a tangible figure,—and that the visible figure involves, in our instant original perception, superficial length and breadth, as the tangible figure, which we learn to see, involves length, breadth, and thickness.

That it is impossible for us, at present, to separate, in the sensation of vision, the colour from the extension, I admit; though not more completely impossible, than it is for us to look on the thousand feet of a meadow, and to perceive only the small inch of greenness on our retina; and the one impossibility, as much as the other, I conceive to arise only from intimate association, subsequent to the original sensations of sight. Nor do I deny, that a certain part of the retina,—which, being limited, must therefore have figure,—is affected by the rays of light that fall on it, as a certain breadth of nervous expanse is affected in all the other organs. I contend only, that the perception of this limited figure of the portion of the retina affected, does not enter into the sensation itself, more than, in our sensations of any other species, there is a perception of the nervous breadth affected.

The immediate perception of visible figure has been assumed as indisputable, rather than

attempted to be proved,—as, before the time of Berkeley, the immediate visual perception of distance, and of the three dimensions of matter, was supposed, in like manner, to be without any need of proof;—and it is, therefore, impossible to refer to arguments on the subject. I presume, however, that the reasons, which have led to this belief, of the immediate perception of a figure termed visible, as distinguished from that tangible figure, which we learn to see, are the following two, —the only reasons which I can even imagine, —that it is absolutely impossible, in our present sensations of sight, to separate colour from extension,—and that there are, in fact, a certain length and breadth of the retina, on which the light falls.

With respect to the first of these arguments, it must be admitted, by those who contend for the immediate perception of visible figure, that it is now impossible for us to refer to our original feelings, and that we can speak, with absolute certainty, only of our present feelings, or, at least, of those which we remember, as belonging to a period long after our first sensations.

What may, or may not, have been originally separable, we cannot, then, determine. But what, even now, is the species of extension, which it is impossible for us, in our visual perceptions, to separate from colour? Is there the slightest consciousness of a perception of visible figure, corresponding with the affected portion of the retina,—or is not the superficial magnitude, and the only magnitude, which we connect with colour, in any case, the very superficial magnitude which we term tangible,—a magnitude, that does not depend on the diameter of the retina, but is variously greater or less, depending only on the magnitude and distance of the external object.

The mere length and breadth, then, which we cannot separate from colour, are not the length and breadth of the figure termed visible,—for of the perception of these limited dimensions we have no consciousness,—but the length and breadth that are truly tangible; and there is not a single moment of visual perception, in which the slightest evidence is afforded by our consciousness of that difficulty of separation, with respect to the affected portion of the expanse of the retina, on which the supposed argument, as to the perception of visible figure, is founded.

Even though the superficial dimensions of length and breadth, connected with colour in vision, were those of the figured retina affected, and were necessarily limited to its small expanse, there would still be no greater impossibility of separating the colour from mere length and breadth in vision, than of separating it from the triple dimensions of length, breadth, and thickness; and the argument, therefore, if it had any force, would be equally applicable to these.

I open my eyes, in the light of day, with a wide landscape around me. I have a sensation, or perception, of varieties of colour, and of all the dimensions of matter. I cannot separate the colour from the length and breadth of the trunk of a large oak before me; but equally impossible is it for me, to separate the colour from the convexity and the magnitude; and, from this equal impossibility, I might conclude, with equal force, that the perception of the convexity and the magnitude is immediate and original, as the perception of mere length and breadth. Where all things are equal, we cannot justly deny to one what we allow to another. He who affirms, that, in looking at a sphere, he can separate, as elements of his sensation, the colour and the convexity, may be allowed to use this argument of impossibility, as proof of original connexion, in the other case. But it is only a person so privileged by nature,—and where is such a person to be found?—who can fairly use it.

We are able, indeed,—not while we continue to look at the sphere, but with a sort of mental effort,—afterwards to separate the colour from the convexity, and to imagine the same colour united with any other surface, plane or concave: the reason of which is very evident. Our sensation of colour has not been uniformly associated with one species of extension, but with all its varieties; and may, therefore, be suggested in possible coexistence with all. In all these varieties, however, two dimensions have been constantly implied; and, therefore, the association of colour with these is complete and indissoluble. If every surface in nature had been convex, it is by no means improbable that we should have found the same difficulty, in attempting to separate colour from convexity, which we now find in attempting to separate it from mere length and breadth.

It is the same, in various other affections of the mind, as in our sensations. There are feelings, which we cannot separate from other feelings, and which, we yet know, must have been originally separate. I might refer to the silent growth and maturity of almost every passion, of which the mind is susceptible. But there is sufficient proof even in affections which seem instantaneous. The mother, when she looks at her babe, cannot behold it without feelings very different from those which the same form and colour, in another infant, would have excited; and yet, impossible as it is to separate, in this case, the mere visual sensation from that emotion of happy and instant fondness which accompanies it, there is surely no natural connexion of the emotion, with the mere length, and breadth, and colour.

The impossibility of separating the sensation of colour from the notion of extension, it appears, then, is not a decisive proof of an original connexion of these; for, if it were decisive, it would prove still more;—and we might, from this alone, assert, with equal confidence, the original visual perception of three dimensions, as that of two, and of the magnitude and figure, which we term tangible, as much as of those which we have chosen to term visible. It is surely as little possible for us, when we open our eyes on some wide and magnificent landscape, to separate the colour, as a mere visual sensation, from the field, the mountain, the forest, the stream, the sky, as to separate it from the half inch, or inch of our retina, of the perception of which we have no consciousness in any case; and it is too much for those, who deny the immediate perception of those greater magnitudes, to urge, in proof of the necessary original perception of this inch or half inch, what, if valid in any respect, must establish no less the proposition which they deny than the proposition which they affirm.

But, it will be said there is truly a certain figure of the part of the retina on which the light falls. The fact is undeniable. But the question is, not whether such a figure exist, but whether the perception of the figure necessarily form a part of the sensation. The brain, and nervous system in general, are of a certain form, when they are affected in any manner. But it does not, therefore, follow, as the fact sufficiently shows, that the knowledge of this form constitutes any part of the changeful feeling of the moment. To confine ourselves, however, to the mere senses: it is not in the organ of sight only that the nervous matter is of a certain shape; it is expanded into some shape or other, in every organ. When the whole, or a part, therefore, of the olfactory organ, is affected by the rays of odour, if I may so term them, we might, with exactly the same ground for our belief, suppose, that the knowledge of a certain extension must accompany the fragrance, because a certain nervous expanse is, in this case, affected, as that the notion of a certain extension must, for the same reason, and for the same reason alone, accompany the sensation of colour. It is because the same light which acts upon the organ of one person may be made visible to another, that we conceive it more peculiarly to be figured, as it were, on the nervous expanse, when it is not in itself truly more figured than the number of coexisting particles of odour, which affect the nerve of smell. We cannot exhibit the particles of odour, however, acting on the nostril of any one. But, when the eye is dissected from its orbit, we can show the image of a luminous body distinctly formed upon the retina. We, the observers of the dissected eye, have thus a clearer notion of the length and breadth of the nervous matter affected in the one case than in the other. But it is not in the dissected eye that vision takes place; and as the living eye and the living nostrils are alike affected in more than one physical point, we must surely admit, that, in both cases, and in both cases equally, a certain length and breadth are affected, and that there is an olfactory figure as truly as a visible figure. The mere visibility of the image to another person cannot alter the nature of the organic affection itself to the sentient individual. If the olfactory figure be not necessarily accompanied with the perception of extension, there is no stronger reason, *a priori*, to suppose that what is termed the visible figure, which is nothing more than a similar affection of a nervous expanse, should be accompanied with the knowledge of the part of the retina affected.

These arguments, however, though they seem to me to invalidate completely the only arguments which I can imagine to be urged in support of our original perception of figure by the eye, are negative only. But there is also a positive argument, which seems to me truly decisive, against the supposed necessary perception of visible figure, that it implies the blending of things which cannot be blended. If the mere visual sensation of colour imply, in itself, no figure, I can conceive it to be blended with any figure; but not so, if it imply, in itself, a fixed definite figure, so essential to the very sensation of the colour, that, without it, the colour could not for a single moment be perceived. During the whole time, then, in which I am gazing on a wide landscape, there is, according to the opinion of those who contend for the necessary perception of visible figure, not colour merely, but a certain small coloured expanse of definite outline constantly perceived, since, without this, colour itself could not be perceived; and, during all this time, there is also a notion of a figure of a very different kind, of three dimensions, and of magnitude almost infinitely greater, combined, not with colour merely, but with the same coloured expanse. There must, therefore, be some possible combination of these forms and magnitudes, since it is the colour which we perceive that is blended with the tangible magnitudes suggested. Now, though there are certain feelings which may coexist and unite, it appears to me that there are others which cannot be so blended. I may combine, for example, my notion of a plane or convex surface, with my notion of whiteness or blueness, hardness or softness, roughness or smoothness; but I cannot blend my notions of these two

surfaces, the plain and the convex, as one surface, both plain and convex, more than I can think of a whole which is less than a fraction of itself, or a square, of which the sides are not equal, and the angles equal only to three right angles. The same blue or white surface cannot appear to me, then, at once plain and convex, as it must do if there be a visible figure of one exact outline coexisting with the tactual figure which is of a different outline; nor, even though the surface were in both cases plain, can it appear to me, at the same moment, half an inch square and many feet square. All this must be done, however, as often as we open our eyes, if there be truly any perception of visible figure coexisting with the mere suggestions of touch. The visible figure of the sphere, on which I fix my gaze, is said to be a plane of two dimensions inseparable from colour, and this inseparable colour must yet be combined with the sphere, which I perceive distinctly to be convex. According to the common theory, therefore, it is at once, to my perception, convex and plain; and, if the sphere be a large one, it is perceived, at the same moment, to be a sphere of many feet in diameter, and a plain circular surface of the diameter of a quarter of an inch. The assertion of so strange a combination of incongruities would, indeed, require some powerful arguments to justify it; yet it has been asserted, not merely without positive evidence, as if not standing in need of any proof, but in absolute opposition to our consciousness; and the only arguments which we can even imagine to be urged for it, are, as we have seen, of no weight, or would tend as much to prove the original visual perception of tangible figures, as of the figure that is termed visible.

Is it not at least more probable, therefore, that though, like the particles of odour when they act upon our nostrils, the rays of light affect a portion of the retina, so as to produce on it an image, which, if the eye were separated from its orbit, and its coats dissected, might be a distinct visible figure to the eye of another observer; this figure of the portion of the retina affected, enters as little into the simple, original sensation of sight, as the figure of the portion of the olfactory nervous expanse, when it is affected, enters into the sensation of smell?—and that, when the simple affection of sight is blended with the ideas of suggestion, in what are termed the acquired perceptions of vision, as, for example, in the perception of a sphere, it is colour only which is blended with the large convexity, and not a small coloured plane?—which small coloured plane being necessarily limited in extent and form, so as never to be larger than the retina itself, cannot blend with various forms and magnitudes, and which, if it could even be supposed to constitute a part of the convexity of a sphere perceived by us, still could not diffuse its own limited and inseparable colour over the whole magnitude of the sphere.

I have stated to you my own opinion with respect to visible figure; an opinion which, to myself, I confess, appears almost certain, or at least far more probable than the opinion generally entertained, that has no evidence in our consciousness at any one moment of vision to support it. But, on subjects of this kind, which are in themselves so very subtile, and, therefore, so liable to error, I must beg you, at all times, and especially when the opposite sentiment has the authority of general belief, to consider any opinion, which I may submit to you, as offered more to your reflection than for your passive adoption of it. If I wish you, reverently, indeed, but still freely, to weigh the evidence of doctrines of philosophy, which are sanctioned even by the greatest names of every age, I must wish you still more, because it will be still more your duty, to weigh well the evidence of opinions that come to you with no other authority than that of *one* very fallible individual.

In looking back on the senses which we have been considering, what a boundless field do we seem already to have been endeavouring to traverse! and, how admirable would the mind have been, even though it had been capable of no other office than that of representing, in the union of all its sensations, as in a living mirror of the universe, the splendid conceptions of the great Being who formed it; or, rather, of creating anew in itself, that very universe which it represents and admires!

Such is the power of the senses;—of

> ——"senses, that inherit earth and heavens,
> Enjoy the various riches Nature yields;—
> Far nobler, give the riches they enjoy:
> Give taste to fruits, and harmony to groves,
> Their radiant beams to gold, and gold's bright sire;
> Take in at once the landscape of the world,
> At a small inlet, which a grain might close,
> And half create the wondrous world they see.
> But for the magic organ's powerful charm,
> Earth were a rude, uncoloured chaos still;—
> Like Milton's Eve, when gazing on the lake,
> Man makes the matchless image, man admires."*

LECTURE XXX.

HISTORY OF OPINIONS REGARDING PERCEPTION.

GENTLEMEN, in my last Lecture, I brought to a conclusion my remarks on Vision, with

* Young's Night Thoughts, VI. v. 120—127. 129—130 and 135—136.

an inquiry into the justness of the universal belief, that, in the perception of objects by this sense, there are two modifications of extension, a visible as well as a tangible figure; the one originally and immediately perceived by the eye, the other suggested by former experience. I stated, at considerable length, some arguments which induce me to believe, in opposition to the universal doctrine, that, in what are termed the acquired perceptions of sight, there is not this union of two separate figures of different dimensions, which cannot be combined with each other, more than the mathematical conceptions of a square and a circle can be combined in the conception of one simple figure; that the original sensations of colour, though, like the sensations of smell or taste, and every other species of sensation arising from affections of definite portions of nervous substance, do not involve the perception of this definite outline, more than mere fragrance or sweetness, but that the colour is perceived by us as figured, only in consequence of being blended by intimate associations with the feelings commonly ascribed to touch. Philosophers, indeed have admitted, or at least must admit, that we have no consciousness of that which they yet suppose to be constantly taking place, and that the only figure which does truly seem to us, in vision, to be combined with colour, is that which they term tangible; that, for example, we cannot look at a coloured sphere, of four feet diameter, without perceiving a coloured figure, which is that of a sphere four feet in diameter, and not a plain circular surface of the diameter of half an inch; yet, though we have no consciousness of perceiving any such small coloured circle, and have no reason to believe that such a perception takes place, they still contend, without any evidence whatever, that we see at every moment what we do not remember to have *ever seen*.

After our very full discussion of the general phenomena of perception, as common to all our senses, and as peculiarly modified in the different tribes of our sensations, I might now quit a subject, to which its primary interest as the origin of our knowledge has led me to pay, perhaps, a disproportionate attention. But beside the theories, to the consideration of which our general inquiry has incidentally led us, there are some hypothetical opinions on the subject, of which it is necessary that you should know at least the outline; not because they throw any real light on the phenomena of perception, but because, extravagantly hypothetical as they are, they are yet the opinions of philosophers, whose eminence, in other respects, renders indispensable some slight knowledge even of their very errors.

In reviewing these hypotheses, it will be necessary to call your attention to that doctrine of causation, which I before illustrated at great length, and which I trust, therefore, I may safely take for granted that you have not forgotten.

In sensation, I consider the feeling of the mind to be the simple effect of the presence of the object; or, at least, of some change which the presence of the object produces in the sensorial organ. The object has the power of affecting the mind; the mind is susceptible of being affected by the object, —that is to say, when the organ, in consequence of the presence of the external object, exists in a certain state, the affection of the mind immediately follows. If the object were absent in any particular case, the mind would not exist in the state which constitutes the sensation produced by it; and, if the susceptibility of the mind had been different, the object might have existed as now without any subsequent sensation. In all this series of mere changes, or affections, in consequence of certain other preceding changes or affections, though a part of the series be material and another part mental, there is truly, as I have repeatedly remarked to you, no more mystery than in any other series of changes, in which the series is not in matter and mind successively, but exclusively in one or the other. There is a change of state of one substance, in consequence of a change of some sort in another substance; and this mere sequence of change after change is all which we know in either case. The same Almighty Being who formed the various substances to which we give the name of matter, formed also the substance to which we give the name of mind; and the qualities with which he endowed them, for those gracious ends which he intended them to answer, are mere susceptibilities of change, by which, in certain circumstances, they begin immediately to exist in different states. The weight of a body is its tendency to other bodies, varying according to the masses and distances;—in this instance the quality may be said to be strictly material. The greenness or redness, ascribed to certain rays of light, are words expressive merely of changes that arise in the mind when these rays are present on the retina;—in this case, the quality, though ascribed to the material rays as antecedent, involves the consideration of a certain change of state in the mind which they affect. But the greenness or redness, though involving the consideration both of mind affected and matter affecting, is not less conceivable by us as a quality of matter than the weight, which also involves the consideration of two substances, affecting and affected, though both go under the name of matter alone. All the

sequences of phenomena are mysterious, or none are so.

It is wonderful that the presence of a loadstone should cause a piece of iron to approach it; and that the presence of the moon, in different parts of the heavens, should be continually altering the relative tendencies of all the particles of our earth. In like manner, it is, indeed, wonderful that a state of our bodily organs should be followed by a change of state of the mind, or a state of our mind by a change of state of our bodily organs; but it is not more wonderful than that matter should act on distant matter, or that one affection of the mind should be followed by another affection of the mind, since all which we know in either case, when matter acts upon matter, or when it acts upon mind, is, that a certain change of one substance has followed a certain change of another substance,—a change which, in all circumstances exactly similar, it is expected by us to follow again. We have experience of this sequence of changes alike in both cases; and, but for experience, we could not in either case have predicted it.

This view of causation, however,—as not more unintelligible in the reciprocal sequences of events in matter and mind than in their separate sequences,—could not occur to philosophers while they retained their mysterious belief of secret links, connecting every observed antecedent with its observed consequent; since mind and matter seemed, by their very nature, unsusceptible of any such common bondage. A peculiar difficulty, therefore, as you may well suppose, was felt in the endeavour to account for their mutual successions of phenomena, which vanishes when the necessity of any connecting links in causation is shown to be falsely assumed.

In their views of perception, therefore, as a mental effect produced by a material cause, philosophers appear to have been embarrassed by two great difficulties:—the production of this effect by remote objects, as when we look at the sun and stars, in their almost inconceivable distances above our heads; and the production of this effect by a substance, which has no common property that renders it capable of being linked with the mind in the manner supposed to be necessary for causation. These two supposed difficulties appear to me to have led to all the wild hypotheses that have been advanced with respect to perception.

The former of these difficulties,—in the remoteness of the object perceived,—even though the principle had not been false which supposes that a change cannot take place in any substance in consequence of the change of position of a distant object,—a principle which the gravitation of every atom disproves,—arose, it is evident, from false views of the real objects of perception. It was on this account that I was at some pains, when we entered on our inquiry into the nature of perception, to show the futility of the distinction which is made of objects that act immediately on the senses, and those which act on them through a medium,—the medium, in this case, as light in vision, and the vibrating air in sound, being the real object of the particular sense,—and the reference to a more remote object being the result not of the simple original sensation, but of knowledge previously acquired.

The mistake as to the real object of perception, and the supposed difficulty of action at a distance, must have had very considerable influence in producing the Peripatetic doctrine of perception by species, of which the cumbrous machinery seems to have been little more than a contrivance for destroying, as it were, the distance between the senses and the objects that were supposed to act on them. According to this doctrine, every object is continually throwing off certain shadowy films or resemblances of itself, which may be directly present to our organs of sense, at whatever distance the objects may be from which they flowed. These species or phantasms, the belief of the separate existence of which must have been greatly favoured by another tenet of the same school, with respect to form as essentially distinct from the matter with which it is united, were supposed to be transmitted, in a manner which there was no great anxiety to explain, to the brain and to the mind itself. I need not detail to you the process by which these sensible species, through the intervention of what were termed the active and passive intellect, were said to become, at last, intelligible species, so as to be objects of our understanding. It is with the mere sensitive part of the process that we have at present any concern; and in this, of itself, there is sufficient absurdity, without tracing all the further modifications, of which the absurdity is capable, if I may speak so lightly of follies that have a name, which for more than a thousand years, was the most venerable of human names, to pass them current as wisdom,—and which were received and honoured as wisdom by the wise of so many generations.

I cannot pay you so very poor a compliment, as to suppose it necessary to employ a single moment of your time in confuting what is not only a mere hypothesis, (and an hypothesis which leaves all the real difficulties of perception precisely as before,) but which, even as an hypothesis, is absolutely inconceivable. If vision had been our only

sense, we might, perhaps, have understood, at least, what was meant by the species that directly produce our visual images. But what is the phantasm of a sound or an odour? or what species is it, which, at one moment, produces only the feeling of cold, or hardness, or figure, when a knife is pressed against us, and the next moment, when it penetrates the skin, the pain of a cut? The knife itself is exactly the same unaltered knife, when it is merely pressed against the hand, and when it produces the incision; and the difference therefore, in the two cases, must arise, not from any species which it is constantly throwing off, since these would be the same, at every moment, but from some state of difference in the mere nerves affected.

I fear, however, that I have already fallen into the folly which I professed to avoid,—the folly of attempting to confute, what, considered in itself, is not worthy of being seriously confuted, and scarcely worthy even of being proved to be ridiculous. It must be remembered, however, in justice to its author, that the doctrine of perception, by intermediate phantasms, is not a single opinion alone, but a part of a system of opinions, and that there are many errors, which, if considered singly, appear too extravagant for the assent of any rational mind, that lose much of this extravagance, by combination with other errors, as extravagant. Whatever difficulties the hypothesis of species involved, it at least seemed to remove the supposed difficulty of perception at a distance, and, by the half spiritual tenuity of the sensible images, seemed also to afford a sort of intermediate link, for the connexion of matter with mind; thus appearing to obviate, or at least to lessen, the two great difficulties which I suppose to have given occasion to the principal hypotheses on this subject.

When the doctrine of species, as modified, in the dark and barren age of Dialectics, by all the additional absurdities which the industrious sagacity of the schoolmen could give to it, had, at length, lost that empire, which it never should have possessed, the original difficulty of accounting for perception, remained as before. If the cause was to be linked, in some manner or other, with its effect, how was matter, so different in all its properties, to be connected with mind?

The shortest possible mode of obviating this difficulty, was, by denying that any direct causation whatever took place between our mind and our bodily organs; and hence arose the system of occasional causes, as maintained by the most distinguished of the followers of Des Cartes,—a system, which supposed, that there is no direct agency of our mind on matter, or of matter on our mind,—that we are as little capable of moving our own limbs by our volition, as of moving by our volition, the limbs of any other person,—as little capable of perceiving the rays of light, that have entered our own eyes, as the rays which have fallen on any other eyes,—that our perception or voluntary movement is, therefore, to be referred, in every case, to the immediate agency of the Deity,—the presence of rays of light, within our eye, being the mere occasion on which the Deity himself affects our mind with vision, as our desire of moving our limbs is the mere occasion on which the Deity himself puts our limbs in motion.

It is of so much importance to have a full conviction of the dependence of all events on the great source of Being, that it is necessary to strip the doctrine, as much as possible, of every thing truly objectionable, lest, in abandoning what is objectionable, we should be tempted to abandon also the important truth associated with it. The power of God is so magnificent in itself, that it is only when we attempt to add to it in our conception, that we run some risk of degrading what it must always be impossible for us to elevate.

That the changes which take place, whether in mind or in matter, are all, ultimately, resolvable into the will of the Deity, who formed alike the spiritual and material system of the universe, making the earth a habitation worthy of its noble inhabitant,—and man an inhabitant almost worthy of that scene of divine magnificence, in which he is placed, is a truth as convincing to our reason as it is delightful to our devotion. What confidence do we feel, in our joy, at the thought of the Eternal Being, from whom it flows, as if the very thought gave at once security and sanctity to our delight; and how consolatory, in our little hour of suffering, to think of Him who wills our happiness, and who knows how to produce it, even from sorrow itself, by that power which called light from the original darkness, and still seems to call, out of a similar gloom, the sunshine of every morning. Every joy thus becomes gratitude,—every sorrow resignation. The eye which looks to Heaven seems, when it turns again to the scenes of earth, to bring down with it a purer radiance, like the very beaming of the presence of the Divinity, which it sheds on every object on which it gazes,—a light

> "That gilds all forms
> Terrestrial, in the vast and the minute;
> The unambiguous footsteps of the God,
> Who gives its lustre to an insect's wing,
> And wheels His throne upon the rolling worlds."*

That the Diety, in this sense, as the Creator of the world, and willer of all those great ends which the laws of the universe

* Cowper's Task, Book V. v. 810—814.

accomplished,—is the author of the physical changes which take place in it, is then most true,—as it is most true also, that the same Power, who gave the universe its laws, can, for the particular purposes of his providence, vary these at pleasure. But there is no reason to suppose that the objects which he has made surely for some ends, have, as made by him, no efficacy, no power of being instrumental to his own great purpose, merely because whatever power they can be supposed to have, must have been derived from the Fountain of all power. It is, indeed, only as possessing this power, that we know them to exist; and their powers, which the doctrine of occasional causes would destroy altogether, are, relatively to us, their whole existence. It is by affecting us that they are known to us. Such is the nature of the mind, and of light, for example, that light cannot be present, or, at least, the sensorial organ cannot exist in a certain state, in consequence of its presence, without that instant affection of mind which constitutes vision. If light have not this power of affecting us with sensation, it is, with respect to us, nothing,—for we know it only as the cause of the visual affection. That which excites in us the feelings of extension, resistance, and all the qualities of matter, is matter; and to suppose that there is nothing, without us, which excites these feelings, is to suppose, that there is no matter without, as far as we are capable of forming any conception of matter. The system of occasional causes seems, therefore, to be only a more awkward and complicated modification of the system of Berkeley; for, as the Deity is, in this system, himself the author of every change, the only conceivable use of matter, which cannot affect us, more than if it were not in existence, must be as a remembrance, to Him who is Omniscience itself, at what particular moment he is to excite a feeling in the mind of some one of his sensitive creatures, and of what particular kind that feeling is to be; as if the Omniscient could stand in need of any memorial, to excite in our mind any feeling which it is His wish to excite, and which is to be traced wholly to his own immediate agency. Matter then, according to this system, has no relations to us; and all its relations are to the Deity alone. The assertors of the doctrine, indeed, seem to consider it as representing, in a more sublime light, the divine Omnipresence, by exhibiting it to our conception as the only power in nature; but they might, in like manner, affirm, that the creation of the infinity of worlds, with all the life and happiness that are diffused over them, rendered less instead of more sublime, the existence of Him, who, till then, was the sole existence; for power that is derived derogates as little from the primary power as derived existence derogates from the Being from whom it flows. Yet the assertors of this doctrine, who conceive that light has no effect in vision, are perfectly willing to admit that light exists, or rather, are strenuous affirmers of its existence, and are anxious only to prove, in their zeal for the glory of Him who made it, and who makes nothing in vain, that this and all his works exist for no purpose. Light, they contend, has no influence whatever. It is as little capable of exciting sensations of colour, as of exciting a sensation of melody or fragrance; but still it exists. The production of so very simple a state as that of vision, or any other of the modes of perception, with an apparatus, which is not merely complicated, but, in all its complication, absolutely without efficacy of any sort, is so far from adding any sublimity to the divine nature in our conception, that it can scarcely be conceived by the mind, without lessening, in some degree, the sublimity of the Author of the universe, by lessening, or rather destroying, all the sublimity of the universe which he has made. What is that idle mass of matter, which cannot affect us, or be known to us, or to any other created being, more than if it were not? If the Deity produces, in every case, by his own immediate operation, all those feelings which we term sensations or perceptions, he does not first create a multitude of inert and cumbrous worlds, invisible to every eye but his own, and incapable of affecting any thing whatever, that he may know when to operate, as he would have operated before. This is not the awful simplicity of that Omnipotence,

> "Whose word leaps forth at once to its effect;
> Who calls for things that are not, and they come."*

If, indeed, the complication of the process could remove any difficulty which truly exists, or even any difficulty which is supposed to exist, the system might be more readily adopted by that human weakness, to which the removal of a single difficulty is of so much value. But the very attempt to remove the difficulty is merely by presenting it in another form. Omnipotent as the Creator is, he is still, like that mind which he has formed after his own image, a spiritual Being; and though there can be no question as to the extent of his power over matter, the operation of this infinite power is as little conceivable by us, in any other way than as a mere antecedence of change, as the reciprocal limited action of mind and matter in man and the objects which he perceives and moves. It is itself, indeed, a proof of action of this very kind; and to state it with the view of obviating any difficulty that

* Cowper's Task, Book V. v. 686—7.

may be supposed to be involved in the mutual influence of mind and matter, seems as absurd as it would be for a sophist, who should profess to believe, from an examination of the wings of birds, that their heavy pinions are incapable of bearing them through the air, to illustrate his paradox by the majestic soaring of the eagle, when he mounts still higher and higher through the sunshine that encircles him, before he stoops from his height above the clouds, to the cliffs which he deigns to make his lowly home.

The system of occasional causes, though it ceased to be known, or at least to be adopted under that name, has not the less continued, by a mere change of denomination, to receive the assent of philosophers, who rejected it under its ancient name. It is, indeed, the spirit of this system alone which gives any sense whatever to the distinction that is universally made of causes, as physical and efficient; a distinction which implies, that, beside the antecedents and consequents in a series of changes, which are supposed to have no mutual influence, and might, therefore, be antecedent and consequent in any other order, there is some intervening agency, which is, in every event of the series, the true efficient. Matter, in short, does not act on mind, nor mind on matter. The physical cause, in this nomenclature, that exists for no purpose, as being absolutely inefficient, or, in other words, absolutely incapable of producing any change whatever, is the occasional cause of the other nomenclature, and nothing more; and all which was cumbrous and superfluous in the one is equally cumbrous and superfluous in the other. On this subject, however, which I have discussed at large in my work on Cause and Effect, I need not add any remarks to those which I offered in an early part of the course. It is sufficient, at present, to point out the absolute identity of the two doctrines in every thing but in name.

The next system to which I would direct your attention, is that of Malebranche, who is indeed to be ranked among the principal assertors of the doctrine of *occasional causes*, which we have now been considering, but who, in addition to this general doctrine, had peculiar views of the nature of perception.

His opinions on this subject are delivered at great length, in the second volume of his Search of Truth,—*La Recherche de la Vérité*, —a work which is distinguished by much eloquence, and by many very profound remarks on the sources of human error, but which is itself an example, in the great system which it supports, of error as striking as any of those which it eloquently and profoundly discusses. It is truly unfortunate, for his reputation as a philosopher, that these discussions do not form a separate work, but are blended with his own erroneous system, the outline of which every one knows too well to think of studying its details. All that is necessary, to give him his just reputation, is merely that he should have written less. He is at present known chiefly as the author of a very absurd hypothesis. He would have been known, and studied, and honoured, as a very acute observer of our nature, if he had never composed those parts of his work, to which, probably, when he thought of other generations, he looked as to the basis of his philosophic fame.

His hypothesis, as many of you probably know, is, that we perceive not objects themselves, but the ideas of them which are in God.

He begins his supposed demonstration of this paradox with a sort of negative proof, by attempting to show the inadequacy of every other mode of accounting for our perception of the ideas of things; for I need scarcely state to you, what is involved in the very enunciation of his metaphysical theorem, —that he regards ideas as distinct from perception itself, not the mind affected in a certain manner, but something separate and independent of the mind.

He then proceeds to his positive proof, asserting, in the first place, that it is "absolutely necessary that God should have in himself the ideas of all the beings which he has created, since otherwise he could not have produced them;"* and, in the second place, that God is united to our soul by his presence, "so that he may be said to have that relation of place to the mind which space has to body."†. Wherever the human mind is, there God is, and consequently all the ideas which are in God. We have thus a fund of all the ideas necessary for perception, and a fund, which, in consequence of the ubiquity of the divine mind, is ever present, requiring, therefore, for our perception of them, only that divine will, without which no change can take place.

That perception takes place by the presence of this one stock of ideas eternally present in the divine mind, with which every other mind is united, rather than by the creation of an infinite number of ideas in each separate mind,—he conceives to be proved by various reasons,—by the greater simplicity of this mode,—by its peculiar consistency with that state of dependence on the Divine Being, as the source of all light, in which the mind of man is represented in many passages of Scripture,—by various notions, such as those of infinity, ge-

* Recherche de la Vérité, Liv. III. c. vi.
† Ibid.

nera, species, &c. the universality of which he conceived to be inconsistent with the absolute unity and limitation of every idea that does not derive a sort of infinity from the mind in which it exists,—and, by some other reasons very mystical and very feeble, in which, though it may not be difficult to discover what their author meant, it is certainly very difficult to conceive how a mind so acute as his could have been influenced by them.

It is, indeed, only this relation of the mind of Malebranche to his own very strange hypothesis, which there is any interest in tracing; for, though I have thought it my duty to give you a slight sketch of the hypothesis itself, as a part of the general history of our science, with which the reputation and genius of its author render it necessary for you to have some acquaintance, I am far from thinking that it can throw any light on our speculations, in the present improved state of the Science of Mind. I shall not waste your time, therefore, with pointing out to you the innumerable objections to his hypothesis, which, after the view already given by me of the simple process of perception, are, I trust, so manifest, as not to require to be pointed out. It may be more interesting to consider, in the history of the Philosophy of Mind, what circumstances led to the formation of the hypothesis.

In the first place, I may remark that, notwithstanding his veneration for the greater number of the opinions of Des Cartes, Malebranche unfortunately had not adopted the very enlightened views of that eminent philosopher with respect to the nature of ideas. He considered them as existences distinct from the sentient or percipient mind,—and, reasoning very justly from this error, inferred their presence in the mind of the Deity, who formed the universe not casually, but according to conceptions that must have preceded creation,—the archetypes or exemplars of all that was to be created. This opinion as to the eternal forms subsisting in the divine mind, agrees exactly with that of Plato, in one of the most celebrated of his doctrines, and certainly one of the most poetical; which, though a term of praise that usually does not imply much excellence of philosophy, is the species of praise to which the philosophy of Plato has the justest claim. It has been delivered, in very powerful verse, by one of our own poets, who describes himself as, in science, a follower of the genius of ancient Greece, and who was worthy of the inspiring presence of that majestic guide:—

"Ere the radiant sun
Sprang from the east, or 'mid the vault of night
The moon suspended her serener lamp;
Ere mountains, woods, or streams adorn'd the globe,
Or Wisdom taught the sons of men her lore,—
Then lived the Almighty One, then, deep retired
In his unfathom'd essence, view'd the forms,
The forms eternal of created things;
The radiant sun, the moon's nocturnal lamp,
The mountains, woods, and streams, the rolling [globe,
And Wisdom's mien celestial. From the first
Of days, on them his love divine, he fix'd
His admiration, till, in time complete,
What he admired and loved, his vital smile
Unfolded into being. Hence, the breath
Of life, informing each organic frame;
Hence the green earth, and wild resounding waves;
Hence light and shade, alternate warmth and cold,
And clear autumnal skies, and vernal showers,
And all the fair variety of things."*

It is in the writings of St. Augustine, however, who had himself imbibed a considerable portion of the spirit of the Platonic philosophy, that the true source of the hypothesis which we are now reviewing is to be found. This very eminent father of the church, whose acuteness and eloquence would have entitled him to very high consideration even though his works had related to subjects less interesting to man than those noble subjects of which they treat, seems to have met with peculiar honour from the French theologians, and to have given a very evident direction to their intellectual inquiries. It is indeed impossible to read the works of any of the theological metaphysicians of that country without meeting with constant references to the opinions of St. Austin, and an implied reference, even where it is not expressed,—particularly to the very opinions most analogous to those of Malebranche.

The opinion of Augustine, to which I particularly allude, is that which forms the principal doctrine of his metaphysical philosophy,—that there is a supreme eternal universal Truth, which is intimately present to every mind, and in which all minds alike perceive the truths, which all alike are, as it were, necessitated to believe,—the truths of arithmetic and geometry, for example, and the primary essential truths of morality.

These truths we feel to be eternal, because we feel that they are not contingent on the existence of those who perceive them, but were, and are, and must for ever be the same; and we feel also, that the truth is one, whatever be the number of individuals that perceive it, and is not converted into many truths, merely by the multitude of believers. "If," says he, "in discoursing of any truth, I perceive that to be true which you say, and you perceive that to be true which I say, where, I pray you, do we both see this at the very moment? I certainly see it not in you nor you in me, but both see it in that unchangeable truth, which is beyond and above our individual minds. "Si ambo videmus verum esse quod dicis, et ambo videmus verum esse quod dico, ubi,

* Pleasures of Imagination, Book I. v. 59—78.

quæso, id videmus? Nec ego utique in te, nec tu in me; sed ambo in ipsâ quæ supra mentes nostras est, incommutabili veritate."

You must not conceive that I am contending for the justness of the opinion which I am now stating to you; I state it merely as illustrative of the system of Malebranche. If we suppose, with Augustine, that there is one eternal Truth, which contains all truths, and is present to all minds that perceive in it the truths which it contains, it is but one step more, and scarcely one step more, to believe that our ideas of all things are contained and perceived in one omnipresent Mind, to which all other minds are united, and which is itself the eternal Truth that is present to all. Indeed, some of the passages which are quoted in the "Search of Truth," from St. Austin, show how strongly its author conceived his own opinions to be sanctioned by that ancient authority.

For some of the happiest applications which have been made of this very ancient system of Christian metaphysics, I may refer you particularly to the works of Fenelon, —to his demonstration of the existence of God, for example,—in which many of the most abstract subtilties of the Metaphysics of Augustine become living and eloquent, in the reasonings of this amiable writer, who knew so well how to give, to every subject which he treated, the tenderness of his own heart, and the persuasion and devout confidence of his own undoubting belief.

In this Protestant country, in which the attention of theologians has been almost exclusively devoted to the Scriptures themselves, and little comparative attention paid to the writings of the Fathers,—unless as strictly illustrative of the texts of Scripture, or of the mere history of the church,—the influence of the metaphysical opinions of St. Austin is less to be traced; and the argument drawn from the eternal omnipresent ideas of unity, and number and infinity, on which so much stress is laid by Catholic philosophers, in demonstrating the existence of God, is hence scarcely to be found at all, or, at least, occupies a very inconsiderable place in the numerous works of our countrymen on the same great subject. The system of Malebranche might, indeed, have arisen in this country; for we have had writers who, without his genius, have adopted his errors; but there can be no doubt that it was, by its very nature, much more likely to arise in the country which actually produced it.

LECTURE XXXI.

HISTORY OF OPINIONS REGARDING PERCEPTION CONCLUDED—ON THE EXTERNAL AFFECTIONS COMBINED WITH DESIRE, OR ON ATTENTION.

In my last Lecture, Gentlemen, I gave you a slight sketch of some theories,—or, to speak more accurately, of some hypothetical conjectures which have been formed with respect to Perception,—pointing out to you, at the same time, the two supposed difficulties which appear to me to have led to them, in false views of the real objects of perception, and of the nature of causation; the difficulty of accounting, with these false views, for the supposed perception of objects at a distance, and for the agency of matter on a substance so little capable as mind of being linked with it by any common bond of connexion.

Of such hypotheses we considered three, —the doctrine of the Peripatetics as to perception by species or shadowy films, that flow from the object to the organ,—the Cartesian doctrine of the indirect subserviency of external objects, as the mere occasions on which the Deity himself, in every instance, produces in the mind the state which is termed perception,—and the particular doctrine of Malebranche, himself a zealous defender of that general doctrine of occasional causes, as to the perception of objects, or rather of the ideas of objects in the Divine Mind.

The only remaining hypothesis which deserves to be noticed, is a very celebrated one, of Leibnitz, the doctrine of the pre-established harmony, which, I have no doubt originated in the same false view of the necessity of some connecting link in causation; and was intended, therefore, like the others, to obviate the supposed difficulty of the action of matter on mind, and of mind on matter.

According to this doctrine, the body never acts on the mind, nor the mind on the body, but the motions of the one, and the feelings of the other, are absolutely independent, having as little influence on each other as they have on any other mind and body. The mind feels pain when the body is bruised, but, from the pre-established order of its own affections, it would have felt exactly the same pain, though the body, at that moment, had been resting upon roses. The arm, indeed, moves at the very moment when the mind has willed its motion; but it moves of itself, in consequence of its own pre-established order of movement, and would move, therefore, equally, at that very moment, though the mind had wished it to remain at rest. The exact correspondence of the motions and feelings, which we observe, arises merely from the exactness of the choice of the Deity, in uniting with a body, that was formed by Him, to have, of itself, a certain order of independent motions, a mind, that was formed of itself to have a certain order of independent but corresponding feelings. In the unerring exactness of this choice, and mutual adaptation, consists the exquisiteness of the harmony. But, however exquisite, it is still a harmony only, without the slightest reciprocal action.

The mind, and its organic frame, are, in

this system,—to borrow the illustration of it which is commonly used,—like two time-pieces, which have no connexion with each other, however accurately they may agree,—and each of which would indicate the hour, in the very same manner, though the other had been destroyed. In like manner, the soul of Leibnitz,—for the great theorist himself may surely be used to illustrate his own hypothesis,—would, though his body had been annihilated at birth, have felt and acted, as if with its bodily appendage,—studying the same works, inventing the same systems, and carrying on, with the same warfare of books and epistles, the same long course of indefatigable controversy;—and the body of this great philosopher, though his SOUL had been annihilated at birth, would not merely have gone through the same process of growth, eating, and digesting, and performing all its other ordinary animal functions,—but would have achieved for itself the same intellectual glory, without any consciousness of the works which it was writing and correcting,—would have argued, with equal strenuousness, for the principle of the sufficient reason,—claimed the honours of the differential calculus,—and laboured to prove this very system of the pre-established harmony, of which it would certainly, in that case, have been one of the most illustrious examples.

To say of this hypothesis, which was the dream of a great mind,—but of a mind, I must confess, which was very fond of dreaming, and very apt to dream,—that it is a mere hypothesis, is to speak of it too favourably. Like the doctrine of occasional causes, it supposes a system of external things, of which, by the very principle of the hypothesis, there can be no evidence, and which is absolutely of no utility whatever, but as it enables a philosopher to talk more justly of pre-established harmonies, without the possibility, however, of knowing that he is talking more justly. If the mind would have exactly the same feelings as now,—the same pleasures, and pains, and perceptions of men and houses, and every thing external, though every thing external, comprehending of course the very organs of sense, had been annihilated ages of ages before itself existed, what reason can there be to suppose that this useless system of bodily organs, and other external things, exists at present? The universal irresistible belief of mankind, to which philosophers of a different school might appeal, cannot be urged in this case, since the admission of it, as legitimate evidence, would, at once, disprove the hypothesis. We do not more truly believe that light exists, than we believe that it affects us with vision, and that, if there had been no light, there would have been no sensation of colour. To assert the pre-established harmony, is, indeed, almost the same thing as to affirm and deny the same proposition. It is to affirm, in the first place, positively, that matter exists, since the harmony, which it asserts, is of matter and mind;—and then to affirm, as positively, that its existence is useless, that it cannot be perceived by us, and that we are, therefore, absolutely incapable of knowing whether it exists or not.

After stating to you so many hypotheses, which have been formed on this subject, I need scarcely remark, what a fund of perpetual conjecture, and, therefore, of perpetual controversy, there is in the varied wonders of the external and internal universe, when it is so very difficult for a few philosophers to agree, as to what it is which gives rise to the simplest sensation of warmth, or fragrance, or colour. It might be thought that, in the intellectual opera,—if I may revert to that ingenious and lively allegory, of which I availed myself in one of my early Lectures, in treating of general physical inquiry,—as the whole spectacle which we behold, is passing within our minds, we are, in this instance, at least, fairly behind the scenes, and see the mechanism of Nature truly as it is. But though we are really behind the scenes, and even in one sense of the word, may be said to be ourselves the movers of the machinery, by which the whole representation is carried on, still the minute parts and arrangements of the complicated mechanism are concealed from *our* view, almost as completely as from the observation of the distant spectators. The primary springs and weights, indeed, by the agency of which Phaeton seemed to be carried off by the winds, are left visible to us; and we know, that when we touch a certain spring, it will put in motion a concealed set of wheels, or that, when we pull a cord, it will act upon a system of pulleys, which will ultimately produce a particular effect desired by us; but what is the number of wheels or pulleys, and how they are arranged and adapted to each other so as to produce the effect, are left to our penetration to divine. On this subject, we have seen, that as many grave absurdities have been formed into systems, and honoured with commentaries and confutations, as in the opera of external nature, at which, in the quotation formerly made to you, the Pythagorases and Platos were supposed to be present. "It is not a system of cords and pulleys which we put in motion," says Aristotle,—"for to move such a heavy and distant mass would be beyond our power,—but only a number of little phantasms connected with them, which have the form, indeed, of cords and pulleys, but not the substance, and which are light enough, therefore, to fly at our very touch."—"We do not truly move any wheels," says the great inventor of the System of Occasional Causes; "for, as we did not make the wheels, how can *we* know the prin-

ciple on which their motion is to depend, or have such a command over them as to be capable of moving them? But when we touch a spring, it is the occasion on which the mechanist himself, who is always present, though invisible, and who must know well how to move them, sets them instantly in motion."—"We see the motion," says Malebranche, "not by looking at the wheels or pulleys,—for there is an impenetrable veil which hides them from us,—but by looking at the Mechanist himself, who *must* see them, because He is the mover of them; and whose eye in which they are imaged as He gazes on them, must be a living mirror of all which he moves."—"It is not a spring that acts upon the wheels," says Leibnitz; "though, when the spring is touched, the wheels begin to move immediately, and never begin to move at any other time. This coincidence, however, is not owing to any connexion of the one with the other; for, though the spring were destroyed, the wheels would move exactly as at present, beginning and ceasing at the same precise moments. It is owing to a pre-established harmony of motion in the wheels and spring; by which arrangement the motion of the wheels, though completely independent of the other, always begins at the very moment when the spring is touched."—"No," exclaims Berkeley, "it is all illusion. The wheels, and cords, and weights, are not seen because they exist, but exist because they are seen; and if the whole machinery is not absolutely annihilated when we shut our eyes, it is only because it finds shelter in the mind of some other Being whose eyes are never shut, and are always open, therefore, at the time when ours are closing."

From all this variety of conjectural speculations, the conclusion which you will perhaps have drawn most readily, is that which is too often the result of our researches in the History of Science, that there may, as D'Alembert truly says, be a great deal of philosophizing, in which there is very little of philosophy.

I have now finished the remarks which I had to make on the very important class of our external affections of mind, as they may be considered simply; but it is not always simply that they exist; and, when they occur in combination with other feelings, the appearance which they assume is sometimes so different as to lead to the erroneous belief that the complex feeling is the result of a distinct power of the mind.

When, in my attempt to arrange the various feelings of which the mind is susceptible, I divided these into our external and internal affections, according as their causes are, in the one case, objects without the mind, and, in the other case, previous feelings, or affections of the mind itself; and subdivided this latter class of internal affections into the two orders of our intellectual states of mind, and our emotions; I warned you, that you were not to consider these as always arising separately, and as merely successive to each other;—that, in the same manner, as we may both see and smell a rose, so may we see, or compare, or remember, while under the influence of some one or other of our emotions; though, at the same time, by analysis, or at least by a reflective process that is similar to analysis, we may be able to distinguish the emotion from the coexisting perception, or remembrance, or comparison,—as we are able, by a very easy analysis, in like manner, when we both see and smell a rose, to distinguish, in our complex perception, the fragrance from the colour and form.

There is one emotion, in particular, that is capable of so many modifications, and has so extensive a sway over human life, which it may be said almost to occupy from the first wishes of our infancy to the last of our old age, that it cannot fail to be combined with many of our other feelings, both sensitive and intellectual. The emotion to which I allude is desire; a feeling which may exist of various species and degrees, from the strongest passion of which the mind is susceptible, to the slightest wish of knowing a little more accurately the most trifling object before us;—and though, in speaking of it at present, I am anticipating what, according to the strict division which we have made, should not be brought forward till we consider the emotions in general, this anticipation is absolutely unavoidable for understanding some of the most important phenomena, both of perception, which we have been considering, and of those intellectual faculties which we are soon to consider. I need not repeat to you, that Nature is not to be governed by the systems which we form; that though our systematic arrangements ought not to be complicated, her phenomena are almost always so; and that, while every thing is thus intermixed and connected with every thing in the actual phenomena of mind as well as of matter, it would be vain for us to think of accommodating our physical discussions, with absolute exactness, even to the most perfect divisions and subdivisions which we may be capable of forming. All that is necessary is, that we should not depart from our order of arrangement without some advantage in view, and an advantage greater than the slight evil which may arise from the appearance of temporary confusion.

The reason of my anticipation, in the present instance, is to explain to you what I conceive to constitute the phenomena of attention,—a state of mind which has been understood to imply the exercise of a peculiar intellectual power, but which, in the case of

attention to objects of sense, appears to be nothing more than the coexistence of desire with the perception of the object to which we are said to attend; as, in attention to other phenomena of the mind, it is, in like manner, the coexistence of a particular desire with these particular phenomena. The desire, indeed, modifies the perception, rendering our feeling more intense, as any other emotion would do that has equal relation to the object. But there is no operation of any power distinct from the desire and perception themselves.

To understand this fully, however, it may be necessary to make some previous remarks on the coexistence of sensations.

In the circumstances in which we are placed by our beneficent Creator, in a world of objects capable of exciting in us various feelings, and with senses awake to the profusion of delight,—breathing and moving in the midst of odours, and colours, and sounds, and pressed alike in gentle reaction, whether our limbs be in exercise or repose, by that firm soil which supports us, or the softness on which we rest,—in all this mingling action of external things, there is scarcely a moment in which any one of our feelings can be said to be truly simple.

Even when we consider but one of our organs, to the exclusion of all the others, how innumerable are the objects that concur in producing the complex affections of a single sense! In the eye, for example, how wide a scene is open to us, wherever our glance may be turned!—woods, fields, mountains, rivers, the whole atmosphere of light, and that magnificent luminary, which converts into light the whole space through which it moves, as if incapable of existing but in splendour. The mere opening of our eyelid is like the withdrawing of a veil which before covered the universe:—It is more; it is almost like saying to the universe, which had perished, Exist again!

Innumerable objects, then, are constantly acting together on our organs of sense; and it is evident that many of these can, at once, produce an effect of some sort in the mind, because we truly perceive them as a coexisting whole. It is not a single point of light only which we see, but a wide landscape; and we are capable of comparing various parts of the landscape with each other,—of distinguishing various odours in the compound fragrance of the meadow or the garden,—of feeling the harmony of various coexisting melodies.

The various sensations, then, may coexist, so as to produce one complex affection. When they do coexist, it must be remarked, that they are individually less intense. The same sound, for example, which is scarcely heard in the tumult of the day, is capable of affecting us powerfully if it recur in the calm of the night; not that it is then absolutely louder, but because it is no longer mingled with other sounds, and other sensations of various kinds, which rendered it weaker, by coexisting with it. It may be regarded, then, as a general law of our perceptions, that, when many sensations coexist, each individually is less vivid than if it existed alone.

It may be considered almost as another form of the same proposition to say, that when many sensations coexist, each is not merely weaker, but less distinct from the others with which it is combined. When a few voices sing together, we easily recognise each separate voice. In a very full chorus, we distinguish each with more difficulty; and if a great multitude were singing together, we should scarcely be able to distinguish any one voice from the rest, more than to distinguish the noise of a single billow, or a single dashing of a few particles of agitated air, in the whole thunders of the ocean and the storm.

When many sensations coexist, and are, therefore, of course weaker and less distinct, if any one were suddenly to become much more intense, the rest would fade in proportion, so as scarcely to be felt. A thousand faint sounds murmur around us, which are instantly hushed by any loud noise. If, when we are looking at the glittering firmament of suns in a winter night, any one of those distant orbs were to become as radiant as our own sun, which is itself but the star of our planetary system, there can be no question, that, like our sun on its rising, it would quench, with its brilliancy, all those little glimmering lights, which would still shine on us, indeed, as before, but would shine on us without being perceived. It may be regarded, then, as another general law of the mind, that when many sensations coexist with equal intensity, the effect of the increased intensity of one is a diminished intensity of those which coexist with it.

Let us now, for the application of these remarks, consider what it is which takes place in attention, when many objects are together acting on our senses, and we attend, perhaps, only to a single sensation. As a mere description of the process, I cannot use a happier exemplification than that which Condillac has given us in his *Logique*.

Let us imagine a castle, which commands, from its elevation, an extensive view of a domain, rich with all the beauties of nature and art. It is night when we arrive at it. The next morning our window-shutters open at the moment when the sun has just risen above the horizon,—and close again the very moment after.

Though the whole sweep of country was shown to us but for an instant, we must have seen every object which it comprehends with-

in the sphere of our vision. In a second or third instant we could have received only the same impressions which we received at first; consequently, though the window had not been closed again, we should have continued to see but what we saw before.

This first instant, however, though it unquestionably showed us all the scene, gave us no real knowledge of it; and, when the windows were closed again, there is not one of us who could have ventured to give even the slightest description of it,—a sufficient proof that we may have seen many objects, and yet have learned nothing.

At length, the shutters are opened again, to remain open while the sun is above the horizon; and we see once more what we saw at first. Even now, however, if, in a sort of ecstasy, we were to continue to see at once, as in the first instant, all this multitude of different objects, we should know as little of them when the night arrived as we knew when the window-shutters were closed again after the very moment of their opening.

To have a knowledge of the scene, then, it is not sufficient to behold it all at once, so as to comprehend it in a single gaze; we must consider it in detail, and pass successively from object to object. This is what Nature has taught us all. If she has given us the power of seeing many objects at once, she has given us also the faculty of looking but at one,—that is to say, of directing our eyes on one only of the multitude; and it is to this faculty,—which is a result of our organization, says Condillac,—that we owe all the knowledge which we acquire from sight.

The faculty is common to us all: and yet, if afterwards we were to talk of the landscape which we had all seen, it would be very evident that our knowledge of it would not be exactly the same. By some of us, a picture might be given of it with tolerable exactness, in which there would be many objects such as they were, and many, perhaps, which had very little resemblance to the parts of the landscape which we wished to describe. The picture which others might give, would probably be so confused, that it would be quite impossible to recognise the scene in the description, and yet all had seen the same objects and nothing but the same objects. The only difference is, that some of us had wandered from object to object irregularly, and that others had looked at them in a certain order.

Now, what is this order? Nature points it out to us herself. It is the very order in which she presents to us objects. There are some which are more striking than others, and which, of themselves, almost call to us to look at them; they are the predominant objects, around which the others seem to arrange themselves. It is to them, accordingly, that we give our first attention; and when we have remarked their relative situations, the others gradually fill up the intervals.

We begin, then, with the principal objects; we observe them in succession; we compare them, to judge of their relative positions. When these are ascertained, we observe the objects that fill up the intervals, comparing each with the principal object, till we have fixed the positions of all.

When this process of successive, but regular observation, is accomplished, we know all the objects and their situations, and can embrace them with a single glance. Their order, in our mind, is no longer an order of mere succession; it is simultaneous. It is that in which they exist, and we see it at once distinctly.

The comprehensive knowledge thus acquired, we owe to the mere skill with which we have directed our eyes from object to object. The knowledge has been acquired in parts successively; but, when acquired, it is present at once to our mind, in the same manner as the objects which it retraces to us are all present to the single glance of the eye that beholds them.

The description which I have now given you, very nearly after the words of Condillac, is, I think, a very faithful representation of a process of which we must all repeatedly have been conscious. It seems to me, however, faithful as it is as a mere description, to leave the great difficulty unexplained, and even unremarked. We see a multitude of objects, and we have one complex indistinct feeling. We wish to know the scene more accurately, and, in consequence of this wish, though the objects themselves continue as before, we no longer seem to view them all, but only one, or a few; and the few, which we now see, we see more distinctly. Such I conceive to be the process; but the difficulty is, that though we seem to view only a few objects, and these much more distinctly, the field of the eye still comprehends a wide expanse, the light from which scarcely affects us, while the light from other parts of it, though not more brilliant, produces in us distinct perception. It is vain for Condillac to say, that it is in consequence of a faculty which we have of directing our eyes on one object, a faculty which is the result of our organization, and which is common to all mankind; for, in the first place, if this direction of our eyes, of which he speaks, on a single object, be meant, in its strict sense, of the eye itself, which we direct, it is not true that we have any such faculty. We cannot direct our eyes so as not to comprehend equally in our field of vision, many objects beside that single object which is sup-

posed to have fixed our attention; and if, by the direction of our eyes, be meant the exclusive or limited perception by our mind itself, there remains the difficulty,—how it happens, that while light from innumerable objects falls on our retina as before, it no longer produces any distinct vision relatively to the objects from which it comes,—while light, probably not more brilliant, from other objects, produces vision much more distinct than before. Let us consider this difficulty, which, in truth, constitutes the principal phenomenon of attention, a little more fully.

When Condillac speaks of the faculty of the mind, by which he supposes it capable of directing the eye, exclusively, on certain objects, he must speak of that only, of which we are conscious, previously to the more distinct perception of those objects, as certain parts of the scene.

What is it, then, of which we are conscious, between the indistinct perception of the wide scene and the distinct perception of parts of the scene?

In the first place, there is a general desire of knowing the scene more accurately. This is the primary feeling of the process of attention. But this primary feeling is soon succeeded by others. Indistinct as the whole complex scene may be, some parts of it more brilliant, or more striking in general character, are less indistinct than others. There are a few more prominent parts, as Condillac says, around which the rest are indistinctly arranged.

With some one of these, then, as in itself more impressive and attractive, we begin; our general desire of knowing the whole scene having been followed by a wish to know this principal part more accurately.

The next step is to prevent the eye itself from wandering, that no new objects may distract it, and that there may be as little confusion as possible of the rays from different objects, on that part of the retina on which the rays fell from the particular object which we wish to consider. We fix our eyes, therefore, and our whole body, as steadily as we can, by the muscles subservient to these purposes.

So far, unquestionably, no new faculty is exercised. We have merely the desire of knowing the scene before us,—the selection of some prominent object, or rather the mere perception of it, as peculiarly prominent,—the desire of knowing it particularly,—and the contraction of a few muscles, in obedience to our volition.

No sooner, however, has all this taken place, than instantly, or almost instantly, and without our consciousness of any new and peculiar state of mind intervening in the process, the landscape becomes to our vision altogether different. Certain parts only, those parts which we wished to know particularly, are seen by us; the remaining parts seem almost to have vanished. It is as if every thing before had been but the doubtful colouring of enchantment, which had disappeared, and left to us the few prominent realities on which we gaze; or rather, it is as if some instant enchantment, obedient to our wishes, had dissolved every reality besides, and brought closer to our sight the few objects which we desired to see.

Still, however, all of which we are truly conscious, as preceding immediately the change of appearance in the scene, is the mere desire, of which I have spoken, combined probably with expectation of that more distinct vision which follows. There may be a combination of feelings, but no new and peculiar feeling, either as simple, or coexisting with other feelings,—no indication, in short, of the exercise of a new power.

Even though we should be incapable, therefore, of understanding how the desire should have this effect, it would not be the less true that the desire of knowing accurately a particular object in a group, is instantly,—or, at least, instantly after some organic change which may probably be necessary,—followed by a more vivid and distinct perception of the particular object, and a comparative faintness and indistinctness of the other objects that coexist with it; and that what we call attention is nothing more.

Are the comparative distinctness and indistinctness, however, a result which we had no reason to expect? or are they not rather what might, in some degree at least, have been expected, from our knowledge of the few physical facts with respect to our coexisting sensations, which I have already pointed out to you, and from the circumstance which we are next to consider? We have seen, in the observations already made by us, that many coexisting perceptions are indistinct, and that when one becomes more vivid, the others become still fainter. All that is necessary, therefore, is to discover some cause of increased vividness of that one to which we are said to attend.

If we can discover any reason why this should become more vivid, the comparative indistinctness of the other parts of the scene may be considered as following of course.

Such a cause exists, unquestionably, in that feeling of desire, without which there can be no attention. To attend, is to have a desire of knowing that to which we attend, and attention without desire is a verbal contradiction, an inconsistency, at least, as great as if we were said to desire to know without any desire of knowing, or to be attentive without attention.

When we attend, then, to any part of a complex group of sensations, there is always an emotion of desire, however slight the emotion may be, connected exclusively with that

particular part of the group to which we attend: and whatever effect our emotions produce on the complex feelings that accompany them, we may expect to be produced, in some greater or less degree, by the desire in the complex process which we term attention.

The effect which our expectation might anticipate, is the very effect that is truly found to take place,—an increased liveliness of that part of the complex group, to which alone the desire relates.

That it is the nature of our emotions of every sort, to render more vivid all the mental affections with which they are peculiarly combined, as if their own vivacity were in some measure divided with these, every one who has felt any strong emotion, must have experienced. The eye has, as it were, a double quickness to perceive what we love or hate, what we hope or fear. Other objects may be seen slightly; but these, if seen at all, become instantly permanent, and cannot appear to us without impressing their presence, as it were, in stronger feeling on our senses and our soul.

Such is the effect of emotion, when combined even with sensations that are of themselves, by their own nature, vivid; and mark therefore less strikingly the increase of vividness received. The vivifying effect, however, is still more remarkable, by its relative proportion, when the feelings with which the emotion is combined are in themselves peculiarly faint, as in the case of mere memory or imagination. The object of any of our emotions, thus merely conceived by us, becomes, in many cases, so vivid as to render even our accompanying perceptions comparatively faint. The mental absence of lovers, for example, is proverbial; and what is thus termed, in popular language, absence, is nothing more than the greater vividness of some mere conception, or other internal feeling, than of any, or all of the external objects present at the time, which have no peculiar relation to the prevailing emotion:—

"The darkened sun
Loses his light: The rosy bosom'd Spring
To weeping Fancy pines; and yon bright arch,
Contracted, bends into a dusky vault.
All nature fades, extinct; and she alone,
Heard, felt, and seen, possesses every thought,
Fills every sense, and pants in every vein.
Books are but formal dulness,—tedious friends,
And sad amid the social band he sits
Lonely and unattentive. From his tongue
The unfinish'd period falls: while, borne away
On swelling thought, his wafted spirit flies
To the vain bosom of his distant Fair;
And leaves the semblance of a lover fix'd
In melancholy site, with head declined
And love-dejected eyes."*

What brighter colours the fears of superstition give to the dim objects perceived in the twilight, the inhabitants of the village who have to pass the churchyard at any late hour, and the little students of ballad lore, who have carried with them from the nursery many tales which they almost tremble to remember, know well. And in the *second sight* of this northern part of the island, there can be no doubt, that the objects which the seers conceive themselves to behold, truly are more vivid, as conceptions, than, but for the superstition and the melancholy character of the natives, which harmonize with the objects of this gloomy foresight, they would have been; and that it is in consequence of this brightening effect of the emotion, as concurring with the dim and shadowy objects which the vapoury atmosphere of our lakes and valleys presents, that fancy, relatively to the individual, becomes a temporary reality. The *gifted eye*, which has once believed itself favoured with such a view of the future, will, of course, ever after have a quicker foresight and more frequent revelations; its own wilder emotion communicating still more vivid forms and colours to the objects which it dimly perceives.

On this subject, however, I need not seek any additional illustration. I may fairly suppose you to admit, as a general physical law of the Phenomena of Mind, that the influence of every emotion is to render more vivid the perception or conception of its object.

I must remark, however, that when the emotion is very violent, as in the violence of any of our fiercer passions, though it still renders every object with which it harmonizes, more vivid and prominent, it mingles with them some degree of its own confusion of feeling. It magnifies and distorts; and what it renders brighter it does not therefore render more distinct:—

"The flame of passion, through the struggling soul
Deep-kindled, shows across that sudden blaze
The object of its rapture, vast of size,
With fiercer colours and a night of shade."*

The species of desire which we are considering, however, is not of this fierce and tempestuous kind.

Emotions of a calmer species have the vivifying effect without the indistinctness; and precisely of this degree is that desire which constitutes attention, as coexisting with the sensations, or other feelings to which we are said to attend.

We have found, then, in the desire which accompanies attention, or rather which chiefly constitutes it, the cause of that increased intensity which we sought.

When all the various objects of a scene are of themselves equally, or nearly equally, in-

* Thomson's Seasons—Spring, v. 1006—1021.

* Pleasures of Imagination, Book II. v. 137—140.

teresting or indifferent to us, the union of desire, with any particular perception of the group, might be supposed, *a priori*, to render this perception in some degree more vivid than it was before. It is not necessary that this difference of vividness should take place wholly, or even be very striking, in the first instant; for, by becoming in the first instant even slightly more vivid, it acquires additional colouring and prominence, so as to increase that interest which led us originally to select it for our first minute observation, and thus to brighten it more and more progressively. Indeed, when we reflect on our consciousness, during what is called an effort of attention, we feel that some such progress as this really takes place, the object becoming gradually more distinct while we gaze, till at length it requires a sort of effort to turn away to the other coexisting objects, and to renew with them the same process.

Attention, then, is not a simple mental state, but a process or a combination of feelings. It is not the result of any peculiar power of the mind, but of those mere laws of perception, by which the increased vividness of one sensation produces a corresponding faintness of others coexisting with it, and of that law of our emotions, by which they communicate greater intensity to every perception, or other feeling, with which they coexist and harmonize.

LECTURE XXXII.

ON THE EXTERNAL AFFECTIONS OF MIND COMBINED WITH DESIRE, CONTINUED — ON THE INTERNAL AFFECTIONS OF MIND—CLASSIFICATION OF THEM.

In my last Lecture, Gentlemen, I concluded my sketch of the different hypotheses of philosophers with respect to perception, with an account of that Pre-established Harmony, by which Leibnitz, excluding all reciprocal agency of mind and matter, endeavoured to account for the uniform coincidence of our mental feelings with our bodily movements,—a hypothesis which, though it does not seem to have gained many followers out of Germany, produced the most enthusiastic admiration in the country of its author. I may remark, by the way, as a very striking example of the strange mixture of seemingly opposite qualities, which we frequently find in the character of nations, that, while the country, of which I speak, has met with ridicule, most unjust in degree, as national ridicule always is, for the heaviness of its laborious erudition, it must be allowed to surpass all other countries in the passionate enthusiasm of its philosophy, which, particularly in metaphysics, from the reign of Leibnitz to the more recent worship paid to the transcendentalism of Kant, seems scarcely to have admitted of any calm approbation, or to have known any other inquirers than violent partisans and violent foes.

After my remarks on this hypothesis, which closed my view of our external affections of mind, as they exist simply, I next proceeded to consider them as they exist, combined with desire, in that state of the mind which is termed *attention*, a state which has been supposed to indicate a peculiar intellectual power, but which, I endeavoured to show you, admits of being analyzed into other more general principles.

It is to our consciousness, of course, that we must refer for the truth of any such analysis; and the process which it reveals to us, in attention, seems, I think, to justify the analysis which I made, indicating a combination of simpler feelings, but not any new and distinct species of feeling, to be referred to a peculiar faculty.

We see many objects together, and we see them indistinctly. We wish to know them more accurately, and we are aware that this knowledge can be acquired only in detail. We select some one more prominent object from the rest, or rather, without any selection on our part, this object excites, in a higher degree, our desire of observing it particularly, merely by being more prominent, or, in some other respect, more interesting than the rest. To observe it particularly, we fix our body, and our eyes,—for it is a case of vision which I have taken for an example,—as steadily as possible, that the light from the same points of the object may continue to fall on the same points of the retina. Together with our wish, we have an expectation, the natural effect of uniform past experience, that the object will now be more distinctly perceived by us; and, in accordance with this expectation, when the process which I have described is completed, the object, as if it knew our very wish and hastened to gratify it, does become more distinct; and, in proportion as it becomes thus more vivid, the other objects of the group become gradually fainter, till at length they are scarcely felt to be present. Such, without the intervention of any new and peculiar state of mind, is the mental process, as far as we are conscious of it; and, if this be the process, there is no reason to infer in it the operation of any power of the mind different from those which are exercised in other cases. The general capacities of perception, and desire, and expectation, and voluntary command of certain muscles, which, on every view of the phenomena of attention, we must allow the mind to possess, are, of themselves, sufficient to explain the phenomena, and preclude, therefore, any further reference.

The brightening of the objects to which we attend, that is to say, of the objects which have interested us, and which we feel a desire of knowing, and the consequent fading of the other coexisting objects, I explained, by the well-known influence, not of desire merely, but of all our emotions, in rendering more vivid those objects of perception or fancy, with which they harmonize; and I illustrated this influence by various examples.

The phantasms of imagination, in the reveries of our waking hours, when our external senses are still open, and quick to feel, are, as mere conceptions, far less vivid than the primary perceptions from which they originally flowed; and yet, under the influence of any strong emotion, they become so much more bright and prominent than external things, that, to the impassioned muser on distant scenes and persons, the scenes and persons truly around him are almost as if they were not in existence. If a mere conception, then, faint as it must always be by its own nature, can thus be rendered more vivid than reality by the union of any strong desire, it is surely less wonderful that the same cause should communicate the same superior vividness to the brighter realities of perception. If what we remember with interest, and wish to see again, become so much more vivid in our fancy, merely by this very wish, that we scarcely perceive any one of the innumerable objects before our eyes, what we truly see, in its own lively colouring, and feel a strong desire of knowing more intimately, may well be supposed to render us less sensible to the other coexisting objects, which the very shadows of our imagination, when brightened by a similar desire, were able mentally to annihilate or eclipse.

In addition to this direct vivifying influence of the desire itself, some part, and perhaps a very considerable part, of the brightening of the object, during attention, may arise indirectly from the mere muscular adaptation of the organ. I do not speak merely of that internal adaptation, whatever it may be, which accommodates the organ to the object, and, therefore, varies with the distance of the object, but of that simpler contraction which keeps the organ, as a whole, steadily fixed. It is proved by many facts, that a certain time is necessary for vision, and, probably, in like manner, for all our perceptions. A cannon ball, for example, though it must have reflected light to us, during its passage, may yet pass before our eyes so rapidly as not to be perceived; and, if a part of the eye be affected, in a certain manner, by one colour, and a different colour fall upon it so rapidly after the first that the former affection has not previously ceased, the result is not the visual affection, which the second colour alone would have produced, but that which would have arisen at once from a mixture of the two colours. In this way, in an experiment, which has been often performed, for the demonstration of this simple and beautiful fact; if a cylinder be painted in longitudinal bars, with the prismatic colours, in certain proportions, and be revolved rapidly on its axis, its surface to the eye will not seem to present any one of the colours which are really painted on it, but a uniform whiteness, which it has not, on a single point of its whole surface.

If rays of different colours, falling in rapid succession on the same points of the retina, thus seem to mingle with each other, and produce one confused effect, it must evidently be of great importance, for distinct vision, that the eyes should be so fixed, that the rays from the objects which we wish to observe, may not fall on parts of the retina, previously affected by the light of other objects, but, as much as possible, on the same parts, during the whole time of our observation. This can be done, as I have said, only by the continued agency of certain muscles; and hence arises that feeling of muscular effort, of which we are conscious in the process. How difficult it is for us to keep a muscle, for any length of time, in the same exact point of contraction, without the slightest deviation from this point, is well known to physiologists; and it is not wonderful, therefore, that, in attention, we should be conscious of a considerable effort, in endeavouring to fix steadily any of our organs. The power of thus fixing our muscles, is a power which improves by habitual exercise; and it is probably very much in this way that the practised eye is able so rapidly to distinguish the minute parts of objects, which require from others a much longer effort of attention.

But, whatever the effect of the muscular adaptation may be, it is not the less certain, if we reflect on our feelings, that the mental part of the process of attention involves nothing more, in addition to the primary perception, which is its object, than desire with expectation. This is all of which we are truly conscious, previously to the brightening of the perception itself, to which we are said to attend;—a brightening which, from the general laws of emotion, might very naturally be expected as the result of the union of desire with any of our sensations. In such circumstances, then, it is not wonderful that we should remember best the objects to which we pay most attention, since this is only to say that we remember best the objects on which we have dwelt longest, and with greatest interest, and which we have therefore known most accurately.

Such are our sensations or perceptions, when united with desire, exhibiting appearances which seem at first to indicate, though they do not truly indicate, a peculiar power

or susceptibility of the mind. We shall find, in considering our intellectual states of mind, the order of mental phenomena, to which we next proceed, that the union of desire with these has led, in like manner, to the belief of many distinct intellectual powers, which yet, like attention, admit of being analyzed into simpler elements. These intellectual phenomena themselves, in their simple state, must, however, be first examined by us.

Having now, then, offered all the observations for which our limited course allows me room, on the very important primary class of external affections of the mind, I proceed, according to our general division, to consider the secondary class of its internal affections; those states of it which are not the result of causes foreign to the mind itself, but immediate consequents of its own preceding feelings.

The Divine Contriver of our mental frame, who formed the soul to exist in certain states, on the presence of external things, formed it also to exist, in certain successive states, without the presence or direct influence of any thing external; the one state of the mind being as immediately the cause of the state of mind which follows it, as, in our external feelings, the change produced in our corporeal organ of sense is the cause of any one of the particular affections of that class. In the one class, that of our internal affections, the phenomena depend on the laws which regulate the successive changes of state of the mind itself. In the other class, that of our external affections, they depend on the laws of the mind, indeed, which is susceptible of these peculiar changes of state; but they depend, in an equal degree, on the laws which give to matter its peculiar qualities, and, consequently, its peculiar influence on this mental susceptibility. If light were to be annihilated, it is very evident that, though our mind itself were to continue endowed with all its present susceptibilities, it never again could behold the sun, around whose cold and gloomy mass our earth might still revolve as now; nor, in such circumstances, is there any reason to suppose that it would exist in any one of those various states which constitute the delightful sensations of vision. These, sensations, then, depend on external things, as much as on the mind itself. But though, after we have once been enriched with the splendid acquisitions which our perceptive organs afford us, every thing external were to vanish, not from our sight merely, but from all our senses, and our mind alone were to exist in the infinity of space, together with that Eternal Majesty which formed it,—still thought after thought, and feeling after feeling, would arise, as it were, spontaneously, in the disembodied spirit, if no change in its nature were to take place; and the whole world of light and fragrance, and harmony, would, in its remembrance, almost rise again, as if outliving annihilation itself. It is by this capacity of internal change of state, indeed, that the soul is truly immortal, which, if it were capable of no affections but those which I have termed external, would itself be virtually as mortal as all the mortal things that are around it; since, but for them, as causes of its feelings, it could not, in these circumstances of complete dependence, have any feelings whatever, and could, therefore, exist only in that state of original insensibility which preceded the first sensation that gave it consciousness of existence. It is, in the true sense of immortality of life, immortal, only because it depends for its feelings, as well as for its mere existence, not on the state of perishable things, which are but the atmosphere that floats around it, but on its own independent laws; or, at least,—for the laws of mind, as well as the laws of matter, can mean nothing more,—depends for the successions of its feelings only on the provident arrangements of that all-foreseeing Power, whose will, as it existed at the very moment at which it called every thing from nothing, and gave to mind and matter their powers and susceptibilities, is thus, consequently, in the whole series of effects, from age to age, the eternal legislation of the universe.

Even while our soul is united to this bodily frame, and continually capable of being affected by the objects that are continually present with it, by far the greater number of our feelings are those which arise from our internal successions of thought. Innumerable as our perceptions are, they are but a small part of the varied consciousness of a day. We do not see or feel objects merely,—for this alone would be of little value; but we compare them with each other—we form plans of action, and prosecute them with assiduous attention, or we meditate on the means by which they may most effectually be prosecuted; and with all our perceptions of external things, and plans of serious thought, a continued fairy-work of involuntary fancy is incessantly mingling, in consequence of the laws of suggestion in the mind itself, like the transient shadows on a stream, of the clouds that flit over it, which picture on it their momentary forms, as they pass in rapid variety, without affecting the course of the busy current, which glides along in its majestic track, as if they had never been. If we had the power of external sense only, life would be as passive as the most unconnected dream, or rather far more passive and irregular than the wildest of our dreams. Our remembrances, comparisons, our hopes, our fears, and all the variety of our thoughts and emotions, give a harmony and unity to our general consciousness, which make the

consciousness of each day a little drama, or a connected part of that still greater drama, which is to end only with the death of its hero, or rather with the commencement of his glorious apotheosis.

How wide a field the internal affections of the mind present, without dependence on the system of material things,—with which we are connected, indeed, by many delightful ties, but by ties that have relation only to this mortal scene,—is proved in a very striking manner, by the increased energy of thought which we often seem to acquire in those hours of the quiet of the night, when every external influence is nearly excluded,—the hours of inward meditation, in which the mind has been poetically said to retire into the sanctuary of its own immense abode, and to feel there and enjoy its spiritual infinity, as if admitted to the ethereal dwellings and the feasts of the Gods.

"Nonne vides, quoties nox circumfunditur atra
Immensi terga Oceani terramque polumque,
Cum rerum obduxit species obnubilus Aer
Nec fragor impulsas aut vox allabitur aures,
Ut nullo intuitû mens jam defixa, recedit
In sese, et vires intra se colligit omnes?
Ut magno hospitio potitur, seque excipit ipsa
Totam intus; seu jussa Deûm discumbere mensis.
Nam neque sic illam solido de marmore tecta
Nec cum porticibus capiunt laquiaria centum
Aurea, tot distincta locis, tot regibus apta,
Quæsitæque epulæ, Tyrioque instructus ab ostro:
Ut gaudet sibi juncta, sibique intenditur ipsa,
Ipsa sibi tota incumbens, totamque pererrans
Immensa immensam spatio longèque patentem.
Seu dulces inter latebras Heliconis amœni,
Et sacram Phœbi nemorum divertitur umbram,
Fœcundum pleno exercens sub pectore numen;
Seu causas rerum occultas, et semina volvit,
Et queis fœderibus conspirent maximus Æther
NeptunusquePater, Tellusque, atque omnia gignant;
Sive altum virtutis iter subducit, et almus
Molitur leges, queis fortunata juventus
Pareat, ac pace imperium tutetur et armis."*

The internal states of mind, then, which form the class next to be considered by us, present to our inquiry no narrow or uninteresting field. We are to find in these again every thing, though in fainter colours, which delighted and interested us in the former class; while we are, at the same time, to discover an abundant source of feelings still more delightful and sublime in themselves, and still more interesting to our analysis. We are no longer mere sensitive beings, that gaze upon the universe, and feel pain or pleasure as a few of its elementary particles touch our nerves. We are the discoverers of laws, which every element of the universe obeys,—the tracers of events of ages that are past,—the calculators and prophets of events, that are not to occur till generation after generation of the prophetic calculators that succeed us shall themselves have passed away;—and, while we are thus able to discover the innumerable relations of created things, we are, at the same time, by the medium of these internal states of our own mind, the discoverers also of that Infinite Being, who framed every thing which it is our glory to be capable merely of observing, and who, without acting directly on any of our organs of sense, is yet present to our intellect with as bright a reality of perception, as the suns and planets which he has formed are present to our corporeal vision.

The species of philosophical inquiry, which our internal affections of mind admit, is exactly the same as that which our external affections admit; that is to say, we are, in our inquiry, to consider the circumstances in which they arise, and the circumstances which follow them, with the relations which they appear to us mutually to bear to our external feelings, and to each other, and nothing more. It is as little possible for us, independently of experience, to discover, *a priori*, any reason that one state of mind should be followed directly by another state of mind, as, in the case of our external feelings, to discover any reason that the presence of light should be followed by that particular mental state which constitutes the sensation of colour, not by that which constitutes the perception of the song of a nightingale, or the fragrance of a violet, or that those external causes should be followed by their peculiar sensations rather than by the perception of colour. It is equally vain for us to think of discovering any reason in the nature of the mind itself, which could have enabled us to predict, without actual experience, or, at least, without analogy of other similar instances, any of the mere intellectual changes of state, that the sight of an object, which we have seen before in other circumstances, should recal, by instant spontaneous suggestion, those other circumstances which exist no longer; that in meeting, in the most distant country, a native of our own land, it should be in our power, by a single word, to annihilate, as it were, for the moment, all the seas and mountains between him and his home; or, in the depth of the most gloomy dungeon, where its wretched tenant, who has been its tenant for half a life, sees, and scarcely sees, the few faint rays that serve but to speak of a sunshine, which he is not to enjoy, and which they deprive him of the comfort of forgetting, and to render visible to his very eyes that wretchedness which he feels at his heart, that even this creature of misery,—whom no one in the world perhaps remembers but the single being, whose regular presence, at the hour at which he gives him, day by day, the means of adding to his life another year of wretchedness like the past, is scarcely felt as the presence of another living thing,—should yet, by the influ-

* D. Heinsius, De Contemptu Mortis, Lib. i.

ence of a single thought, enter into the instant possession of a freedom, beyond that which the mere destruction of his dungeon could give,—a freedom which restores him not merely to the liberty, but to the very years which he had lost,—to the woods, and the brook, and the fields of his boyish frolics, and to all the happy faces which were only as happy as his own. The innumerable examples of such successions of thought we know from experience, but from experience only. It is enough for us, however, to ascertain the simple fact, that the internal suggestions of thought after thought, without the recurrence of any external object, does take place, as truly as sensation itself, when external objects recur,—to observe the general circumstances relating to the suggestion,—and to arrange the principle on which it seems to depend, as a principle of our intellectual constitution. While we attempt no more than this, we are certain at least that we are not attempting any thing which is beyond the sphere of human exertion. To attempt more, and to strive to discover, in any one of the series of our internal feelings, some reason which might have led us originally to predict its existence, or the existence of the other mental affections which succeed it, would be to hope to discover, what is not merely beyond our power even to divine, but what we should be incapable of knowing that we had divined, even though we should casually have succeeded in making the discovery.

In the classification of our internal feelings, as in every classification, and, indeed, in every thing, intellectual or moral, which can exercise us, it is evident that we may err in two ways, by excess or deficiency. We may multiply divisions without necessity, or we may labour in vain to force into one division individual diversities, which cannot, by any labour, be made to correspond. The golden mean, of which moralists speak, is as important in science as in our practical views of happiness; and the habit of this cautious speculative moderation is probably of as difficult attainment in the one, as the habitual contentment which is necessary to the enjoyment of the other.

When we think of the infinite variety of the physical objects around us, and of the small number of classes in which they are at present arranged, it would seem to us, if we were ignorant of the history of philosophy, that the regular progress of classification must have been to simplify more and more the general circumstances of agreement on which arrangement depends; that, in this progressive simplification, millions of diversities must have been originally reduced to thousands,—these afterwards to hundreds,—and these again, successively, to divisions still more minute. But the truth is, that this simplicity of division is far from being so progressive in the arrangement even of external things. The first steps of classification must indeed uniformly be, to reduce the great multitude of obvious diversities to some less extensive tribes. But the mere guess-work of hypothesis soon comes in to supply the place of laborious observation or experiment, and of that slow and accurate reasoning on observations and experiments which, to minds of very rapid imagination, is perhaps a labour as wearisome as, in the long observation itself, to watch for hours, with an eye fixed like the telescope through which it gazes, one constant point of the heavens, or to minister to the furnace, and hang over it in painful expectance of the transmutations which it tardily presents. By the unlimited power of an hypothesis, we in a moment range together, under one general name, myriads of diversities the most obstinately discordant; as if the mere giving of a name could of itself alter the qualities of things, making similar what was dissimilar before, like words of magic, that convert any thing into any thing. When the hypothesis is proved to be false, the temporary magic of the spell is of course dissolved, and all the original diversities appear again to be ranged once more in a wider variety of classes. Even where, without any such guess-work of hypothetical resemblance, divisions and arrangements have been formed on the justest principles, according to the qualities of objects known at the time, some new observation or new experiment is continually showing differences of composition or of general qualities where none were conceived before; and the same philosophy is thus, at the same moment, employed in uniting and disuniting, in reducing many objects to a few, and separating a few into many,—as the same electric power, at the moment in which it is attracting objects nearer to it, repels others which were almost in contiguity, and often brings the same object close to it, only to throw it off the next moment to a greater distance. While a nicer artificial analysis, or more accurate observation, is detecting unsuspected resemblances, and, still more frequently, unsuspected diversities, there is hence no fixed point nor regular advance, but a sort of ebb and flow of wider and narrower divisions and subdivisions; and the classes of an intervening age may be fewer than the classes both of the age which preceded it and of that which comes after it. For a very striking example of this alternation, I may refer to the history of that science which is to matter what our intellectual analysis is to mind. The elements of bodies have been more and fewer successively, varying with the analyses of almost every distinguished chemist: far from having fewer principles

of bodies, as chemistry advances, how many more elements have we now than in the days of Aristotle! There can be no question, that when man first looked around him with a philosophic eye, and saw, in the sublime rudeness of nature, something more than objects of savage rapacity, or still more savage indifference, he must have conceived the varieties of bodies to be innumerable, and could as little have thought of comprehending them all under a few simple names, as of comprehending the whole earth itself within his narrow grasp. In a short time, however, this narrow grasp, if I may venture so to express myself, did strive to comprehend the whole earth; and soon after man had made the first great advance in science, of wondering at the infinity of things in which he was lost, we had sages, such as Thales, Anaximenes, and Heraclitus, who were forming every thing of a single principle,—water, or air, or fire. The four elements, which afterwards reigned so long in the schools of physics, gave place to a single principle with the alchemists; or to three principles,—salt, sulphur, and mercury,—with chemists less bold in conjecture. These, again, were soon multiplied by observers of still nicer discrimination; and modern chemistry, while it has shown some bodies, which we regarded as different, to be composed of the same elements, has at the same time shown, that what we regarded as elements are themselves compounds of elements which we knew not before.

To him who looks back on the history of our own science, the analytic science of mind, which, as I have already said, may almost be regarded, in its most important aspects, as a sort of intellectual chemistry,—there will appear the same alternate widening and narrowing of classification. The mental phenomena are, in one age or country, of many classes; in a succeeding age, or in a different country, they are of fewer; and again, after the lapse of another age, or the passage of a river or a mountain, they are of many more. In our own island, after the decay of scholastic metaphysics, from Hobbes to Hume,—if I may use these names, as dates or eras, in a science, on which, with all their unfortunate errors on many of the most important points of human belief, they both unquestionably threw a degree of light, which rendered their errors on these subjects the more to be lamented,—in this long and brilliant period,—which, of course, includes, with many other eminent names, the very eminent author of the Essay on the Human Understanding,—there was a tendency to simplify, as much as possible, the classification of the phenomena of mind; and more regard, perhaps, was paid to the similarities of phenomena, than to their differences. Subsequent to this period, however, the philosophy of Dr. Reid, and, in general, of the metaphysicians of this part of the island, has had the opposite tendency,—to enlarge, as I conceive, far beyond what was necessary, the number of classes which they considered as too limited before;—and, in proportion, more regard has perhaps been paid to the differences, or supposed differences of phenomena, than to their resemblances. There can be no doubt, at least, that we are now accustomed to speak of more powers or operations of the mind, than even the schoolmen themselves, fond as they were of all the nicest subtilties of infinitesimal subdivision.

The difference in this respect, however, is not so striking, when we consider successions of ages, in which, of course, from our general notion of the effects of time, we are accustomed to expect variety, as when we look to neighbouring countries at the same period, especially if we consider the advantage of that noble art, which might have been supposed, by the wide diffusion which it gives to opinion, to have removed, as to human sentiment, all the boundaries of mere geographic distance. Slight, however, as the distance is which separates the two countries, the philosophy of France, in its views of the phenomena of mind, and the philosophy of Britain, particularly of this part of Britain, have for more than half a century differed as much as the philosophy of different ages; certainly in a degree far greater than, but for experience, it would have been easy for us to suppose. In France, all the phenomena of mind have been, during that period, regarded as sensations, or transformed sensations, that is to say, as sensations variously simplified or combined. The works of Condillac, who professed to have founded his system on that of Locke, but who evidently did not understand fully what Locke intended, gave the principal tone to this philosophic belief; and it has been fostered since by that passion for the simple and the wonderful, which, when these two objects can be united, is perhaps the strongest of all our intellectual passions. In the system of the French metaphysicians, they are united in a very high degree. That this universal presence of sensation, whether true or false, is at least very simple, cannot be denied; and there is certainly abundant matter of wonder in the supposed discovery, that all the variety of our internal feelings are those very feelings of a different class, to which they have so little appearance of belonging. It is a sort of perpetual masquerade, in which we enjoy the pleasure of recognising a familiar friend in a variety of grotesque dresses, and the pleasure also of enjoying the mistakes of those around us, who take him for a different person, merely because he has changed his robe and his mask. The fallacy of the doctrine is precisely of that kind, which, is

once admitted, is most difficult to be shaken off. It relates to a system which is very simple, very wonderful, and obviously true in part. Indeed, when there are so many actual transformations of our feelings, so many emotions, of which the principal elements are so little recognisable, in the complex affection that results from them,—the supposition that all the variety of our consciousness may be only modes of one simple class of primary feelings, false as it is, is far from being the most striking example which the history of our science presents of the extravagance of philosophic conjecture.

The speculations of the French school of philosophers, to which I have now alluded, as to the supposed universal transmutations of feeling, bear, as you can scarcely fail to have remarked, a very obvious resemblance, in extreme simplicity, to the speculations of the alchemists on transmutations of another kind. The resemblance is stated, with great force, by a living French author, himself a metaphysician of no humble rank. I allude to a passage which you will find quoted by Mr. Stewart, in one of the valuable preliminary dissertations of his volume of Essays, from a work of De Gerando.

"It required nothing less,"—says this ingenious writer,—"than the united splendour of the discoveries brought to light by the new chemical school, to tear the minds of men from the pursuit of a simple and primary element; a pursuit renewed in every age, with an indefatigable perseverance, and always renewed in vain. With what feelings of contempt would the physiologists of former times have looked down on the chemists of the present age, whose timid and circumscribed system admits nearly forty different principles in the composition of bodies! What a subject of ridicule would the new nomenclature have afforded to an alchemist!

"The Philosophy of Mind has its alchemists also; men, whose studies are directed to the pursuit of one single principle, into which the whole science may be resolved; and who flatter themselves with the hope of discovering the grand secret, by which the pure gold of truth may be produced at pleasure.

This secret of the intellectual *opus magnum*, Condillac conceived himself to have found; or, rather, as I have already said, he ascribed the grand discovery to our own illustrious countryman. In this reference the whole school of French metaphysicians have very strangely agreed; conferring on Mr. Locke a praise which they truly meant to do him honour, but praise which the object of it would have hastened to disclaim. He certainly was not that alchemist in the science of mind which they conceived him to be; though he was a chemist in it, unquestionably, and a chemist of the highest rank.

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* Chap. I. Sect. ii p. 15, 16. 4to Edit.

LECTURE XXXIII.

ON THE CLASSIFICATION OF THE MENTAL PHENOMENA, BY LOCKE—BY CONDILLAC—BY REID—A NEW CLASSIFICATION.

Gentlemen, in the conclusion of my last Lecture, I alluded to the system of the French metaphysicians, as an instance of error from extreme simplification in the analysis of that class of our feelings which we are now considering.

Of this system,—which deserves some fuller notice, on account both of the great talents which have stated and defended it, and of its very wide diffusion,—I may remark, in the first place, that it is far from being, what its author and his followers consider it to be, a mere development of the system of our illustrious countryman. On the contrary, they agree with Locke only in one point, and that a negative one,—as to which all philosophers may now be considered as unanimous,—the denial of what were termed innate ideas. In every thing which can be strictly said to be positive in his system, this great philosopher is nearly as completely opposed to Condillac and his followers, as to the unintelligible wranglers of the ancient schools. To convince you of this, a very slight statement of the two systems will be sufficient.

According to Locke, the mind, to whose existence thought or feeling is not essential, might, but for sensation, have remained for ever without feeling of any kind. From sensation we acquire our first *ideas*, to use a word which, from its ambiguity, I am not very fond of using, but which, from its constant occurrence, is a very important one in his system. These ideas we cannot merely remember as past, and compound or decompound them in various ways, but we can compare them in all their variety of relations; and, according as their objects are agreeable or disagreeable, can love or hate those objects, and fear or hope their return. We remember not external things only, so as to have ideas of them,—ideas of sensation,—but we remember also our very remembrance itself; our abstractions, comparisons, love, hate, hope, fear, and all the varieties of reflex thought or feeling; and our remembrance of these internal feelings, or operations of our mind, furnishes another abundant source of ideas, which he terms ideas of reflection. The comparison, however,—and it is this point alone which can be of any consequence in reference to the French system,—the com-

parison, as a state of the mind, even when it is exercised on our sensations or perceptions, is not itself a sensation or perception; nor is our hope, or fear, or any other of our reflex feelings; for then, instead of the two sources of our ideas, the distinction of which forms the very groundwork of the Essay on the Human Understanding, we should truly have but one source, and our ideas of reflection would themselves be the very ideas of sensation to which they are opposed. Our sensations, indeed, directly or indirectly, give rise to our reflex feelings, but they do not involve them; they are only prior in order, the occasions on which certain powers or susceptibilities of feeling in the mind evolve themselves.

Such is the system of Locke on those very points, on which the French philosophers most strangely profess to regard him as their great authority. But it is surely very different from the system which they affect to found on it. According to them, sensation is not merely that primary affection of mind which gives occasion to our other feelings, but is itself, as variously composed or decomposed, all the variety of our feelings. "If we consider," says Condillac, in a paragraph which may be said to contain a summary of his whole doctrine with respect to the mind—"if we consider that to remember, to compare, to judge, to distinguish, to imagine, to be astonished, to have abstract ideas, to have ideas of number and duration, to know truths, whether general or particular, are but so many modes of being attentive; that to have passions, to love, to hate, to hope, to fear, to will, are but so many different modes of desire; and that attention in the one case, and desire in the other case, of which all these feelings are modes, are themselves, in their origin, nothing more than modes of sensation, we cannot but conclude, that sensation involves in itself—*enveloppe*—all the faculties of the soul."*

Whatever we may think of this doctrine, as true or false, ingenious or absurd, it seems, at least, scarcely possible that we should regard it as the doctrine of Locke—of him who sets out with a primary division of our ideas into two distinct classes, one class of which alone belongs to sensation; and who considers even this class of our mere ideas not as involving all the operations of the mind with respect to them, but only as the objects of the mind in these various operations; as being what we compare, not the very feeling of our comparison itself, the inducements to passion, not what constitutes any of our passions, as a state, or series of states of the mind. To render the paragraph which I have quoted from Condillac at all accordant with the real doctrine of Locke, it would be necessary to reverse it in almost every proposition which it involves.

The doctrine then, as exhibited by Condillac and his followers, whatever merit it may have in itself, or however void it may be of merit of any kind, is not the doctrine of him from whom it is said to be derived. But its agreement or disagreement with the system of any other philosopher is, comparatively, of very little consequence. The great question is, whether it be just—whether it truly have the merit of presenting a faithful picture of the mental phenomena, which it professes to develope to us more clearly.

Have we reason to believe, then, that all the various feelings of our mind, which form the classification of its internal affections, are merely, to use Condillac's phrase, transformed sensations?

Transformed sensations, it is evident, on his own principles, though the phrase might seem vague and ambiguous in any other system, can mean nothing more than sensations more or less lively, or more or less complex. It cannot signify any thing that is absolutely different or superadded; for, if there be any thing in any complex feeling of the mind which did not originally form a sensation, or a part of a complex sensation, this addition, however slight, is itself a proof that all the phenomena of the mind are not mere sensations variously repeated; that sensation in short, does not "involve" all the affections and faculties of the soul.

Is every feeling, then, in the whole series of our varied consciousness, referable, in all its parts, to sensation, as its original source? Not its source merely, in one very evident respect, as that which is, in order, truly primary to all our other feelings, but as that which essentially constitutes them all, in the same manner as the waters of the fountain are afterwards the very waters which flow along the mead?

To prove the affirmative of this, it is astonishing with what readiness Condillac, who is generally regarded as a nice and subtile reasoner, aud who certainly, as his work on that subject shows, had studied with attention the great principles of logic,—passes from faculty to faculty, and from emotion to emotion, professing to find sensation everywhere, without exhibiting to us even the semblance of what he seeks, and yet repeating the constant affirmation that he has found it,—as if the frequent repetition were itself a proof of what is frequently repeated,—but proving only that the various feelings of the mind agree, as might be supposed, in being feelings of the mind—not that they agree in being sensations, as that word is used by himself, and as it is, in common philosophic use, distinguished from the other more gen-

* Traité des Sensations, Part I. Chap. vii. Sect. 2.

eral term. Except the mere frequency of the affirmation, and the unquestionable priority in order of time, of our sensations to our other feelings,—there is not the slightest evidence, in his system, of that universal transmutation which it affirms.

It may be necessary to mention, that, in these remarks on the system of the illustrious preceptor of the Prince of Parma, I allude, in particular, to his Treatise "*Of Sensations*," which contains his more mature opinions on the subject—not to his earlier work, *On the Origin of Human Knowledge*, in which he has not ventured on so bold a simplification; or, at least, has not expressed it in language so precise.

The great error of Condillac, as it appears to me, consists in supposing, that, when he has shown the circumstance from which any effect *results*, he has shown this result to be essentially the *same* with the circumstance which produced it.

Certain sensations have ceased to exist, certain other feelings have immediately arisen; —these new feelings are therefore the others, under another shape. Such is the secret, but very false logic, which seems to pervade his whole doctrine on the subject,

If all that is meant were merely, that whatever may be the varying feelings of the mind, the mind itself, in all this variety, when it remembers or compares, hates or loves, is still the same substance, as that which saw, heard, smelled, tasted, touched, there could be nothing objectionable in the doctrine, but there would then certainly be nothing new in it; and, instead of thinking either of Locke or of Condillac, we might think at pleasure in stating such a doctrine of any of the innumerable assertors of the spirituality of the thinking principle. Such, however, is not the meaning of the French metaphysician. He asserts this identity of substance, indeed, like the philosophers who preceded him, but he asserts still more. It is not the permanent substance *mind* only which is the same. Its affections or states, which seem, in many respects, absolutely different, are the same as those very affections or states, from which they seem to differ; and are the same, merely because they have succeeded them; for, as I have already said, except the frequency of his affirmation, that they are the same, there is no other evidence but that of the mere succession in order of time, by which he attempts to substantiate their sameness.

The origin of this false reasoning I conceive to be the analogy of *matter*, to which his system, by reducing all the affections of mind to that class which is immediately connected with external things, must have led him to pay peculiar attention. Yet, in justice to him, I must remark, that, although a system which reduces every feeling to mere sensation, and consequently connects every feeling, in its origin, with the qualities of matter, must be favourable to materialism, and has unquestionably fostered this, in a very high degree, in the French school of metaphysics, there is no reason to consider Condillac himself as a materialist; on the contrary, his works contain many very just remarks on the errors of materialism. But still his system, as I have said, by leading him continually to our organs of sense, and to the objects which act upon them, must have rendered the phenomena of matter peculiarly apt to recur to his mind in all its speculations. Now, in matter, there can be no question as to the reality of that transmutation, which, as applied to mind, forms the chief principle of his intellectual analysis. In the chemistry of the material elements, the compounds are the very elements themselves. When any two substances, present together, vanish as it were from our view, and a third substance, whether like or unlike to either of the former, presents itself in their place, we believe this third substance, however dissimilar it may appear, to be only the coexistence of the two others; and, indeed, since we have no reason to believe that any change takes place, in the number of the corpuscles of which our planet is composed, the whole series of its corpuscular changes can be only new combinations of particles that existed before.

The doctrine of Pythagoras, in its application to the material world, is in this respect philosophically accurate:—

> Tempus edax rerum, tuque invidiosa vetustas
> Omnia destruitis, vitiataque dentibus ævi
> Paulatim lentâ consumitis omnia morte.
> Nec species sua cuique manet; rerumque novatrix
> Ex aliis alias reparat natura figuras.
> Nec perit in toto quicquam, mihi credite, mundo,
> Sed variat faciemque novat; *nascique* vocatur
> Incipere esse aliud quàm quod fuit antè,—*moriique*
> Desinere illud idem. Cùm sint hûc forsitan ilia,
> Hæc translata illûc, summa tamen omnia constant.*

With respect to the mere elements of matter, therefore, the present may be said, and truly said, to be exactly the past; and, in the whole series of phenomena of the material universe, from the moment of its creation to this present moment, there has been nothing new, but mere changes of relative position. This absolute sameness of result, in all the apparent changes of matter, Condillac applies, by a most unwarrantable extension, to the mere affections of the mind; and because two affections of mind are followed by a third, he considers this third to be the two former coexisting, or, as he terms it, transformed. The feeling which follows another feeling, however seemingly different, is thus, in his system, the same, because it results from it;

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* Ovid. Metamorph. Lib. XV. v. 234—6, and 252—8.

and it is very easy for him, in this way, to prove all our feelings to be sensations, by this simplest of arguments, that sensation was the first state induced in mind, and that, hence, since all our other feelings, of every species, must have followed it, they must have originated in it, and, therefore, been this very sensation under a mere change of form. It is number one of the long series; and, if number two be a transformed sensation, because it results from number one, which was a sensation, number three must be equally so, because it follows number two; and thus, successively, the whole series. I perceive a horse; I perceive a sheep:—each of these separate states of my mind is a sensation. I cannot attend to them long, he says, without comparing them, and perceiving those circumstances of agreement, which lead me to apply to both the word quadruped. All this is most indubitably true. It is impossible, or, at least, it is not very common for us to observe any two animals long together, without thinking of some of the circumstances in which they agree or differ. The one state of mind is a consequence of the other state of mind. But this is far from proving the comparison itself, as a subsequent state or phenomenon of the mind, to be the same mental state as the mere perception of the two animals which simply preceded it. If the evidence of our consciousness is to be trusted, it is very different; and in what other evidence can the assertion of their sameness be founded? We do not feel the state of mind, which constitutes the comparison, to be virtually equal to the two states of mind which constituted the separate perceptions, as we feel the relation of virtual equality between our notion of the number eight, and our notions of six and two combined; the one feeling does not virtually comprehend the two others, and it surely does not comprehend them in any grosser physical sense; for there certainly is nothing in the absolute spiritual unity of our thinking principle which can lead us to believe that the state or affection of mind which constitutes the perception of a horse, and the state or affection of mind which constitutes the perception of a sheep, unite, in that different state or affection of mind, which constitutes the comparison of the two, in the same manner as the solid crystals of any salt unite, in solution, with the liquid which dissolves them. They do not involve or constitute, they merely give occasion to this third state, and give occasion to it, merely in consequence of the peculiar susceptibilities of the mind itself, as formed, by its divine Author, to be affected in this particular manner, after being affected in those different manners which constitute the separate perceptions, as sensation itself, the primary feeling, was made to depend on some previous organic affection produced by an external object. It is not, therefore, as being susceptible of mere sensation, but as being susceptible of more than mere sensation, that the mind is able to compare its sensations with each other. We may see, and certainly do see, objects together, without forming uniformly the same comparison; which could not be the case if the mere coexistence of the two perceptions constituted or involved the comparison itself. In the case of a horse and sheep, for example, though these, in the sensations which they excite, cannot, at different times, be very different, we compare at different times, their colour, their forms, their magnitudes, their functions, and the uses to which we put them, and we consider them as related in various other ways. The perceptions being the same, the comparisons, or subsequent feelings of relation, are different; and though the relation cannot be felt but when both objects are considered together, it is truly no part of the perception of each. According to the French system, the science, which we now strangely regard as of difficult acquirement, would be nothing more than the mere opening of our eyes. Were we to show to a peasant, absolutely unacquainted with the very elements of geometry, diagrams representing two right angles and a plane triangle, he might certainly, though he could not give them names, perceive these figures as clearly as the most expert mathematician. Every thing which mere sensation could produce, in this case, would be the same in both; and nothing can be added to this primary sensation, since every thing is said to be actually involved in the sensation itself. Yet, with all his accurate perception of the figures, however clear, and vivid, and lasting, the peasant would not find, in this immediate perception, the equality of the two right angles taken together to the three angles of the triangle, or any other geometrical relation. The comparison, then, and the belief of an universal truth of proportion, which results from that comparison, are certainly something more than the mere sensation itself. They are, in short, new states of mind, as distinct from the mere perception of the figures in the diagram, as the perception of a circle itself differs from the perception of a square. To compare one animal with another, is, indeed, to have different visual images, but the mere coexistence of visual images is only a group, larger or smaller as the images are more or fewer, and all which transformation can do is to add to this group or take away from it. Innumerable objects may be, and are continually present to us at once, so as to produce one complex affection of mind, fields, groves, mountains, streams; but the mere coexistence of these, so as to form in our thought one scene, involves no feeling of comparison; and if the mind had not been susceptible of other affections than those of sense, or of mere remembrance of the past objects of sense, either in whole or in

part, it might, when such a scene was present, have existed for ever in the state which forms the complex perception of the scene, without the slightest notion of the relation of its parts to the whole, or to each other.

When I thus attempt to prove, by so many wearying arguments, that the feeling which constitutes our comparison of our sensations, or, in other words, our belief of their agreement or disagreement, is itself a state of mind, different from either of the separate sensations which we compare, and different from both, as merely coexisting, I cannot but feel, what many of you have probably felt already, as if I were labouring to demonstrate a mere truism. Indeed, when I consider the argument as any thing more, it is necessary for me to call to mind the great name and great talents of the author whose system I oppose, the praise which the system has received, of extreme subtilty of analysis, combined with extreme simplicity, and its wide diffusion, as the universal, or nearly universal, metaphysical creed, of one of the most enlightened nations of Europe.

But for these remembrances, I must confess, that the system, which supposes our comparison to be the ideas compared, and nothing more, as if these had flowed together into one, would appear to me to correspond almost exactly with an ironical theory of the same process, and, indeed, of all the intellectual processes, proposed in our own country,—not in the Essay on the Human Understanding, but in a very different work, —a theory which supposes comparison, or judgment, to be only the conflux of two ideas, in one propositional canal.

" Simple ideas are produced by the motion of the spirits in one simple canal: when two of these canals disembogue themselves into one, they make what we call a proposition; and when two of these propositional channels empty themselves into a third, they form a syllogism, or a ratiocination. Memory is performed in a distinct apartment of the brain, made up of vessels similar, and like situated to the ideal, propositional, and syllogistical vessels, in the primary parts of the brain. After the same manner, it is easy to explain the other modes of thinking; as also why some people think so wrong and perversely, which proceeds from the bad configuration of those glands. Some, for example, are born without the propositional or syllogistical canals; in others, that reason ill, they are of unequal capacities; in dull fellows, of too great a length, whereby the motion of the spirits is retarded; in trifling geniuses, weak and small; in the over-refining spirits, too much intorted and winding; and so of the rest."*

* Mart. Scrib. c. xii.

In examining the system of Condillac, which must certainly be allowed to bear a considerable resemblance to this system, I have instanced the feeling of relation in comparison, merely as being one of the simplest examples which I could select. I might, with equal reason, have instanced other states of mind; in particular, all the variety of our emotions,—astonishment or desire for example, which are as little sensations, in the philosophical meaning of the term, as they are fear or sorrow. The feeling of pleasure, in all its degrees of vividness or faintness, is a state of mind very different from that which constitutes desire of the recurrence of its object; for, otherwise, the desire would be itself the very gratification which it supposes to be absent. It is induced, indeed, by the remembrance of the pleasure; but it is a consequence of the remembrance, not a part of it. It is like that general activity of life, to which, amid the mild breathings of spring, the torpid animal awakes, that, in continual winter, would have slumbered for ever in insensibility; or like the bud, which, without warmth and moisture, never could have burst from the leafless stem; but which is still, in itself, something very different from the sunshine and the shower.

It seems to me not improbable, that the error of Condillac, and of the other French metaphysicians who have adopted his leading doctrine, may have arisen in part, or at least may have escaped detection more readily, from the ambiguous signification of the word *sentir*, which is a verb originally, indeed, and strictly expressive of mere sensation; but applied also, by a sort of metaphorical extension, to our emotions and other affections of mind, that do not originate directly like sensation, in an external cause. Though this mere arbitrary word, however, may be applicable to a variety of feelings, it does not therefore follow that these are all modifications of that small class of feelings, to which the word was, in its primary sense, confined,—any more than from the still wider use, in our language, of the term feeling, as applicable to all the states of the mind, it would follow, that these are all modes of affection of our sense of touch. Still, however, I cannot but think, that, if the term *sentir* had been of less vague application, a mind so acute as that of Condillac could not have failed to discover, in the imaginary proof which he offers, of the intellectual transmutations of his simple and universal principle, those unwarrantable assumptions, which, even to humbler minds, seem so obvious as scarcely to require, for the detection of them, many moments of thought.

These observations, I flatter myself, have shown sufficiently the error of the system, which would convert all our feelings into sensations, in some indescribable state of

metamorphosis. The system, I confess, appears to me a very striking example of an extreme, into which we are more apt to fall, from the very false notion, that it is characteristic of philosophic genius,—the extreme of excessive simplification,—which is evil, not merely as being false in itself, but I may remark also, as being productive of the very confusion to which simplicity is supposed to be adverse. When we think of love or hate, fear or hope, as fundamentally and truly nothing more than affections of external sense, we try to recognise the original sensations of smell, taste, hearing, touch, and sight, which have been transformed into them; but we try in vain to recognise what is essentially different, and lose ourselves therefore in the attempt. We perceive every thing, as it were, through a mist, which it is impossible for our vision to penetrate, and we are at least as much perplexed by having only one object to seek amid the multitude, as if we considered all the phenomena of mind without any classification whatever.

Before closing this slight review of the theory of transformed sensations, I must remark, that, even though it were strictly true, that all the feelings of the mind, if considered simply as feelings of the mind, are mere sensations varied or transformed by some strange internal process, undescribed and indescribable, still, in conformity with every just principle of philosophizing, it would be necessary to form two classes of these mental phenomena, corresponding with the primary classification which we have made of them. That the mind should begin immediately to exist in a certain state, in consequence of the presence of external objects, so that it would not, at that moment, have existed in that state but for the presence of the external object, is a proof of one set of laws, which connect mind directly and immediately with matter. That it should afterwards begin to exist in a similar state, without the recurrence of any external cause whatever, in consequence of its own susceptibilities only, is a proof of another set of laws peculiar to the mind itself. The complete difference of the cause, in the two instances, would justify, or rather require a different arrangement of the effect; as when the same motion of a piece of iron is produced at one time by impulse, at another by the presence of a magnet, at another by its mere gravity, we consider the motion, though itself the same in velocity and direction, as referable to different physical powers. With the same states of mind variously produced, we should still have to speak of external and internal mental susceptibilities of affection, as, with the same motions of a piece of iron variously produced, we speak of magnetism, impulse, gravitation.

The very celebrated system which I have now been combating,—a system, which, by the universality of transmutation supposed in it, truly deserves the name of intellectual alchemy,—may then be regarded as exemplifying one species of error in arrangement,—the error of a simplification beyond what the phenomena allow. This species of error, in the philosophy of mind, has not prevailed very generally in our country,—by far the more general tendency, especially on this part of the island, being to excessive amplification. Instead of wasting the labour of our analysis on elements that do not admit of any further decomposition, we have given up this labour too soon, and have classed, in many cases, as ultimate principles, what appear to me to be susceptible of still nicer analysis. The phenomena of mind are, accordingly, in the general technical language of the science, referred by us to many powers, which I cannot but think are not so different as to furnish ground of ultimate distinction, but are truly only varieties of a few more simple powers or susceptibilities.

While I am far from conceiving, therefore, with Condillac and his followers, that all our states of mind are mere sensations modified or transformed, since this belief appears to me to be a mere assumption without even the slightest evidence in our consciousness, I am equally unwilling to admit the variety of powers, of which Dr. Reid speaks. In one sense, indeed, the susceptibilities, or powers, which the mind possesses, may be said, with propriety, to be still more numerous,—as numerous as its feelings themselves,—for it must never be forgotten, that what we term classes, are only words of our own invention,—that the feelings which we arrange as belonging to one class, are truly different in themselves, precisely in the same manner as the feelings arranged in different classes are reciprocally different,—that each feeling is, and must be, indicative of a peculiar susceptibility of being affected in that particular manner,—and that the mind has, therefore, truly, as many susceptibilities, as, in various circumstances, it can have different feelings. But still, when we arrange these different phenomena in certain classes, it is an error in classification to give a new name to varieties that can be referred to other parts of the division already made; and it is on this account I object to the unnecessary amplification of our intellectual systems, in arranging the phenomena of mind under so many powers as those of which we are accustomed to speak.

Our various states or affections of the mind, I have already divided into two classes, according to the nature of the circumstances which precede them,—the External and the Internal,—and this latter class into two orders,—our Intellectual States of Mind, and

our Emotions. It is with the intellectual phenomena that we are at present concerned; and this order I would arrange under two generic capacities, that appear to me to comprehend or exhaust the phenomena of the order. The whole order, as composed of feelings, which arise immediately, in consequence of certain former feelings of the mind, may be technically termed, in reference to these feelings which have induced them, Suggestions; but, in the suggested feelings themselves, there is one striking difference. If we analyse our trains of intellectual thought, exclusively of the emotions which may coexist or mingle with them, and of sensations that may be accidentally excited by external objects, we shall find them to be composed of two very distinct sets of feelings,—one set of which are mere conceptions or images of the past, that rise, image after image, in regular sequence, but simply in succession, without any feeling of relation necessarily involved,—while the perceptions of relation in the various objects of our thought, form another set of feelings, of course as various as the relations perceived. Conceptions and relations,—it is with these, and with these alone, that we are intellectually conversant. There is thus an evident ground for the arrangement of the internal suggestions, that form our trains of thought, under two heads, according as the feeling excited directly by some former feeling, may be either a simple conception, in its turn, perhaps, giving place to some other conception as transient; or may be the feeling of a relation which two or more objects of our thought are considered by us as bearing to each other. There is, in short, in the mind a capacity of association; or as, for reasons afterwards to be stated, I would rather term it,—the capacity of Simple Suggestion,—by which feelings, formerly existing, are revived, in consequence of the mere existence of other feelings, as there is also a capacity of feeling resemblance, difference, proportion, or relation in general, when two or more external objects, or two or more feelings of the mind itself, are considered by us,—which mental capacity, in distinction from the former, I would term the capacity of Relative Suggestion; and of these simple and relative suggestions, our whole intellectual trains of thought are composed. As I am no lover of new phrases, where the old can be used without danger of mistake, I would, very willingly, substitute for the phrase *relative suggestion* the term *comparison*, which is more familiar, and expresses very nearly the same meaning. But comparison, though it involves the feeling of relation, seems to me also to imply a voluntary seeking for some relation, which is far from necessary to the mere internal suggestion or feeling of the relation itself. The resemblance of two objects strikes me, indeed, when I am studiously comparing them; but it strikes me also, with not less force, on many other occasions, when I had not previously been forming the slightest intentional comparison. I prefer, therefore, a term which is applicable alike to both cases, when a relation is sought, and when it occurs, without any search or desire of finding it.

The term judgment, in its strict philosophic sense, as the mere perception of relation, is more exactly synonymous with the phrase which I have employed, and might have been substituted with safety, if the vulgar use of the term, in many vague significations, had not given some degree of indistinctness even to the philosophical use of it. I may remark, too, that, in our works of logic and intellectual physiology, judgment and reasoning are usually discussed separately, as if there were some essential difference of their nature; and, therefore, since I include them both, in the relative suggestions of which I shall afterwards have to treat, it seems advisable, not to employ for the whole, a name which is already appropriated, and very generally limited, to a part. As the rise in the mind of the feeling of relation, from the mere perception or conception of objects, is, however, what I mean to denote by the phrase Relative Suggestion; and as judgment, in its strictest sense, is nothing more than this feeling of relation of any two or more objects, considered by us together, I shall make no scruple to use the shorter and more familiar term, as synonymous, when there can be no danger of its being misunderstood.

The intellectual states of the mind, then, to give a brief illustration of my division, I consider as all referable to two generic susceptibilities,—those of Simple Suggestion and Relative Suggestion. Our perception or conception of one object excites, of itself, and without any known cause, external to the mind, the conception of some other object, as when the mere sound of our friend's name suggests to us the conception of our friend himself,—in which case, the conception of our friend which follows the perception of the sound, involves no feeling of any common property, with the sound which excites it, but is precisely the same state of mind, which might have been induced, by various other previous circumstances, by the sight of the chair on which he sat, of the book which he read to us, of the landscape which he painted. This is Simple Suggestion.

But, together with this capacity of Simple Suggestion, by which conception after conception arises in the mind,—precisely in the same manner, and in the same state, as each might have formed a part of other trains, and in which the particular state of mind that arises by suggestion does not necessarily involve any consideration of the state of mind

which preceded it,—there is a suggestion of a very different sort, which, in every case, involves the consideration, not of one phenomenon of mind, but of two or more phenomena, and which constitutes the feeling of agreement, disagreement, or relation of some sort. I perceive, for example, a horse and a sheep at the same moment. The perception of the two is followed by that different state of mind which constitutes the feeling of their agreement in certain respects, or of their disagreement in certain other respects. I think of the square of the hypotenuse of a right-angled triangle, and of the squares of the two other sides;—I feel the relation of equality. I see a dramatic representation; I listen to the cold conceits which the author of the tragedy, in his omnipotent command over warriors and lovers of his own creation, gives to his hero, in his most impassioned situations;—I am instantly struck with their unsuitableness to the character and the circumstances. All the intellectual successions of feeling, in these cases, which constitute the perception of relation, differ from the results of simple suggestion in necessarily involving the consideration of two or more objects, or affections of mind, that immediately preceded them. I may think of my friend, in the case of simple suggestion; that is to say, my mind may exist in the state which constitutes the conception of my friend, without that previous state which constitutes the perception of the sound of his name; for the conception of him may be suggested by various objects and remembrances. But I cannot, in the cases of relative suggestion, think of the resemblance of a horse and a sheep, of the proportion of the squares of the sides of a right-angled triangle; or of the want of the truth of nature in the expressions of a dramatic hero, without those previous states of mind, which constitute the conceptions of a horse and a sheep, of the sides of the triangle, or of the language of the warrior or lover, and the circumstances of triumph, or hope, or despair, in which he is exhibited to us by the creative artist.

With these two capacities of suggested feelings, simple and relative, which are all that truly belong to the class of intellectual states of the mind,—various emotions may concur, particularly that most general of all emotions, the emotion of desire, in some one or other of its various forms. According as this desire does or does not concur with them, the intellectual states themselves appear to be different; and, by those who do not make the necessary analysis, are supposed, therefore, to be indicative of different powers. By simple suggestion, the images of things, persons, events, pass in strange and rapid succession; and a variety of names, expressive of different powers,—conception, association, memory,—have been given to this one simple law of our intellectual nature. But, when we wish to remember some object; that is to say, when we wish our mind to be affected in that particular manner which constitutes the conception of a particular thing, or person, or event,—or when we wish to combine new images, in some picture of fancy, this coexistence of desire, with the simple course of suggestion, which continues still to follow its own laws, as much as when no desire existed with it,—seems to us to render the suggestion itself different; and recollection, and imagination, or fancy, which are truly, as we shall afterwards find, nothing more than the union of the suggested conceptions, with certain specific permanent desires, are to us, as it were, distinct additional powers of our mind, and are so arranged in the systems of philosophers, who have not made the very simple analysis, which alone seems to me to be necessary for a more precise arrangement.

In like manner, those suggestions of another class, which constitute our notions of proportion, resemblance, difference, and all the variety of relations, may, as I have already remarked, arise, when we have had no previous desire of tracing the relations, or may arise after that previous desire. But, when the feelings of relation seem to us to arise spontaneously, they are not, in themselves, different from the feelings of relation, that arise, in our intentional comparisons or judgments, in the longest series of ratiocination. Of such ratiocination, they are truly the most important elements. The permanent desire of discovering something unknown, or of establishing, or confuting, or illustrating some point of belief or conjecture, may coexist, indeed, with the continued series of relations that are felt, but does not alter the nature of that law, by which these judgments, or relative suggestions, succeed each other. There is no new power to be found, but only the union of certain intellectual states of the mind, with certain desires,—a species of combination not more wonderful in itself, than any other complex mental state, as when we, at the same moment, see and smell a rose,—or listen to the voice of a friend, who has been long absent from us, and see, at the same moment, that face of affection, which is again giving confidence to our heart and gladness to our very eyes.

Our intellectual states of mind, then, are either those resemblances of past affections of the mind, which arise by simple suggestion, or those feelings of relation, which arise by what I have termed relative suggestions, the one set resulting, indeed, from some prior states of the mind, but not involving, necessarily, any consideration of these previous states of mind, which suggested them,—the other set necessarily involving the con-

sideration of two or more objects, or two or more affections of the mind, as subjects of the relation which is felt.

How readily all the intellectual states of mind, which are commonly ascribed to a variety of powers, may be reduced to those two, will appear more clearly, after we have considered and illustrated the phenomena of each set.

I shall proceed, therefore, in the first place, to the phenomena of simple suggestion, which are usually referred to a principle of asssociation in our ideas.

LECTURE XXXIV.

CLASSIFICATION OF THE INTERNAL AFFECTIONS OF MIND, CONTINUED,—ON SIMPLE SUGGESTION, — ADVANTAGES RESULTING FROM THE PRINCIPLE OF SUGGESTION,—ON MR. HUME'S CLASSIFICATION OF THE CAUSES OF ASSOCIATE FEELINGS.

Gentlemen, my general arrangement of the various phenomena, or states of the mind, is, I trust, now sufficiently familiar to you. We know the mind only in the succession of these states, as they vary from moment to moment; and you have learned to class them, as, in the first place, External or Internal Affections, according as the mental changes of state that are induced, have arisen immediately from the presence of external objects, or from some preceding state of the mind itself; and the latter of these classes you have learned also to subdivide into its two distinct orders of Intellectual States of the Mind and Emotions. Thus far we have proceeded, I trust, without much risk of misconception.

In my last Lecture I proceeded to consider the former of these orders, and arranged all the variety of our Intellectual States of Mind under two generic capacities,—those of Simple and of Relative Suggestion. Intellectually we conceive or we judge; our past feelings, in Simple Suggestion, of image after image, arise again in colours more or less faint, without any known cause exterior to the mind. By our capacity of the other species of Suggestion, we are impressed with feelings of a different order, that arise when two or more objects are contemplated together,—feelings of their agreement, proportion, or some one or other of the variety of their relations. Of these two orders of feelings, and of these alone, consists the whole varied tissue of our trains of thought. All the intellectual powers, of which writers on this branch of science speak, are, as we shall find, only modes of these two, as they exist simply, or as they exist in combination with some desire more or less permanent,—with the desire of prosecuting a continued inquiry, for example, or of evolving its results to others,—as in the long series of our ratiocination; or of forming some splendid succession of images and incidents, as in the magic pictures of poetry and romance. The simplification may, perhaps, at present appear to you excessive; but I flatter myself that, after the two generic capacities themselves shall have been fully considered by us, it will not appear to you more than is absolutely necessary for accuracy of analysis and arrangement.

SIMPLE SUGGESTION.

The intellectual phenomena which we are, in the first place, to consider, then, are those of Simple Suggestion, which are usually classed under the general term of the Association of Ideas; a term employed to denote that tendency of the mind by which feelings that were formerly excited by an external cause arise afterwards, in regular successions to each other, as it were spontaneously, or at least without the immediate presence of any known external cause. The limitation of the term, however, to those states of mind which are exclusively denominated ideas, has, I conceive, tended greatly to obscure the subject, or at least to deprive us of the aid which we might have received from it in the analysis of many of the most complex phenomena. The influence of the associating principle itself extends not to ideas only, but to every species of affection of which the mind is susceptible. Our internal joys, sorrows, and all the variety of our emotions, are capable of being revived in a certain degree by the mere influence of this principle, and of blending with the ideas or other feelings which awakened them, in the same manner as our conceptions of external things. These last, however, it must be admitted, present the most striking and obvious examples of the influence of the principle, and are, therefore, the fittest for illustrating it. The faint and shadowy elements of past emotions, as mingling in any present feeling, it may not be easy to distinguish; but our remembrances of things without are clear and definite, and are easily recognised by us as images of the past. We have seen, in the history of our senses, by what admirable means Nature has provided for communicating to man those first rude elements of knowledge, which are afterwards to be the materials of his sublimest speculations, and with what still more admirable goodness she has ministered to his pleasure in these primary elements of thought, and in the very provision which she has formed for the subsistence of his animal frame,—making the organs by which he becomes acquainted with the properties of external things, not the fountain of knowledge only, but an ever-mingling source of enjoyment and instruction.

It is through the medium of perception,

as we have seen, that is to say, through the medium of those sensitive capacities already so fully considered by us, that we acquire our knowledge of the properties of external things. But if our knowledge of these properties were limited to the moment of perception, and were extinguished for ever with the fading sensation from which it sprang, the acquisition of this fugitive knowledge would be of little value. We should still, indeed, be sensible of the momentary pleasure or pain; but all experience of the past, and all that confidence in the regular successions of future events which flows from experience of the past, would, of course, be excluded by universal and instant forgetfulness. In such circumstances, if the common wants of our animal nature remained, it is evident that even life itself, in its worst and most miserable state, could not be supported; since, though oppressed with thirst and hunger, and within reach of the most delicious fruits and the most plentiful spring-water, we should still suffer, without any knowledge of the means by which the suffering could be remedied. Even if, by some provision of Nature, our bodily constitution had been so framed as to require no supply of subsistence, or if, instinctively and without reflection, we had been led, on the first impulse of appetite, to repair our daily waste, and to shelter ourselves from the various causes of physical injury to which we are exposed, though our animal life might then have continued to be extended to as long a period as at present, still, if but a succession of momentary sensations, it would have been one of the lowest forms of mere animal life. It is only as capable of looking before and behind; that is to say, as capable of those spontaneous suggestions of thought which constitute remembrance and foresight, that we rise to the dignity of intellectual being, and that man can be said to be the image of that Purest of Intellects, who looks backward and forward, in a single glance, not on a few years only, but on all the ages of eternity. "Deum te scito esse," says Cicero, in allusion to these powers—"Deum te scito esse, siquidem Deus est, qui viget, qui sentit,—qui meminit, qui prævidet, qui tam regit et moderatur et movet id corpus, cui præpositus est, quam hunc mundum princeps ille Deus."

"Were it not so, the Soul, all dead and lost,
As the fix'd stream beneath the impassive frost,*
Form'd for no end, and impotent to please,
Would lie inactive on the couch of ease;
And, heedless of proud fame's immortal lay,
Sleep all her dull divinity away."†

Without any remembrance of pleasures formerly enjoyed, or of sorrows long past and long endured,—looking on the persons and scenes which had surrounded us from the first moment of our birth, as if they were objects altogether unknown to us,—incapable even of as much reasoning as still gleams through the dreadful stupor of the maniac,—or of conveying even that faint expression of thought with which the rudest savages, in the rudest language, are still able to hold some communication of their passions or designs;—such, but for that capacity which we are considering, would have been the deplorable picture of the whole human race. What is now revered by us as the most generous and heroic virtue, or the most profound and penetrating genius, would have been nothing more than this wretchedness and imbecility. It is the suggesting principle, the reviver of thoughts and feelings which have passed away, that gives value to all our other powers and susceptibilities, intellectual and moral,—not, indeed, by producing them, for, though unevolved, they would still, as latent capacities, be a part of the original constitution of our spiritual nature,—but by rousing them into action, and furnishing them with those accumulating and inexhaustible materials, which are to be the elements of future thought, and the objects of future emotion. Every talent by which we excel, and every vivid feeling which animates us, derive their energy from the suggestions of this ever-active principle. We love and hate, we desire and fear, we use means for obtaining good, and avoiding evil, because we remember the objects and occurrences which we have formerly observed, and because the future, in the similarity of the successions which it presents, appears to us only a prolongation of the past.

In conferring on us the capacity of these spontaneous suggestions, then, Heaven has much more than doubled our existence; for, without it, and consequently, without those faculties and emotions which involve it, existence would scarcely have been desirable. The very importance of the benefits which we derive from it, however, renders us perhaps less sensible of its value; since it is so mingled, with all our knowledge, and all our plans of action, that we find it difficult to conceive a state of sentient being, of which it is not a part, and to estimate, consequently, at a just amount, the advantage which it affords. The future memory of perception seems to us almost implied in perception itself; and to speculate on that strange state of existence which would have been the condition of man, if he had been formed without the power of remembrance, and capable only of a series of sensations, has, at first, an appearance almost of absurdity and contradiction, as if we were imagining conditions which were in their nature incompatible. Yet, as-

* "Like the tall cliff beneath the impassive frost."—Orig.

† Cawthorn.—Regulation of the Passions, &c. v. 15–20.

surely, if it were possible for us to consider such a subject *a priori*, the real cause of wonder would appear to be, not in the absence of the suggestions of memory, as in the case imagined, but in that remembrance of which we have the happy experience. When a feeling, of the existence of which consciousness furnishes the only evidence, has passed away so completely, that not even the slightest consciousness of it remains, it would surely, but for that experience, be more natural to suppose that it had perished altogether, than that it should, at the distance of many years, without any renewal of it by the external cause which originally produced it, again start, as it were of itself, into being. To foresee that which has not yet begun to exist, is, in itself, scarcely more unaccountable than to see, as it were before us, what has wholly ceased to exist. The present moment is all of which we are conscious, and which can strictly be said to have a real existence, in relation to ourselves. That mode of time, which we call the past, and that other mode of time, which we call the future, are both equally unexisting. That the knowledge of either should be added to us, so as to form a part of our present consciousness, is a gift of Heaven, most beneficial to us indeed, but most mysterious, and equally, or nearly equally mysterious, whether the unexisting time, of which the knowledge is indulged to us, be the future or the past.

The advantage which we derive from the principle of suggestion, it must, however, be remarked, consists, not in its mere revival of thoughts and feelings, of which we had before been conscious, but in its revival of these in a certain order. If past objects and events had been suggested to us again, not in that series in which they had formerly occurred, nor according to any of those relations, which human discernment has been able to discover among them, but in endless confusion and irregularity, the knowledge thus acquired, however gratifying as a source of mere variety of feeling, would avail us little, or rather would be wholly profitless, not merely in our speculative inquiries as philosophers, but in the simplest actions of common life. It is quite evident, that, in this case, we should be altogether unable to turn our experience to account, as a mode of avoiding future evil or obtaining future good; because, for this application of our knowledge, it would be requisite that events, before observed, should occur to us at the time when similar events might be expected. We refrain from tasting the poisonous berry, which we have known to be the occasion of death to him who tasted it; because the mere sight of it brings again before us the fatal event which we have heard or witnessed. We satisfy our appetite with a salutary fruit without the slightest apprehension; because its familiar appearance recals to us the refreshment which we have repeatedly received. But if these suggestions were reversed, —if the agreeable images of health and refreshment were all that were suggested by the poisonous plant, and pain, and convulsions, and death, were the only images suggested by the sight of the grateful and nourishing fruit, there can be no doubt to which of the two our unfortunate preference would be given. To take the most familiar of all instances, that of language, which, either as written or spoken, is in such constant use, and which is so essential, not merely to our first advance from absolute barbarism, but to the common domestic necessities, even of barbarous life, that without it we can scarcely conceive two individuals, however rude, to exist together: this, it is evident, could not have been invented, nor, if invented, could it serve any other purpose than to mislead, if the words spoken were to have no greater chance of suggesting the meaning intended by the speaker, than any other meaning which any other words of the language might be employed to denote. What social affection could continue for an hour, if the sight of a friend were to suggest, in intimate combination, not the kindnesses which he had conferred, and all the enjoyments of which he had been the source, but the malice, and envy, and revenge, of some jealous and disappointed enemy?

He who has given us, in one simple principle, the power of reviving the past, has not made his gift so unavailing. The feelings which this wonderful principle preserves and restores, arise, not loosely and confusedly,— for what is there in the whole wide scene of nature which does so occur?—but, according to general laws or tendencies of succession, contrived with the most admirable adaptation to our wants, so as to bring again before us the knowledge formerly acquired by us, at the very time when it is most profitable that it should return. A value is thus given to experience, which otherwise would not be worthy of the name; and we are enabled to extend it almost at pleasure, so as to profit, not merely by that experience which the events of nature, occurring in conformity with these general laws, must at any rate have afforded to us, but to regulate this very experience itself, to dispose objects and events, so that, by tendencies of suggestion, on the firmness of which we may put perfect reliance, they shall give us, perhaps at the distance of many years, such lessons as we may wish them to yield, and thus to invent and create, in a great measure, the intellectual and moral history of our future life, as an epic or dramatic writer arranges at his will the continued scenes of his various and magnificent narrative. I need not add, that it is on this skilful management of the laws,

which regulate our trains of thought, the whole theory and practice of education are founded; that art, which I have already repeatedly represented to you as the noblest of all the arts of man,—itself the animating spirit of every other art,—which exerts its own immediate operation, not on lifeless things, but on the affections and faculties of the soul itself, and which has raised us from the dust, where we slept or trembled in sluggish yet ferocious ignorance, the victims of each other, and of every element around us, to be the sharers and diffusers of the blessings of social polity, the measurers of the earth and of the skies, and the rational worshippers of that eternal Being by whom they and we were created.

That there is a tendency of ideas to suggest each other, without any renewed perception of the external objects which originally excited them, and that the suggestion is not altogether loose and indefinite, but that certain ideas have a peculiar tendency to suggest certain other relative ideas in associate trains of thought, is too familiar to you, as a general fact of our intellectual nature, to require to be illustrated by example.

It has been beautifully compared, by the most philosophic of our poets, to the mutual influence of two sympathetic needles, which Strada, in one of his Prolusions, availing himself of a supposed fact, which was then believed, or scarcely doubted by many philosophers, makes the subject of verses, supposed to be recited by Cardinal Bembo, in the character of Lucretius. The needles were fabled to have been magnetized together, and suspended over different circles, so as to be capable of moving along an alphabet. In these circumstances, by the remaining influence of their original kindred magnetism, they were supposed, at whatever distance, to follow each other's motions, and pause accordingly at the same point; so that, by watching them at concerted hours, the friends who possessed this happy telegraph were supposed to be able to communicate to each other their feelings, with the same accuracy and confidence as when they were together.

"For when the different images of things,
By chance combin'd, have struck the attentive soul,
With deeper impulse, or, connected long,
Have drawn her frequent eye; howe'er distinct
The external scenes, yet oft the ideas gain
From that conjunction an eternal tie
And sympathy unbroken. Let the Mind
Recal one partner of the various league,—
Immediate, lo! the firm confederates rise,—
And each his former station straight resumes;
One movement governs the consenting throng,
And all at once with rosy pleasure shine,
Or all are sadden'd with the glooms of care.
'Twas thus, if ancient fame the truth unfold,
Two faithful needles, from the informing touch
Of the same parent-stone, together drew
Its mystic virtue, and at first conspir'd
With fatal impulse quivering to the pole.
Then, though disjoin'd by kingdoms,—though the main
Roll'd its broad surge betwixt,—and different stars
Beheld their wakeful motions,—yet preserv'd
The former friendship, and remember'd still
The alliance of their birth. Whate'er the line
Which one possess'd, nor pause nor quiet knew
The sure associate, ere, with trembling speed,
He found its path, and fixed unerring there.
Such is the secret union when we feel
A song, a flower, a name, at once restore
Those long connected scenes where first they mov'd
The attention. Backward through her mazy walks,
Guiding the wanton fancy to her scope,
To temples, courts, or fields,—with all the band
Of (living*) forms, of passions, and designs,
Attendant; whence, if pleasing in itself,
The prospect from that sweet accession gains
Redoubled influence o'er the listening mind.
By these mysterious ties, the busy power
Of memory her ideal train preserves
Entire; or when they would elude her watch
Reclaims their fleeting footsteps from the waste
Of dark oblivion."†

What then are these mysterious ties?—or, to state the question more philosophically, what are the general circumstances which regulate the successions of our ideas?

That there is some regularity in these successions, must, as I have already remarked, have been felt by every one; and there are many references to such regularity in the works of philosophers of every age. The most striking ancient reference, however, to any general circumstances, or laws of suggestion, though the enumeration of these is hinted, rather than developed at any length, is that which you will find in a passage, quoted by Dr. Beattie and Mr. Stewart from Aristotle. It is a passage explanatory of the process by which, in voluntary reminiscence, we endeavour to discover the idea of which we are in search. We are said to hunt for it—(*Θηρεύομεν* is the word in the original)—among other ideas, either of objects existing at present, or at some former time; and from their resemblance, contrariety, and contiguity—*ἀπὸ τοῦ νῦν, ἢ ἄλλα τινὸς, καὶ ἀφ' ὁμοίου, ἢ ἐναντίου, ἢ τοῦ συνήγγυς. Διὰ τοῦτο γίνεται ἡ ἀνάμνησις.*‡ This brief enumeration of the general circumstances which direct us in reminiscence, is worthy of our attention on its own account; and is not less remarkable on account of the very close resemblance which it bears to the arrangement afterwards made by Mr. Hume, though there is no reason to believe that the modern philosopher was at all acquainted with the classification which had, at so great a distance of time, anticipated his own.

I must remark, however, that, though it would be in the highest degree unjust to the well-known liberality and frankness of Mr. Hume's character, to suppose him to have been aware of any enumeration of the general circumstances on which suggestion appears to depend, prior to that which he has

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* Painted—Orig.

† Pleasures of Imagination, Book III. v. 312—352.

‡ Arist. de Memor. et Reminisc. c. ii.—v. II. p. 86. Edit. Du Val.

himself given us, his attempt was far from being so original as he supposed. I do not allude merely to the passage of Aristotle, already quoted, nor to a corresponding passage which I might have quoted from one of the most celebrated of his commentators, Dr. Thomas Aquinas, but to various passages which I have found in the works of writers of much more recent date, in which the influence of resemblance and contiguity, the two generic circumstances to which, on his own principles, his own triple division should have been reduced, is particularly pointed out. Thus, to take an example from an elementary work of a very eminent author, Ernesti, published in the year 1734,—his *Initia Doctrinæ Solidioris*,—with what precision has he laid down those very laws of association of which Mr. Hume speaks. After stating the general fact of suggestion, or association, under the Latin term *phantasia*, he proceeds to state the principles which guide it. All the variety of these internal successions of our ideas, he says, may be reduced to the following law. When one image is present in the mind, it may suggest the image of some absent object, either of one that is similar in some respect to that already present, or of one of which the present is a part, or of one which has been present together with it on some former occasion. "Hujus autem phantasiæ lex hæc est: Præsentibus animo rerum imaginibus quibuscunque, recurrere et redire ad animum possunt rerum absentium olimque perceptarum imagines, præsentibus similes, vel quarum, quæ sunt præsentes, partes sunt,—vel denique, quas cum præsentibus simul hausimus."*

Even the arrangement, as stated by Mr. Hume, is not expressed in more formal terms. But as it is to his arrangement the philosophers of our own country are accustomed to refer, in treating of association, the importance thus attached to it gives it a preferable claim to our fuller discussion. It is stated by him briefly in two paragraphs of his Essay on the Association of Ideas.

"Though it be too obvious to escape observation," he says, "that different ideas are connected together, I do not find that any philosopher has attempted to enumerate or class all the principles of association; a subject, however, that seems worthy of curiosity. To me there appear to be only three principles of connexion among ideas, viz. resemblance, contiguity in time or place, and cause or effect.

"That these principles serve to connect ideas, will not, I believe, be much doubted. A picture naturally leads our thoughts to the original. The mention of one apartment in a building naturally introduces an inquiry or discourse concerning the others. And if we think of a wound, we can scarcely forbear reflecting on the pain which follows it. But that the enumeration is complete, and that there are no other principles of association except these, may be difficult to prove to the satisfaction of the reader, or even to a man's own satisfaction. All we can do, in such cases, is to run over several instances, and examine carefully the principle which binds the different thoughts to each other,—never stopping till we render the principle as general as possible. The more instances we examine, and the more care we employ, the more assurance shall we acquire, that the enumeration which we form from the whole is complete and entire."†

On these paragraphs of Mr. Hume, a few obvious criticisms present themselves. In the first place, however, I must observe,—to qualify in some degree the severity of the remarks which may be made on his classification,—that it is evident, from the very language now quoted to you, that he is far from bringing forward his classification as complete. He states, indeed, that it appears to him, that there are no other principles of connexion among our ideas than the three which he has mentioned; but he adds, that though the reality of their influence as connecting principles, will not, he believes, be much doubted, it may still be difficult to prove, to the satisfaction of his reader, or even of himself, that the enumeration is complete; and he recommends, in consequence, a careful examination of every instance of suggestion, in the successive trains of our ideas, that other principles, if any such there be, may be detected.

But to proceed to the actual classification, as presented to us by Mr. Hume. A note, which he has added to the paragraph that contains his system, affords perhaps as striking an instance as is to be found in the history of science of that illusion which the excessive love of simplicity tends to produce, even in the most acute and subtile philosopher, so as to blind to the most manifest inconsistencies, in his own arrangement, those powers of critical discernment which would have flashed instant detection on inconsistencies far less glaringly apparent in the speculations of another. After stating, that there appear to him to be only the three principles of connexion already mentioned, Mr. Hume adds, in a note,—as an instance of other connexions apparently different from these three, which may, notwithstanding, be reduced to them,—

"*Contrast*, or *contrariety*, also is a species

* De Mente Humana, c. I. sect. xvi. p. 138, 139.

† Hume's Inquiry concerning the Human Understanding, Sect. III.

of connexion among ideas. But it may perhaps be considered as a mixture of causation and resemblance. Where two objects are contrary, the one destroys the other, *i. e.* is the cause of its annihilation, and the idea of the annihilation of an object implies the idea of its former existence."

When we hear or read for the first time this little theory of the suggestions of contrast, there is, perhaps, no one who does not feel some difficulty in believing it to be a genuine speculation of that powerful mind which produced it. Contrast, says Mr. Hume, is a mixture of causation and resemblance. An object, when contrasted with another, destroys it. In destruction their is causation; and we cannot conceive destruction without having the idea of former existence. Thus, to take an instance,—Mr. Hume does not deny, that the idea of a dwarf may suggest, by contrast, the idea of a giant; but he says that the idea of a dwarf suggests the idea of a giant, because the idea of a dwarf *destroys* the idea of a giant, and thus, by the connecting principle of causation involved in all destruction, may suggest the idea destroyed: And he adds, as an additional reason for the suggestion, that the idea of the annihilation of a giant implies the idea of the former existence of a giant. And all this strange and complicated analysis,—this explanation, not of the *obscurum per obscurius*, which is a much more intelligible paralogism, but of the *lucidum per obscurum*, is seriously brought forward by its very acute author, as illustrating the simple and familiar fact of the suggestion of opposites, in contrast, by opposites.

In the first place, I may remark, that, in Mr. Hume's view of contrast, it is not easy to discover what the resemblance is of which he speaks, in a case in which the objects in themselves are said by him to be so contrary, that the one absolutely destroys the other by this contrariety alone; and, indeed, if there be truly this mixed resemblance in contrast, what need is there of having recourse to annihilation or causation at all, to account for the suggestion, since the resemblance alone in this, as in every other case, might be sufficient to explain the suggestion, without the necessity of any separate division?—as the likeness of a single feature in the countenance of a stranger is sufficient to bring before us in conception the friend whom he resembles, though the resemblance be in the single feature only.

In the second place, there is no truth, if, indeed, there be any meaning whatever, in the assertion that in contrast one of the objects destroys the other; for, so far is the idea of the dwarf from destroying the idea of the giant, that, in the actual case supposed, it is the very reason of the existence of the second idea; nay, the very supposition of a perceived contrast implies that there is no such annihilation; for both ideas must be present to the mind together, or they could not appear either similar or dissimilar, that is to say, could not be known by us as contrasted, or contrary in any respect. It is, indeed, not very easy to conceive, how a mind so acute as that of Mr. Hume should not have discovered that grossest of all logical and physical errors, involved in this explanation, that it accounts for the existence of a feeling, by supposing it previously to exist as the cause of itself. If, as he says, the idea of the annihilation of an object implies the idea of its former existence—an assertion which is by no means so favourable as he thinks to his own theory—it must surely be admitted, that no annihilation can take place before the existence of that which is to be annihilated. Whether, therefore, we suppose, that the idea of the dwarf, which suggests the idea of the giant, annihilates that idea, or is itself annihilated by it, the two ideas of the dwarf and the giant must have existed before the annihilation of either. The suggestion, in short, which is the difficulty, and the only difficulty to be explained, must have completely taken place, before the principle can even be imagined to operate, on which the suggestion itself is said to depend.

Such minute criticism, however, is perhaps more than it is necessary to give to a doctrine so obviously false, even sanctioned as it is by so very eminent a name.

LECTURE XXXV.

ON MR. HUME'S CLASSIFICATION OF THE CAUSES OF ASSOCIATE FEELINGS, CONCLUDED—PRIMARY LAWS OF SUGGESTION—I. RESEMBLANCE.

In the conclusion of my last Lecture, Gentlemen, I offered some remarks on Mr. Hume's classification of the circumstances on which he supposes our associate trains of thought to depend, and particularly on the very strange attempt which he made, in conformity with this arrangement, to reduce contrast, as a connecting principle of our ideas, into causation and resemblance,—an attempt which, as we have seen, explains nothing; and explains nothing with most laborious incongruity. Of such mistakes of such a mind, it should, as I have already remarked, be the natural tendency to inspire us with more diffidence in our own judgment, and more indulgent toleration for the want of discernment in others, which, in the intercourse of life, we must often have to discover and lament. Above all, as the most instructive lesson which can be derived from them,

they should teach us the folly of attaching ourselves implicitly to great names; since, in adopting the whole system of opinions, even of the most acute philosophers, we may be in danger of embracing tenets, the absurdity of which, though altogether unobserved by their illustrious authors, minds of a much humbler class might, perhaps, have been swifter to perceive, and which, if they had first occurred to ourselves in our own speculations, unsanctioned by authority, we should probably not have hesitated a single moment in rejecting.

To the threefold division, which Mr. Hume has made, of the principles of association in the trains of our ideas, as consisting in resemblance, contiguity, and causation, there is an obvious objection of a very different kind, not founded on excessive simplicity, the love of which might more naturally be supposed to have misled him, but on its redundancy, according to the very principles of his own theory. Causation, far from being opposed to contiguity, so as to form a separate class, is, in truth, the most exquisite species of proximity in time, and in most cases of contiguity in place also, which could be adduced; because it is not a proximity depending on casual circumstances, and consequently liable to be broken, as these circumstances may exist apart, but one which depends only on the mere existence of the two objects that are related to each other as cause and effect, and therefore fixed and never failing. Other objects may sometimes be proximate; but a cause and effect are always proximate, and must be proximate, and are, indeed, classed in that relation, merely from this constant proximity. On his own principles, therefore, the three connexions of our ideas should indisputably be reduced to two. To speak of resemblance, contiguity, and causation, as three distinct classes, is, with Mr. Hume's view of causation, and indeed with every view of it, as if a mathematician should divide lines into straight, curved, and circular. The inhabitants of China are said to have made a proverbial division of the human race into men, women, and Chinese. With their view of their own importance, we understand the proud superiority of the distinction which they have made. But this sarcastic insolence would surely have been absurdity itself if they had not intended it to express some characteristic and exclusive excellence, but had considered themselves as such ordinary men and women as are to be found in all the other regions of the earth.

Resemblance and contiguity in place and time,—to which, on his own principles, Mr. Hume's arrangement must be reduced,—may be allowed indeed to hold a prominent rank, in whatever classification there may be formed, if any be to be formed, of the principles that regulate our trains of thought. But are there, in this case, truly distinct classes of suggestions that are not reducible to any more common principle? or are they not all reducible to a single influence? I have already remarked the error into which the common phrase, *Association of Ideas*, has led us, by restricting, in our conception, the influence of the suggesting principle to those particular states of mind which are exclusively denominated ideas; and it is this false restriction which seems to me to have led to this supposition of different principles of association, to be classed in the manner proposed by Mr. Hume and others, under distinct heads. All suggestion, as I conceive, may, if our analysis be sufficiently minute, be found to depend on prior coexistence, or at least on such immediate proximity as is itself, very probably, a modification of coexistence. For this very nice reduction, however, we must take in the influence of emotions and other feelings, that are very different from ideas; as when an analogous object suggests an analogous object, by the influence of an emotion or sentiment, which each separately may have produced before, and which is therefore common to both. But though a very nice analysis may lead to this reference of all our suggestions to one common influence of former proximity or coexistence of feelings, it is very convenient, in illustration of the principle, to avail ourselves of the most striking subdivisions, in which the particular instances of that proximity may be arranged; and I shall therefore adopt, for this purpose, the arrangement which Mr. Hume has made,—if resemblance be allowed to comprehend every species of analogy, and if contrast, as a peculiar subdivision, be substituted for the superfluous one of causation. The illustrations which I shall use will be chiefly rhetorical, because these are, in truth, the most striking and beautiful illustrations, and because it may be of use to lead your attention more particularly to the great principles of human nature, as in their relation to human emotions and human judgments, the standard of all just criticism.

To begin then, with resemblance, no one can be ignorant of the effect of strong similarity, in recalling objects, as when a pictured landscape recals a familiar scene, or a portrait a familiar countenance. There are many cases of this kind, indeed, which, strictly speaking, cannot be said to be instances of suggestion, from resemblance, but to be reducible to the simple laws of perception, or, at least, to associations, which may be considered almost as involved in every repeated perception of the same object; for, if a portrait be faithfully painted, the effect which it produces on the eye that perceives it, is the same, or very nearly the same, as the effect produced on the

eye by similar light reflected from the living object; and we might therefore, almost as justly, say, that, when any individual is seen by us repeatedly, he suggests himself by resemblance, as that he is thus suggested by his portrait.

In many other cases, in which the resemblance is less complete, its operation may, even without such refinement of analysis as that to which I have alluded, be very obviously brought under the influence of contiguity. Thus, as the drapery forms so important a part of the complex perception of the human figure, the costume of any period may recal to us some distinguished person of that time. A ruff, like that worn by Queen Elizabeth, brings before us the sovereign herself, though the person who wears the ruff may have no other circumstance of resemblance;—because, the ruff, and the general appearance of Queen Elizabeth, having formed one complex whole in our mind, it is necessary only that one part of the complexity should be recalled,—as the ruff, in the case supposed,—to bring back all the other parts, by the mere principle of contiguity. The instance of drapery, which is but an adjunct or accidental circumstance of the person, may be easily extended to other instances, in which the resemblance is in parts of the real and permanent figure; for, though the drapery be only an adjunct of the person, considered separately from our perception, it is an actual component part, as much as any other component part, of that complex idea, which is formed of the person perceived. If we meet a stranger, who, in any particular feature, as in the shape and colour of his eyes, resembles one of our intimate friends, the conception of our friend is suggested; because the conception of our friend's countenance is a complex one, composed of the separate parts of forehead, eyes, cheeks, mouth, nose, chin; and the eyes of the stranger affecting our vision, in precisely the same manner as the eyes of our friend, thus produced one part of the complex whole, which we have been accustomed to recognise, as our friend; and the one part, by its former proximity, recals the others. The view of one piece of landscape brings before us, in conception, a distant, and perhaps very different scene, by the influence of some small group of objects, or some detached rock, or tree, or hill, or water-fall, which produces the same impression on the eye in both. In this manner, by analysing every complex whole, and tracing, in the variety of its composition, that particular part, in which the actual similarity consists, and which may, therefore, be supposed to introduce the other parts that have formerly coexisted with it,—we might be able to reduce every case of suggestion from direct resemblance to the influence of mere contiguity. But as, in many cases of faint analogical resemblance, this analysis, however just, might appear to involve too great subtility; and as the suggestions of resemblance, if indeed they arise, as I suppose, only from the influence of former proximity, are at least so easily distinguishable, from the grosser instances of contiguity, that they may, without any inconvenience, be considered apart,—I have thought it, as I have said, upon the whole, more advantageous for our present purpose of illustration, to consider them thus separately. By the application of a similar refined analysis, however, to other tribes of associations, even to those of contrast, we may, perhaps, find that it would be possible to reduce these also to the same comprehensive influence of mere proximity, as the single principle on which all suggestion is founded.

As yet we have taken into view only those more obvious resemblances of actual things, which produce similar impressions on our organs of sense. There is another species of resemblance, founded on more shadowy analogies, which gives rise to an innumerable series of suggestions, most important in value to our intellectual luxury, since it is to them we are, in a great measure, indebted for the most sublime of arts. To these analogies of objects, that agree in exciting similar emotions, we owe the simile, the metaphor, and, in general, all that figurative phraseology, which has almost made a separate language of poetry, as distinct from the abstract language of prose. "Poetas omnino, quasi alienâ linguâ locutos, non cogar attingere," says Cicero. Yet the difference of the language of poetry and prose, is much less in Latin than in our own tongue, in which the restriction of genders, in common discourse to animated beings, gives, for the production of high rhetorical effect, such happy facilities of distinct personification. In poetry, we perceive every where what Akenside calls

> "The charm,
> That searchless Nature o'er the sense of man
> Diffuses,—to behold, in lifeless things,
> The inexpressive semblance of himself,
> Of thought and passion."*

The zephyrs laugh,—the sky smiles,—the forest frowns,—the storm and the surge contend together,—the solitary place not merely blossoms like the rose, but it is glad.

> "Mark the sable woods,
> That shade sublime yon mountain's nodding brow;
> With what religious awe the solemn scene
> Commands your steps! as if the reverend form
> Of Minos or of Numa should forsake
> The Elysian seats, and down the embowering glade
> Move to your pausing eye."†

All nature becomes animated. The po-

* Pleasures of Imagination, Book III. v. 282—286.
† Ibid. v. 286—292.

etic genius, like that soul of the world, by which the early philosophers accounted for all earthly changes, breathes its own spirit into every thing surrounding it. It is "quodcunque vides, quocunque moveres," that vivifying essence, which, in the beautiful language of Virgil,

—"Cœlum, ac terram, camposque liquentes,
Lucentemque globum Lunæ, Titaniaque astra
Spiritus intus alit, totamque infusa per artus
Mens agitat molem, et magno se corpore miscet."*

It is the metaphor which forms the essence of the language of poetry; and it is to that peculiar mode of association which we are now considering,—the suggestion of objects by their analogous objects,—that the metaphor owes its birth,—whether the analogy be derived from the moral to the physical, or from the physical to the moral world. The metaphor expresses with rapidity the analogy, as it rises in immediate suggestion, and identifies it, as it were, with the object or emotion which it describes; the simile presents, not the analogy merely, but the two analogous objects, and traces their resemblance to each other with the formality of regular comparison. The metaphor, therefore, is the figure of passion; the simile the figure of calm description. In the drama, accordingly, as the most faithful poetic representation of passion, the simile should be of rare occurrence, and never but in situations in which the speaker may be considered as partaking almost the tranquillity of the poet himself. Thus, to take a well-known instance of error in this respect, when Portius, in the tragedy of Cato, at the very moment in which Lucia, whom he loves, has just bid him farewell for ever, and when he is struggling to detain her, traces all the resemblances of his passion to the flame of a fading lamp, we feel immediately, that a lover who could so fully develope a comparison, and a comparison, too, derived from an object the least likely to occur to him at such a moment, could not be suffering any very great agony of heart.

"Farewell," says Lucia;
"O, how shall I repeat the word—forever."

To which Portius, hanging over her in despair, immediately replies—

"Thus, o'er the dying lamp, the unsteady flame
Hangs quivering on a point, leaps off by fits,
And falls again, as loth to quit its hold.
Thou must not go! My soul still hovers o'er thee,
And can't get loose."†

The speech, it may be remarked, by combining a simile and metaphor, in the compass of a very few lines, presents at once a specimen of a figure which suits, and a figure which is altogether inconsistent with a state of passion. If the three lines which describe the flame of a lamp had been omitted, and only the conclusion retained,—

"Thou must not go! My soul still hovers o'er thee,
And can't get loose;"

there would still have been an analogy borrowed from a remote object, but an analogy implied, not developed, and expressed with the rapidity with which such analogies really arise.

It may perhaps be thought, that even the analogy implied in a metaphor, as it is borrowed from objects not immediately present, and not essential to the emotion, is inconsistent with the natural direction of the suggesting principle in a state of violent feeling. But it is the nature of strong feeling to give to the whole character, for the time, a greater elevation, which enables it to comprehend, as it were, within its vision a greater multitude of kindred objects than can be grasped by it in its unimpassioned state, and to diffuse itself over them all, as if they were living and sympathizing parts of itself. If we attend to what occurs in real life, we shall find, that the metaphor, far from being unnatural, is almost a necessary part of the language of emotion, and that it is then that the language of prose makes its nearest approach to the language of poetry. Indeed, as poetry seems to have originated in the expression of lively feeling, it would have been truly singular if its language had been the least suited to the state in which such feelings are expressed.

"I cannot believe," says the younger Racine, in his *Reflections on Poetry*,—"I cannot believe, with Aristotle, that figures of speech are only expressions disguised, for the purpose of pleasing by the mere astonishment which their disguise affords; nor with Quinctilian and Rollin, that they are expressions which the indigence of our language obliges us to borrow, when I reflect that we speak, without intending it, a figurative language whenever we are animated by passion. It is then that words derived from foreign objects present themselves so naturally, that it would be impossible to reject them, and to speak only in common terms. To be convinced of this, we have only to listen to a dispute between women of the lowest rank, who cannot be suspected of any very refined search for expressions. Yet what an abundance of figures do they use! They lavish the *metonymy*, the *catachresis*, the *hyperbole*, and all those other tropes, which, in spite of the pompous names that have been given to them by rhetoricians, are only forms of familiar speech used in common by them and by the vulgar."‡

* Æn. VI. v. 724—727.

† Act III. Scene 2.

‡ C. III. Art. I.—Œuvres, tome V. p. 63. Edit. 1750.

The discovery of the *metonymy* and *catachresis*, in the wranglings of the mob, has certainly a considerable resemblance to the discovery which Cornelius Scriblerus made of the ten prædicaments of logic, in the battle of the serjeant and the butcher in the Bear-garden.

"Cornelius was forced to give Martin sensible images; thus, calling up the coachman, he asked him what he had seen in the Bear-garden? The man answered, he saw two men fight a prize; one was a fair man, a serjeant in the guards; the other black, a butcher; the serjeant had red breeches, the butcher blue; they fought upon a stage about four o'clock, and the serjeant wounded the butcher in the leg.—'Mark (quoth Cornelius) how the fellow runs through the prædicaments. Men, *substantia;* two, *quantitas;* fair and black, *qualitas;* serjeant and butcher, *relatio;* wounded the other, *actio et passio;* fighting, *situs;* stage, *ubi;* two o'clock, *quando;* blue and red breeches, *habitus.*'"*

"Nothing is more evident," says the same author, "than that divers persons, no other way remarkable, have each a strong disposition to the formation of some particular trope or figure. Aristotle saith, that the hyperbole is an ornament fit for young men of quality; accordingly we find in those gentlemen a wonderful propensity toward it, which is marvellously improved by travelling. Soldiers also and seamen are very happy in the same figure. The periphrasis or circumlocution is the peculiar talent of country farmers; the proverb or apologue of old men at their clubs; the ellipsis or speech by half words, of ministers and politicians; the aposiopesis of courtiers; the litotes, or diminution, of ladies, whisperers and backbiters; and the anadiplosis of common cryers and hawkers, who, by redoubling the same words, persuade people to buy their oysters, green hastings, or new ballads. Epithets may be found in great plenty at Billingsgate, sarcasm and irony learned upon the water, and the epiphonema or exclamation frequently from the Bear-garden, and as frequently from the *hear him* of the House of Commons."†

These examples are ludicrous indeed; yet the observation of Racine is not the less just; and we may safely conclude, however different it may be from the opinion which we should have formed *a priori*, that, when the mind is in a state of emotion, the suggestions of analogy arise with more than usual copiousness and rapidity, and that figurative language is thus the very language of nature.

But though, in a state of emotion, images are readily suggested, according to that principle of shadowy and remote resemblance which we are considering, it must be remembered, as a rule which is to guide us in the use of figures, that in this case the mind seizes the analogy with almost unconscious comparison, and pours it forth in its vigorous expression with the rapidity of inspiration. It does not dwell on the analogy beyond the moment, but is hurried on to new analogies, which it seizes and deserts in like manner. This rapidity with which analogies are seized and deserted seems to me to justify, in some degree, in the drama and in highly impassioned poetry of every kind, what in poetry or general composition of a calmer kind, would be unpardonable inaccuracy. In the case of mixed metaphor, for instance, as when Hamlet talks of taking arms against a sea of troubles, nothing can be clearer than that there is an incongruity of phrase in the different parts of the sentence, since it is not with a sword or a spear that we stem the waves; and as the inconsistent images occur in the short compass of a single line, and are a part of a meditative soliloquy, a greater congruity might unquestionably have been preserved with advantage. But when the objection is made universal, and applied to every case of expression, even of the strongest passion, in which any mixture of metaphors occurs in the imagery of the longest sentence, I cannot but think that this universal censure has arisen from that technical criticism, which thinks only of tropes and figures, and the formal laws of rhetoric, and not from that sounder criticism, which founds its judgments on the everlasting principles of our intellectual and moral nature. In conformity with these principles, a long and exact adherence to all the congruities of an image that has been accidentally used in a former part of a sentence or paragraph, though indispensably necessary in every species of calm composition, is yet rather censurable than commendable in scenes of dramatic passion. If the speaker be supposed to reflect that he is using a comparison, it is a proof that he is not impassioned at this moment of reflection; and if he be supposed to use the metaphorical expression only from its greater strength, as it bursts upon him immediately, and without any attention to the various properties of the object, which suggested it perhaps by a single analogy, nothing can be more just, in point of nature, than that a subsequent expression should chance to have little agreement with those other properties which never were real objects of his thought. When a metaphor is comprised in a few words,—and it is of such brief metaphors that the poetic language of passion should in preference be composed—the image should be faithfully observed; because the metaphorical expression does not then outlast the feeling of analogy which origi-

* Chap. vii. † Art of Sinking in Poetry, c. xiii

nally suggested it. But it is very different when it extends through a long sentence. To follow it out rigidly, for several lines, in the expression of strong feeling, is an evident departure from nature; since it is to have a remote object of analogy constantly in view during the whole time of the emotion. To seize a new metaphor, or, in other words, to think no more of a metaphorical expression when it has already exhibited all the analogy that was felt at the time when it rose, as it were, to our utterance, is to be conscious only of our emotion itself, and to speak with that instant inspiration which it gives. It may be to mix metaphors, in the common rhetorical sense of that phrase, but it is assuredly to be faithful to nature. It must not be forgotten, however, that it is only to the eloquence of strong passion that such a licence is allowable; and that it cannot be admitted in any case in which the very image conveyed in the primary metaphor can be supposed, without impropriety, to be itself a continued object of the speaker's thought.

The simile, as I have already remarked, is a figure of more deliberate reflection than the metaphor; yet, notwithstanding the intellectual labour which it seems to imply, it is evident that, in the pleasure which we receive from it, we still have in view its source in the general principle of spontaneous suggestion. It is not every simile, therefore, however just, that pleases; but such only as seem to be derived from objects that might naturally be expected to occur to the mind in the situation in which the comparison is made. We talk of far-fetched similes, not as implying that there is no real analogy in the objects which they compare, or that the analogy is not as complete as in many other comparisons to which we do not give that name, but merely because the analogy is sought in objects, the natural occurrence of which to the mind does not seem very probable. We are more pleased, in general, with comparisons derived from the works of nature, than with those which are borrowed from the works of art; partly because natural objects are not limited to a particular class of observers, but may be supposed to have been present to the senses of all in every period of their life, and therefore to be of more ready and general occurrence in suggestion,—and partly, because with works of human art there is associated a degree of minute labour, which is not favourable to conceptions of beauty and sublimity, and which carries with it the feeling of toil and artificial preparation into all the groups of images with which it is combined. In exactness of analogy,—and this, too, in a case in which such similitude could scarcely have been expected,—it is not easy to find a comparison more striking than that which Butler has made of honour, to the drop of quickly-cooled glass, which chemists have called Prince Rupert's drop, and which has long attracted their attention, in consequence of the particular quality described in the simile:—

"Honour is like that glassy bubble
Which gives* philosophers such trouble:
Whose least part crack'd, the whole does fly;
And wits are crack'd to find out why."†

Yet, truly accurate as it is, how absurd would such a simile have appeared in any other species of poetry than that, of which it is a part of the province to bring far-fetched images together!

The different degrees of the pleasure received from comparisons, as they appear to harmonize more or less with the natural influence of the principle of suggestion in spontaneous trains of thought, is finely shown in what has always appeared to me a very striking imperfection in one of the most popular stanzas of Gray's very popular Elegy. I quote also the two preceding stanzas:—

"Perhaps, in this neglected spot is laid
Some heart, once pregnant with celestial fire:
Hands that the rod of empire might have sway'd,
Or waked to ecstasy the living lyre.

But Knowledge to their eyes her ample page,
Rich with the spoils of Time, did ne'er unroll;
Chill Penury repressed their noble rage,
And froze the genial current of the soul.

Full many a gem, of purest ray serene,
The dark unfathom'd caves of Ocean bear:
Full many a flower is born to blush unseen,
And waste its sweetness on the desert air."‡

The two similes in this stanza certainly produce very different degrees of poetic delight. That which is borrowed from the rose blooming in solitude pleases in a very high degree, both as it contains a just and beautiful similitude, and still more as the similitude is one the most likely to have arisen to a poetic mind in such a situation. But the simile in the first two lines of the stanza, though it may, perhaps, philosophically be as just, has no other charm, and strikes us immediately as not the natural suggestion of such a moment and such a scene. To a person moralizing amid the simple tombs of a village church-yard, there is perhaps no object that would not sooner have occurred than this piece of minute jewellery—a gem of purest ray serene in the unfathomed caves of ocean. When the analogies are suggested by surrounding objects, or by objects that harmonize with the surrounding scenery, they appear more natural, and therefore more pleasing. It is this which forms the principal charm of the separate stanzas of another very popular poem of a similar class, the Hermit of Dr. Beattie, in which the moral allusions are all caught from objects that are represent-

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* That finds, Orig.
† Part II. Canto ii. v. 385—388. ‡ V. 45—56.

ed as present to the eye or ear of the moralist. I confess, however, that, when the poem is read as a whole, the uniformity of the allusions, drawn from such a variety of objects to the single circumstance of man's mortality, gives an appearance of laborious search, almost in the same manner as if the analogy had been traced from very remote objects. I select, therefore, only a single stanza from the whole:—

"'Tis night and the landscape is lovely no more.
I mourn, but ye woodlands I mourn not for you:
For morn is approaching your charms to restore,
Perfum'd with fresh fragrance, and glittering with dew.
Nor yet for the ravage of winter I mourn,
Kind Nature the embryo blossom will save.
But when shall Spring visit the mouldering urn?
O! when shall it dawn on the night of the grave?"*

We have seen, then, what an accession to our pleasure the suggesting principle of analogy has produced, in giving birth to the figurative language of poetry; and how necessary it is to have frequent recourse to this principle in laying down the general laws of philosophical criticism. But there is another class of most important analogies which we have not yet considered,—those which form the powerful associations that direct the genius of scientific invention. These are the analogies of objects, considered as means, in reference to a particular end. When a mechanician sees a machine, the parts of which all concur in one great ultimate effect, if he be blessed with inventive genius he will not merely see and comprehend the uses of the parts as they co-operate in the particular machine before him, but there will perhaps arise in his mind the idea of some power yet unapplied to the same purpose, some simpler process by which the ultimate effect may be augmented or improved, or at least obtained at less cost of time, or labour, or capital. When the crucible of the chemist presents to him some new result, and his first astonishment is over, there arise in his mind the ideas of products, or operations, in some respects analogous, by the comparison of which he discovers some new element or combination of elements, and perhaps changes altogether the aspect of his science. A Newton sees an apple fall to the ground, and he discovers the system of the universe. In these cases, the principle of analogy, whether its operation be direct or indirect, is too forcible and too extensive in its sway to admit of much dispute. It is sufficient to know that, by the suggestions which it has afforded, to those whom Heaven has formed for the high destiny of constituting a part of that series of minds which spread from age to age the progress of improvement over all the regions and generations of mankind, we have risen to a degree of empire over nature, which, compared with our original imbecility, is a greater advance in the scale of being than that fabulous apotheosis which the ancient world conferred on its barbarous heroes.

* Stanza 1.

LECTURE XXXVI.

PRIMARY LAWS OF SUGGESTION,—I. RESEMBLANCE, CONCLUDED,—II. CONTRAST.

GENTLEMEN, a great part of my last Lecture was occupied in considering the influence of resemblance, as a connecting principle in our trains of thought. The illustrations of it which I used were chiefly of the rhetorical kind, which are, in themselves, most striking illustrations of the varieties of spontaneous suggestion, and which appeared to me peculiarly valuable, as enabling me to point out to what simple universal principles of the mental constitution even the boldest figures of the rhetorician are to be traced. It is the same in these as in all the other products of human skill. The very arts which we seem to ourselves to create, as if it were in our power to add to nature, never can be any thing more than forms which nature herself assumes. Whether the province be that of matter or of mind,—in the exercises of poetry and eloquence, and in the philosophic criticism which estimates the degrees of excellence displayed in these delightful combats of intellectual glory,—as in the works of a very different kind, which the mechanic ingenuity and labour of man devise and execute, what appears most artificial is nothing more than a skilful application of the simple laws of nature; of laws which we may apply, indeed, to our various purposes; and which some may know how to apply more successfully than others, but which are continually operating on matter and mind, independently of the applications which our skill may make of them.

In examining how much the suggesting principle is influenced by similarity, we considered first, that most direct and obvious resemblance which objects bear to each other in their sensible qualities. We then proceeded to consider the fainter indirect resemblance, which constitutes what is termed analogy, and we found, that it is to this species of shadowy likeness that philosophy owes its accessions of power, and poetry its most attractive charms; since to the invention of the philosopher it suggests, in the contemplation of a single desired effect, all the variety of analogous means which may separately lead to the production of it, and to the fancy of the poet all that variety of kindred imagery and emotions, with which, by a sort of double transformation, he gives

life to inanimate objects, and form and colour, and substance, to every feeling of the soul.

There is another set of resemblances, not in the objects themselves, but in the mere arbitrary signs which express them, that have a powerful, though less obvious influence on suggestion, and often guide the trains of our thought without appearing to guide them.

It is, when we consider, indeed, what language truly is, not more wonderful that words as sounds, without regard to the sensible objects or abstract meanings denoted by them, should awaken in the mind the conception of similar sounds, than that one form or colour should be suggested by a similar form or colour; and, so arbitrary is language, that these mere verbal similarities do not, necessarily, involve similarities of meaning. On the contrary, the words which express different objects may have the most exact resemblance, though there may not be the slightest direct resemblance, nor even the faintest analogy, in the objects, which the words denote. The new word, however, which some former word may have suggested, by its mere similarity in sound, is itself significant of some peculiar meaning. It, too, is a symbol, and as a symbol cannot be thus suggested, without exciting uniformly, or almost uniformly, and immediately, the conception of the thing signified; and hence, from the accidental agreement of their mere verbal signs, conceptions arise which otherwise would not have arisen, and, consequently, trains of reflection altogether different. Our thoughts, which usually govern our language, are themselves also in a great measure governed in this way, by that very language over which they seem to exercise unlimited command; so true, in more senses than one, is the observation of Lord Bacon, "Credunt homines rationem suam verbis imperare, sed fit etiam ut verba vim suam super rationem retorqueant."*

I do not speak at present, however, of the important influence which Bacon had particularly in view in these words,—the influence of language, as the direct medium of thought, perpetuating, by habitual use, the prejudices involved in the original meaning of certain words, or by accidental association, conveying peculiar differences of meaning, to the minds of different individuals, and thus strengthening and fixing in each many separate prejudices, in addition to the general prejudices of mankind. This permanent influence of language, as tinging with its peculiar colours the thought of which it is the medium, though we may not feel it in the particular cases in which it modifies our own judgments, we know, at least, to be very powerful; because we are sufficiently quick-sighted to discover its influence on the minds of those who are opposed to us in opinion; every one, in the intercourse of society, thus serving as a mirror, to show, to every one besides, the principles of fallacy in his own mental constitution, which are truly in himself, though he cannot perceive them but as they are reflected from others.

We have, however, too many mirrors of this kind around us, not to have some slight fear at least, that the prejudices of language, as the direct medium of thought, may be exercising their universal dominion, even on ourselves, the *least fallible* of the multitude; but we pay little attention in general, and even philosophers have scarcely attended to that indirect, though not less real, influence of language, to which I at present allude,—the influence which it indirectly acquires, as a series of sounds, suggesting each other in succession, by their own similarities, independently of any relations that may subsist in the objects which they denote, and independently, too, of those general habits, or accidental and limited associations, of which Bacon speaks. Similar sounds suggest, by their mere similarity, similar sounds; and the words thus suggested, awaken the conceptions which they are accustomed to represent,—and, consequently, the whole train of thoughts and images associated with these conceptions, which would not have arisen but for the accidental resemblance of one symbol to another. That such verbal suggestions should frequently occur, we might presume, *a priori*, from our knowledge of the general principles of association. But the influence which this symbolic resemblance has on our looser train of silent thought, is, perhaps, far greater than we conceive it to be. There is, indeed, a very obvious reason, that it should appear to us less than it truly is.

When a word is once suggested by its syllabic resemblance, and, consequently, the image which that new word denotes, the mind is so quick to perceive a relation of some sort among almost all the objects which can be presented to it, that it readily discovers some relation between the new image and those which preceded it; and though it was truly the resemblance of mere sound which suggested it, independently of the relation, which may be discovered after it is suggested, the feeling of this relation seems of itself, when we look back, sufficient to account for the suggestion. We think of this, therefore, as the cause, since it can be made to harmonize, in some measure, with our thought itself, and disregard that mere verbal influence, in which, and in which alone, the suggestion had its origin. It is only where the direct verbal suggestion is rendered more apparent, by the strange incongruity of

* Nov. Org. Lib. I. aph. lix.

the images, which the similar sounds chance to denote, as in the case of puns, that we readily ascribe the suggestion to the word, and not to the thought itself. Even in the case of puns, it is only to the few, in which the contrast of meaning is very striking, that we pay any attention. How many words of similar sound arise in the mind by this species of suggestion, which are never uttered as puns, but pass silently away, because they are felt to be without that happy ambiguity, or opposition of meaning, which alone could reconcile the hearers to this petty species of wit.

Next to this petty species of wit, as a proof of the influence of mere verbal similarities of sound in suggestion, may be mentioned the connecting influence of rhyme. That, in rhyme, sound suggests sound, and consequently operates indirectly on the train of thought by this mere symbolic resemblance, there can be no question, since rhyme itself is but the recurrence of such similar sounds at regular or irregular intervals; and to these recurring sounds, it is very evident that the strain of thought must be in a considerable degree subservient, however independent of it it may seem. I need not quote to you the simile of Butler, so often quoted on this subject, in which he compares rhyme, in its influence on verse, to the rudder, which, though in the rear of the vessel, and apparently following its direction, directs the track which the vessel itself is to pursue; but there can be no doubt as to the reality of the influence exercised on the whole verse, by these final words,—the monotonous syllables,—of which the office has been said to be nothing more than the very humble one of standing,

> "like watchmen at the close,
> To keep the verse from being prose."

On first consideration it might seem, that, in the use of rhyme, the necessity under which the poet is placed of accommodating his strain of thought to resemblances of sound that have themselves no peculiar relation to one thought more than to another, and the frequent sacrifices which may therefore be required of him, must be unfavourable to the sentiment of the verse, whatever accession of pleasure it may or may not be supposed to give to the melody. That it must occasionally render some sacrifices unavoidable, and thus sometimes deprive the reader of expressions more powerful in themselves than the tamer phrases, which alone admit of being accommodated to some obstinate and intractable rhyme, is indeed true. Yet the influence of this constraint is, perhaps, upon the whole, far from unfavourable to the sentiment, giving more than it takes away. For how many of the most beautiful thoughts and images of poetry are we indebted to these final sounds, which suggest each other by their accidental resemblances; and which, merely by obliging the poet to pause till he can accommodate the verse, with perfect propriety of sentiment and measure, to the imperious necessity of the rhyme, bring before him during this interval a greater variety of images, from which to make his selection, than would have occurred to his rapid invention and too easy acquiescence, if he had not been under the same unavoidable restraint. In this respect, the shackles of rhyme have often been compared to the fetters of the actor; which, instead of truly embarrassing his movements, and giving him less pomp and consequence in the eyes of those who gaze on him, only make him toss his arms with more impetuous action, and tread the stage with greater majesty.

An influence on the successions of our thought,—similar to that of the concluding syllables of verse,—is exercised by the initial sounds of words in alliteration. How readily suggestions of this kind occur, so as to modify indirectly the train of images and feelings in the mind, and what pleasure they afford when they seem to have arisen without effort, is marked by the tendency to alliteration which is so prevalent, not in the poetry merely, but still more in the traditionary proverbs of every country. In like manner, when names are to be coupled in the fictions of romance, and when many names seem equal in every other respect, this alliterative resemblance is very frequently, to use Leibnitz's phrase, the sufficient reason which directs the author's choice. In the works of a single novelist, for example, how much more readily do the names Roderick Random, Peregrine Pickle, Ferdinand Count Fathom, seem to join together, than if the same names had been differently arranged, in any transposition which we could make of them.

It is in verse, however, and particularly in the lighter species of verse, that the charm of alliteration is most powerfully felt. I scarcely need repeat to you any examples, to prove what you must often have experienced:—

> "But thousands die, without or this or that;
> Die, and endow a college, or a cat."*

> "Fill but his purse, our poet's work is done;
> Alike to him, by pathos or by pun."†

> "Or her whose life the church and scandal share;
> For ever in a passion, or a prayer."‡

> ——"Many a German Prince is worse,
> Who, proud of pedigree, is poor of purse."‖

In these lines of Pope, it is impossible not to

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* Moral Essays, Ep. III. v. 95, 96.
† Imitations of Horace, Book II. Ep. I. v. 294, 295. —"Their purse," and "them."—*Orig.*
‡ Moral Essays, Ep. II. v. 105, 106.
‖ Imitations of Horace, Ep. VI. v. 83, 84.

feel the force of the alliteration, and the additional prominence and sharpness which it seems to give to every point of the thought and expression.

It may be remarked, however, that though the alliteration itself consists only in the similarity of sounds,—which must, of course, be the same, whatever be the meaning of the particular words, it is by no means indifferent as to the effect produced, on what words of the sentence the alliteration is made to fall. Unless where it is intended for producing or augmenting imitative harmony by its redoubled sounds,—which may be considered as forming a class apart,—it is never so powerful, as when it falls on words, which, together with the similarity of sound, have either a great similarity or a great discrepance of meaning, harmonizing, as it were, with those other principles of resemblance or contrast, which, of themselves, might have been sufficient to produce the particular suggestion. Thus, in the very alliterative line in the Rape of the Lock, which describes the furniture of Belinda's toilet,—

"Puffs, powders, patches, Bibles, billets-doux ;*"—

the alliteration in the former half of the verse is of words which express things similar,—that in the latter part, of words which express things discrepant. The contrast produced by the ideas of Bibles and billets-doux, gives more pleasure, by the agreement which the alliteration points out of things that are in other respects so opposite. It is the same in the case of the passion and the prayer, the college and the cat, and in most of those happy alliterations which are to be found in the satirical or playful verses of this powerful master of all the art of verse. The alliteration of words that express opposite ideas is, in truth, a species of wit,—as far as the pleasure of wit consists in the sudden discovery of unexpected resemblances,—and approaches very nearly the nature of a pun; combined, at the same time, with the pleasure which the ludicrous antithesis of the objects themselves would have produced even without alliteration. To the other half of the line,—"Puffs, powders, patches,"—the same remark does not apply. Yet the pleasure, in this instance, is not produced merely by the occurrence of similar sounds. It arises also, in part, from the discovery of a new and different resemblance, in things of which all the similarities were before supposed to be known. In this, too, the effect of the alliteration is very nearly similar to that of a pun; and it is, in truth, a pun of letters, as puns, conversely, may be said to imply an alliteration of whole words. In both cases, whether the resemblance be in the whole word, as in the pun, or only in a part of the word, as in alliteration, the suggestion may be considered as a decisive proof of the influence which is exercised over our trains of thought by the mere accident of the agreement of arbitrary sounds.

In treating of the pleasure which we receive from comparisons in poetry, I remarked, how evidently we still have in view the source of such comparisons, in the spontaneous suggestion of similar objects by similar objects; and how much, therefore, our pleasure is lessened, when the simile, though perhaps sufficiently exact in that analogy which it is intended to express, appears of a kind, which, in the circumstances described, could not be supposed naturally to have arisen to the conception of the individual who uses it. It is the same with that resemblance of mere syllabic sound which we are now considering. It must appear to have its source in spontaneous suggestion, or it ceases to give pleasure. On this account chiefly it is, that alliteration, which delights us when sparingly used, becomes offensive when frequently repeated in any short series of lines; not because any one of the reduplications of sound would itself be less pleasing if it had not been preceded by others, than those others which preceded it, but because the frequent recurrence of it shows too plainly, that the alliteration has been studiously sought. The suggesting principle, as I have already remarked, is not confined to one set of objects, or to a few; and, though similarity of mere initial sound be one of the relations according to which suggestion may take place, it is far from being the most powerful or constant one. A few syllabic or literal resemblances are, therefore, what may be expected very naturally to occur, particularly in those lighter trains of thought in which there is no strong emotion to modify the suggestion, in permanent relation to one prevailing sentiment. But a series of alliterative phrases is inconsistent with the natural variety of the suggesting principle. It implies a labour of search and selection, and a labour which it is not pleasing to contemplate, because it is employed on an object too trifling to give it interest.

In the early ages of verse, indeed, when the skill that is admired must be a species of skill that requires no great refinement to discover it, this very appearance of labour is itself a charm. A never-ceasing alliteration, as it presents a difficulty of which all can readily judge, is, in this period of rude discernment, an obvious mode of forcing admiration;—very much in the same way as the feats of a rope-dancer or a tumbler never fail to give greater pleasure to a child, and to the vulgar, who in their tastes are always children, than the most graceful attitudes of the dancer in all his harmony of movement,—

* Canto I. v. 138.

who does, perhaps, what no one else is capable of doing, but who seems to do it in a way which every one may try to imitate, and who is truly most inimitable when he seems to show how very easy it is to execute all the wonders which he performs. Accordingly we find, in the history of our own poetry, and in the poetry of many semi-barbarous nations, that frequent alliteration has been held to be a requisite of verse as indispensable as the metrical pauses on which its melody depends. With the refinement of taste, however, this passion for coarse difficulty subsides; and we begin at last to require, not merely that difficulty should be overcome, but that the labour of overcoming the difficulty should be hid from us, with a care at least equal to that which was used in overcoming it.

All that is truly marvellous in art is thus augmented, indeed, rather than lessened. But it is no longer art that must present itself: it is nature only;—"artis est celare artem;"—and that nature to which we look in all the finer intellectual arts, as to the genius which animates them, is the knowledge and observance of the principle which we are considering,—the accordance which we feel of every sentiment, and image, and expression, with those laws of spontaneous suggestion in the mind, which seem as if, in the circumstances represented, they might almost, without the assistance of any art, have produced of themselves whatever we admire.

We know too well the order of this spontaneous suggestion, not to feel, when this alliteration is very frequently repeated, the want of the natural flow of thought, and consequently, the labour which must have been used in the search of sounds that were to be forced reluctantly together. There is no longer any pleasure felt, therefore; or, if any pleasure be felt, it is of a kind totally different from that which gives an additional charm to the easy flow of verse when the alliteration is sparingly used. There is a poem of some hundred lines, in regular hexameter verse,—the *Pugna Porcorum, per Publium Porcium, Poetam*,—in which there is not a single word introduced that does not begin with the letter *P*. But what is the pleasure which the foolish ingenuity of such a poem affords? and who is there who could have patience sufficient to read the whole of it aloud, or even to read the whole of it inwardly? As a specimen, I may quote to you a few lines,—which are, perhaps, as many as you can bear with patience,—containing a part of the speech of the Proconsul Porcorum, in which he endeavours to win over the younger Pigs to peace:—

"Propterea properans Proconsul, poplite prono,
Præcipitem Plebem, pro patrum pace poposcit.
Persta paulisper, pubes preciosa! precamur,
Pensa profectum parvum pugnæ peragendæ.
Plures plorabant, postquàm præcelsa premetur
Prælatura patrum, porcelli percutientur
Passim, posteaquam pingues porci periere.
Propterea petimus, præsentem ponite pugnam,
Per pia Porcorum petimus penetralia," &c.*

This, it is evident, is the very vaulting, and tumbling, and rope-dancing of poetry; and any coarse pleasure which we may receive from it, when we hear or read a part of it for the first time, is not the pleasure of verse, but a pleasure which the wise, indeed, may feel, but which is very much akin to the mere clownish wonderment that fixes the whole village in the rural fair around the stage of some itinerant tumbler or fire-eater. The *Pugna Porcorum* is not the only long piece of perfect alliteration. A similar poem was addressed to Charles the Bald, of which every word, in compliment to the monarch, began with his own initial letter *C*. So various, in all ages, have been these *difficiles nugæ*, this *labor ineptiarum*, as Martial calls them, that poems have been written, deriving their principal, or probably their only recommendation, from a quality the very opposite to that which conferred so unenviable an immortality on the busy idleness of the *Pugna Porcorum*. The labour of the poems, to which I now allude, was not to repeat, but to exclude altogether a particular letter, on which account their authors were termed *Leipogrammatists*. Thus, we hear of a Greek *Iliad*, from the first book of which the letter *Alpha* was excluded; from the second the letter B, and so on through the whole books of the Iliad and letters of the alphabet. The same species of laborious trifling, by the report of the traveller Chardin, appears to have prevailed in Persia. One of the poets of that country had the honour of reading to his sovereign a poem, in which no admission had been allowed to the letter A. The king, who was tired of listening, and whose weariness had probably too good a cause, returned the poet thanks, and expressed his very great approbation of his omission of the letter A; but added, that in his opinion, the poem might, perhaps, have been better still, if he had only taken the trouble to omit, at the same time, all the other letters of the alphabet.

In all these cases of studious alliteration, positive or negative, it is very evident that the natural course of the suggesting principle must have been checked, and checked almost incessantly; and the constraint and irksomeness which this constant effort involves, are thus every moment forced upon us, till we feel more sympathy with the weariness of the artist, than admiration of the power with which he has been able to struggle through his painful task. We love, in-

* V. 41—49.

deed, in works of genius, strains of exalted sentiment, and successions of bright and glowing imagery, which are beyond the ordinary suggestions of our own mind; but, even in the very majesty of all that is sublime, or in that transcendent and overwhelming tenderness which is itself but a softer species of sublimity, while we yield with more than admiration to the grandeur or the pathos, we still love them to harmonize with the universal principles on which the spontaneous suggestions of our own humbler thoughts depend. When they do so harmonize, we feel what we read or hear, almost as if it had arisen in our mind, by the principle of spontaneous suggestion, which we know that we partake, in its general tendencies, with the very genius which we revere; and this identity which we love to feel, with every thing that interests us, as it constitutes, in a great measure, the charm of our moral sympathy, has also, I conceive, no small influence on the kindred emotions of taste, constituting a great portion of the pleasure which we derive from the contemplation of works of art. The genius which commands our applause is still the genius of man; of a being who perceives, remembers, reasons, and exercises every function of which we are conscious in ourselves. "Homines sumus; humani nihil alienum." We feel, therefore, that it is not our admiration only that connects us with the works which we admire, but the very faculties which have produced those admirable results. We see our common nature reflected, and reflected with a beauty of which we were not sensible before; and while thought succeeds thought, and image rises upon image, according to laws of succession which we have been accustomed to recognise in the trains of our own fancy, these thoughts and images are, as it were, for the moment ours; and we have only the delightful impression that we are of a race of nobler beings than we conceived. This delightful identification, however, lasts only as long as the thoughts and images, that are presented to us, arise in the order in which nature might have spontaneously presented them to our own mind. When there is any obvious and manifest violation of the natural course of suggestion, as there must be when the labour of the composition is brought before us, this illusion of identity is dissolved. It is no longer our common nature which we feel; but the toil and constraint which are peculiar to the individual, and which separate him, for the time, from our sympathy. The work of labour seems instantly something insulated and detached, which we cannot identify with our own spontaneous thought; and we feel for it that coldness which, by the very constitution of our nature, it is impossible for us not to feel, with respect to every thing which is absolutely foreign.

After these remarks on the influence of the various species of resemblance, in the objects themselves, in the analogy of some of their qualities, and in the arbitrary symbols which denote them, I proceed to consider the force of contrast as a suggesting principle. I consider it at present as forming a class apart, for the same reason which has led me, in these illustrations of the general principle, to class separately the suggestions of resemblance, though I conceive that all, or at least the greater number of them, on a more subtile analysis, might be reduced to the more comprehensive influence of former proximity.

Of this influence, whether direct or indirect, in contrast, the memory of every one must present him with innumerable instances. The palace and the cottage, the cradle and the grave, the extremes of indigence and of luxurious splendour, are not connected in artificial antitheses only, but arise, in ready succession, to the observer of either. Of all moral reflections, none are so universal as those which are founded on the instability of mortal distinctions, the sudden reverses of fortune, the frailty of beauty, the precariousness of life itself, all which reflections are manifestly the result of that species of suggestion which we are considering,—for the very notion of instability implies the previous conception of that state of decay which is opposite to the flourishing state observed by us. If we see the imperial victor moving along, in all the splendour of majesty and conquest, we must have thought of sudden disaster, before we can moralize on the briefness of earthly triumph. If we see beauty, and youth, and joy, and health on the cheek, we must have thought of age, or sickness, or misfortune, before we can look on it with sorrowful tenderness. This transition in our trains of thought, from one extreme to its opposite, is perhaps a happy contrivance of nature for tempering excess of emotion, by interrupting the too long continuance of trains of any kind. It must occasionally produce some little tendency to salutary reflection, even in "the gay licentious proud," who are fated by their situation to "dance along" through life, though it is certainly not on them, but on those by whom they are surrounded, that its beneficial influence most fully operates. This natural tendency is, in truth, what the lyre of Timotheus is represented to have been in Dryden's Ode, when, with a sudden change of subject, he checked the too triumphant exultation of the conqueror of Darius:—

"With downcast looks, the joyless victor sat,
Revolving in his alter'd soul
The various turns of chance below;
And, now and then, a sigh he stole;
And tears began to flow."*

I cannot help thinking, in like manner, that the everlasting tendency to hope,—that only happiness of the wretched, which no circumstances of adverse fortune, not even the longest oppression of unchanging misery can wholly subdue,—derives much of its energy from this principle. The mere force of contrast must often bring before the imagination circumstances of happier fortune, and images of past delight. These very images, indeed, are sad, in some respects, especially when they first arise and coexist, as it were, with the images of misery which produced them, so as to present only the mortifying feeling of the loss which has been suffered; but they cannot long be present to the mind, without gradually awakening trains of their own, and, in some degree, the emotions with which they were before associated,—emotions which dispose the mind more readily to the belief, that the circumstances which have been, may yet again recur. It is, at least, not unsuitable to the goodness of that mighty Being who has arranged the wonderful faculties of man, in adaptation to the circumstances in which he was to be placed, that he should thus have formed us to conceive hope, where hope is most needed, and provided an internal source of comfort, in the very excess of misery itself.

Much of the painful retrospection, and, therefore, of the salutary influence of conscience, may arise, in like manner, from the force of this suggesting principle, which must frequently recall the security and happiness of the past, by the very anguish of the present, and which, thus, though it cannot restore innocence itself, may at least, by the images which it awakes, soften the mind to that repentance which is almost innocence under another form.

There is a passage, in the only remaining oration of the younger Pliny, that expresses strongly the power which the associating principle of contrast holds over the conscience of the guilty. It is in the Panegyric of Trajan, an emperor, of whom it has been said, that, to deserve the magnificent eulogium pronounced on him, the only merit wanting to him was that of not being a hearer of it. The Panegyric is unquestionably written with much eloquence, and is not the less impressive from those circumstances which give occasion to a very just remark,—"that the Romans have in it the air of slaves, scarcely escaped from their chains; who are astonished at their own liberty, and feel grateful to their master that he does not think proper to crush them, but deigns to count them in the rank of men." "Merenti gratias agere facile est," says Pliny, "non enim periculum est, ne cùm loquar de humanitate, exprobrari sibi superbiam credat; cùm de frugalitate, luxuriam; cùm de clementia, crudelitatem; cùm de liberalitate, avaritiam; cùm de benignitate, livorem; cùm de continentia, libidinem; cùm de labore, inertiam; cùm de fortitudine, timorem."† In this allusion to times that had scarcely passed away, what a striking picture is presented to us, of that despotism which, not satisfied with the unlimited power of doing evil, was still greedy of the praise of good which it despised, and of which it dreaded to hear the very name, even while it listened to the forced eulogium! and how still more sad a picture does it afford, of that servile cowardice which was doomed with ready knee, but with trembling tongue, to pay the perilous tax of adulation,—"cùm dicere quod velles, periculosum; quod nolles, miserum esset;"—that reign of terror, and flattery, and confiscation, and blood; when, to borrow the eloquent description which a panegyrist of Theodosius has given us of a similar period, with every misery around, there was still added the dreadful necessity of appearing to rejoice, the informer wandering to mark down countenances, and calumniate looks and glances; the plundered citizen driven from opulence into sudden poverty, fearful of seeming sad because there was yet left to him life; and he whose brother had been assassinated not daring to appear in the dress of mourning, because he had still a son.

Alas! in such times eloquence could be nothing more than what it was said to be for many ages of national servitude; "the unhappy art of exaggerating a few feeble virtues, or of disguising atrocious crimes." "Tristis illa facundiæ ancillantis necessitas, cùm trucem dominum auras omnes plausuum publicorum ventosa popularitate captantem, mendax adsentatio titillabat, cùm gratias agebant dolentes,—et tyrannum non prædicasse tyrannidis accusatio vocabatur."‡ Yet it is pleasing to think, that, in the long detail of praises which were addressed to guilty power, that suggesting principle which we are considering must often have exerted its influence, and in spite of all the artifices of the orator to veil, under magnificence of language, that hateful form of virtue which he was under the necessity of presenting, must sometimes have forced upon the conscience of the tyrant the feeling of what he was, by the irresistible contrast of the picture of what he was not.

* Alexander's Feast, Stanza IV. v. 19—23.

† Sect. IV. p. 6.—Edit. Venet. 1728.
‡ Pacati Panegyr. Sect. II

It is this tendency of the mind, to pass readily from opposites to opposites, which renders natural the rhetorical figure of antithesis. When skilfully and sparingly used, it is unquestionably a figure of great power, from the impression of astonishment which the rapid succession of contrasted objects must always produce. The infinity of worlds, and the narrow spot of earth which we call our country, or our home,—the eternity of ages, and the few hours of life,—the Almighty power of God and human nothingness,—it is impossible to think of these in succession without a feeling like that which is produced by the sublimest eloquence. This very facility, however, of producing astonishment, at little cost of real eloquence, renders the antithesis the most dangerous and seductive of all figures to a young orator. It is apt to introduce a symmetry of arrangement, in which scarcely an object is brought forward that has not to run a parallel of all its qualities with the qualities of some other object, till even contrast itself becomes monotonous and uniform by the very frequency of opposition. The thoughts and sentences are so nicely tallied as to be like pieces of Dutch gardening, where

> "Half the platform just reflects the other."*

It is not so that nature operates. She gives variety to the field of our thought, in the same manner as she diversifies her own romantic scenery. Now and then, on the banks of her rivers, rock answers to rock, and foliage to foliage; but, when we look along the wide magnificence of her landscapes, we discover that still, as in that "wilderness of sweets," which Milton describes, she continues "to wanton as in her prime, and play at will—wild without rule or art." It is the same in the field of our associations. Sometimes she presents objects together, in exact proportion of resemblance or contrast; but more frequently she groups them according to other relations, especially according to their former accidental concurrence in time or place, and thus communicates, if I may so express it, to the scenery of our thought, that very variety which she spreads over external things.

In the use of antithesis, then, as much as in the use of the other rhetorical forms of thought and expression before considered by us, it is in the general nature of spontaneous suggestion that we have to find the principle which is to direct us. Contrast is one of the forms of this suggestion; and occasional antithesis is therefore pleasing; but it is only one of the occasional forms of suggestion; and therefore frequent antithesis is not pleasing but offensive. Our taste requires that the series of thoughts and images presented to us should be exquisite in kind; but, even when they are most exquisite, it requires that, without any obtrusive appearance of labour, they should seem to have risen, as it were, spontaneously, and to have been only the perfection of the natural order of thought.

I shall proceed, in my next Lecture, to the consideration of *nearness in place or time* as an associating principle.

* Pope's Moral Essays, Ep. IV. v. 118.

LECTURE XXXVII.

OF NEARNESS IN PLACE OR TIME, AS MODIFYING SUGGESTION—SECONDARY LAWS OF SUGGESTION.

GENTLEMEN, the influence of the direct resemblances of objects, on the suggestions which constitute our trains of thought, having been considered by us in a former Lecture, I proceeded, in my last Lecture, to point out and illustrate the influence of another species of resemblance, which is not in the objects themselves, but in the mere signs that express them. As similar forms and colours suggest similar forms and colours, so do similar words mutually suggest each other; and the words thus suggested exciting the corresponding conceptions of which they are significant, a new train of thought may thus be introduced by the mere arbitrary resemblance of one symbolic sound to another. This influence of mere sounds in modifying suggestion, though, from circumstances which I pointed out, unremarked by us in many cases in which its influence is, probably, very powerful, is too striking in some cases not to force our attention. I availed myself, therefore, chiefly of these more striking cases, illustrating it particularly by the examples of puns and rhymes, and alliteration; and endeavouring at the same time to show you how exactly the principles of taste, in reference to these, as pleasing or unpleasing, have regard to their accordance or obvious unaccordance, with the natural order of spontaneous suggestion.

I then proceeded to consider the influence of contrast on the tendencies of suggestion, illustrating this by various examples, and pointing out to you, particularly, some moral advantages, of which I conceived these rapid transitions of thought to be productive—advantages not more important to our virtue than to our serenity in happiness, and to our comfort in sorrow.

I proceed now to the consideration of nearness in place or time—the next general circumstance which I pointed out as modifying suggestion.

Of all the general principles of connexion in the trains of our thought, this is evidently the most frequent and extensive in its operation; even when we confine our attention to its grosser and more obvious forms, without attempting, by any very refined analysis, to reduce to it any of the other tribes of our suggestions. The gross and obvious nearness in place or time, of which alone I speak when I use Mr. Hume's phrase of contiguity, forms the whole calendar of the great multitude of mankind, who pay little attention to the arbitrary eras of chronology, but date events by each other, and speak of what happened in the time of some persecution, or rebellion, or great war, or frost, or famine. Even with those who are more accustomed to use, on great occasions, the stricter dates of months and years, this association of events, as near to each other, forms the great bond for uniting in the memory those multitudes of scattered facts which form the whole history of domestic life, and which it would have been impossible to remember by their separate relation to some insulated point of time. It is the same with nearness in place. To think of one part of a familiar landscape is to recall the whole. The hill, the grove, the church, the river, the bridge, and all the walks which lead to them, rise before us in immediate succession. On this species of local relation chiefly have been founded those systems of artificial memory which at different periods have been submitted to the world, and which, whatever perfections or imperfections they may possess in other respects, certainly demonstrate very powerfully, by the facilities of remembrance which they afford, the influence that is exercised by mere order in place, on the trains of our suggestion. From neighbouring place to place our thoughts wander readily, with a sort of untaught geography; and, but for this connecting principle, not even the labour of the longest life could have fixed in our mind the simple knowledge of that science. If the idea of the river Nile had been as quick to arise on our conception of Greenland as on that of Egypt, and the Pyrenees, instead of suggesting the conterminous countries of France and Spain, had suggested to us equally at random, China and New Holland, and Lapland and Morocco, it is evident that, however intently and frequently we might have traced on our maps every boundary of every province of every nation on our globe, all would have been, in our mind, one mingled chaos of cities and streams and mountains. Every physical science would have been in like manner beyond our reach; since all are founded on the suggestion of the common antecedent events, together with their common consequents, in their regular order of proximity. The most powerful illustration, however, of the influence of coexistence or proximity in associating ideas, is the command acquired by the weak infant mind over all the complicated machinery of language. The thing signified recals the sign, and conversely the sign the thing signified, because both have been repeatedly at the same moment presented to the senses; and though it would be too much to say, with the emperor Charles the Fifth, that a man is as many times a man as he has acquired different languages, we may still say, with great truth, that we should scarcely have been men at all if we had not possessed the power of acquiring at least one language.

What a striking picture of this local connexion of feelings is presented by the state of Europe at the time of the Crusades!

> "Banditti saints disturbing distant lands,
> And unknown nations wandering for a home!"*

What was the interest which then roused, and led for the first time to one great general object, so many warring tribes, who had till then never thought of each other but with mutual animosity, and which brought forward the feudal slave with his feudal tyrant, not, as before, to be his blind and devoted instrument of vengeance or rapacity, but to share with perfect equality the same common passion with his lord?

It certainly was not the rescue of a few rocks or plains from the offspring of the invaders who had subdued them—it was for the delivery of that land, to which local conceptions associated with it gave a value that could not be measured with any calculations of wealth, or people, or territory;—for that land, which, trod by prophets, and consecrated by the display of the power and the sufferings of the great Being whom they worshipped as the founder of their faith, presented in almost every step the vestige of a miracle. The belief of wonders, which were said to be still performed there, might concur to raise the importance of the holy sepulchre, and to augment the general devotion, —if, indeed, this very belief itself was not, in its origin, referable to the same cause which gave interest to the scene, being only another form of that lively emotion which must have been felt by those who visited it, and who thought of *Him* whom the sepulchre had inclosed, and of the miracles which he had wrought. The sepulchre itself was thus, as it were, mingled with the very image of its divine tenant; and it was only a natural result of the influence of this contiguity, that the wonder-working power, which was known to have been exercised by the one, should have been felt as in some measure a part of the other. The very ardour of emotion, which could not fail to be excited on the first visit to such a spot, would aid this illu-

* Thomson's Poems—Liberty, Part IV. v. 86, 87.

sion; as it would seem like a sudden inspiration from that awful presence which, in the liveliness of the conception excited, was felt as if still hovering around the place. To think of the presence of that Being, however, was to recognise the power by which miracles were actually performed; and, with such an impression, it was scarcely possible to return from the pilgrimage, without the belief of a sort of holiness derived from it; as if nothing could be impure which had come from the presence of its God.

After this statement and illustration of various relations, by which, without the renewal of perception, the mere conception of one object is sufficient to awaken the conception of many others that are said to be associated with it, an inquiry very naturally presents itself, which yet seems to have been unaccountably neglected by philosophers. If there be various relations, according to which these parts of our trains of thought may succeed each other,—if the sight of a picture, for example, can recal to me the person whom it resembles, the artist who painted it, the friend who presented it to me, the room in which it formerly was hung, the series of portraits of which it then formed a part, and perhaps many circumstances and events that have been accidentally connected with it,—why does it suggest one of these conceptions rather than the others? The variety of the suggestion is surely sufficient to show, that the laws of suggestion, as a principle of the mind, are not confined merely to the relations of the successive feelings,—in which case the suggestion would be uniform,—but that, though these may be considered as primary laws, there must be some other circumstances which modify their peculiar influence at different times, and in different persons, and which may therefore be denominated secondary laws of suggestion. To the investigation of the secondary laws, then, as not less important than the primary, I next proceed.

After the remarks which I have already frequently made on this subject, I trust it is now unnecessary for me to repeat, that the term *laws*, as employed in the physics, whether of matter or of mind, is not used to denote any thing different from the phenomena themselves,—that, in short, it means nothing more than certain circumstances of general agreement in any number of phenomena. When Mr. Hume reduced, to the three orders of resemblance, contiguity, and causation, the relations on which he believed association to depend, he considered himself as stating only facts which were before familiar to every one, and did state only facts that were perfectly familiar. In like manner, when I reduce under a few heads those modifying circumstances, which seem to me as secondary laws, to guide, in every particular case, the momentary direction of the primary, my object is not to discover facts that are new, or little observed, but to arrange facts that, separately, are well known.

The first circumstance which presents itself, as modifying the influence of the primary laws, in inducing one associate conception rather than another, is the length of time during which the original feelings from which they flowed, continued, when they coexisted, or succeeded each other. Every one must be conscious, that innumerable objects pass before him, which are slightly observed at the time, but which form no permanent associations in the mind. The longer we dwell on objects, the more fully do we rely on our future remembrance of them.

In the second place, the parts of a train appear to be more closely and firmly associated, as the original feelings have been more lively. We remember brilliant objects, more than those which are faint and obscure. We remember, for our whole lifetime, the occasions of great joy or sorrow; we forget the occasions of innumerable slight pleasures or pains, which occur to us every hour. That strong feeling of interest and curiosity, which we call attention, not only leads us to dwell longer on the consideration of certain objects, but also gives more vivacity to the objects on which we dwell,—and in both these ways tend, as we have seen, to fix them more strongly in the mind.

In the third place, the parts of any train are more readily suggested, in proportion as they have been more frequently renewed. It is thus we remember, after reading them three or four times over, the verses which we could not repeat when we had read them only once.

In the fourth place, the feelings are connected more strongly, in proportion as they are more or less recent. Immediately after reading any single line of poetry, we are able to repeat it, though we may have paid no particular attention to it;—in a very few minutes, unless when we have paid particular attention to it, we are no longer able to repeat it accurately—and in a very short time we forget it altogether. There is, indeed, one very striking exception to this law, in the case of old age: for events, which happened in youth, are then remembered, when events of the year preceding are forgotten. Yet, even in the case of extreme age, when the time is not extended so far back, the general law still holds; and events, which happened a few hours before, are remembered, when there is total forgetfulness of what happened a few days before.

In the fifth place our successive feelings are associated more closely, as each has coexisted less with other feelings. The song, which we have never heard but from one person, can scarcely be heard again by us,

without recalling that person to our memory; but there is obviously much less chance of this particular suggestion, if we have heard the same air and words frequently sung by others.

In the sixth place, the influence of the primary laws of suggestion is greatly modified by original constitutional differences, whether these are to be referred to the mind itself, or to varieties of bodily temperament. Such constitutional differences affect the primary laws in two ways,—first, by augmenting and extending the influence of all of them, as in the varieties of the general power of remembering, so observable in different individuals. Secondly, they modify the influence of the primary laws, by giving greater proportional vigour to one set of tendencies of suggestion than to another. It is in this modification of the suggesting principle, and the peculiar suggestions to which it gives rise, that I conceive the chief part, or, I may say, the whole of what is truly called genius, to consist. We have already seen, that the primary tendencies of suggestion are of various species,—some, for example, arising from mere analogy, others from direct contiguity or nearness in time or place of the very objects themselves; and it is this difference of the prevailing tendency, as to these two species of suggestions, which I conceive to constitute all that is inventive in genius;—invention consisting in the suggestions of analogy, as opposed to the suggestions of grosser contiguity.

In the mind of one poet, for example, the conception of his subject awakens only such images as he had previously seen combined with it in the works of others; and he is thus fated, by his narrow and unvarying range of suggestion, only to add another name to the eternal list of imitators. In a poetic mind of a higher order, the conception of this very subject cannot exist for a moment, without awakening, by the different tendency of the suggesting principle, groups of images which never before had existed in similar combination; and, instead of being an imitator, he becomes a great model for the imitation of others. The prevailing suggestions of the one, in his trains of thought, are according to the relation of analogy, which is almost infinite; the prevailing suggestions of the other are those of contiguity of the images themselves, which, by its very nature, admits of no novelty, and gives only transcripts of the past. To tame down original genius, therefore, to mere imitation, and to raise the imitator to some rank of genius, it would be necessary only to reverse these simple tendencies. The fancy of the one would then, in the suggestions of mere contiguity, lose all that variety which had distinguished it, and would present only such combinations of images, as had before occurred to it, in similar order, in the works of former writers;—the fancy of the other, on acquiring the peculiar tendency to suggestions of analogy, would become instantly creative—new forms, of external beauty, or of internal passion, would crowd upon his mind, by their analogy to ideas and feelings previously existing; and this single change of the direction of the suggesting principle would be sufficient to produce all those wonders, which the poet of imagination ascribes to the influence of inspiring genii,—

> "Who conduct
> The wandering footsteps of the youthful bard,
> New to their* springs and shades; who touch his ear
> With finer sounds; who heighten to his eye
> The bloom of nature · and before him turn
> The gayest, happiest attitudes† of things."‡

Even in all those "thoughts that breathe, and words that burn," and those boundless stores of imagery, which a great poet lavishes with magnificent profusion, there is probably not a single image which has not been an object of our own perception, and therefore capable of being again awakened in our mind, in conformity with the primary laws of suggestion; nay there is perhaps not a single image which has not repeatedly been thus awakened in our mind. It is not, therefore, in consequence of any more copious store of images, that an original poet is enabled to group them in more beautiful variety, since the forms which he combines are stored in the memory of all, and are common to him with the dullest versifier; nor is it from any superior tenacity of general memory, that they arise more readily to his imagination. They might rise to both minds, and they do rise to both minds, but they rise on different occasions, in consequence, merely, of the different directions of the suggesting principle. How many are there, who have seen an old oak, half leafless, amid the younger trees of the forest, and who are therefore capable of remembering it when they think of the forest itself or of events that happened there! But it is to the mind of Lucan that it rises, by analogy, on the conception of a veteran chief—as in that exquisite simile, which, in contrasting the heroes of Pharsalia, he uses to illustrate the character of Pompey, and the veneration still paid to that ancient greatness of which little more was left than the remembrance of its glory:—

> "Stat magni nominis umbra,
> Qualis frugifero quercus sublimis in agro
> Exuvias veteres populi, sacrataque gestans
> Dona ducum: nec jam validis radicibus hærens
> Pondere fixa suo est; nudosque per æra ramos
> Effundens, trunco, non frondibus, efficit umbram
> At quamvis primo nutet casura sub Euro
> Tot circum sylvæ firmo se robore tollant
> Sola tamen colitur.§"

The inventions of poetic genius, then, are the suggestions of analogy: the prevailing suggestions of common minds, are those of

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* Your, Orig. † Attitude, Orig.
‡ Pleasures of Imagination, Book I. v. 25—30.
§ Pharsalia, Lib. I. v. 135—143.

mere contiguity; and it is this difference of the occasions of suggestion, not of the images suggested, which forms the distinctive superiority of original genius. Any one, who has had the pleasure of reading the beautiful simile, which I have quoted to you from the Pharsalia, may, on the sight of a decaying oak, feel immediately the relation of analogy which this majestic trunk, still lifting as proudly to the storm, and spreading as widely its leafless arms, bears to the decay of human grandeur, more venerable, perhaps, in its very feebleness, than in all the magnificence of its power. The mind of every one, therefore, is capable of the suggestion of the one analogous object by the other, as much as the mind of Lucan. The only difference is, that, to produce this suggestion in a common mind, it was necessary, previously, to make the one conception successive, in point of time, to the other,—to produce, in short, a proximity of the very images that could be obtained only by a perusal of the verses, in which the images are immediately proximate:—while the suggestion, in the mind of the original author, though perhaps not more clear and perfect, than it was afterwards to be, in the memory of many of those who have read the simile, and felt its justness and beauty, differed, notwithstanding, in this most important respect, that, in him, it did not require such previous contiguity to produce the suggestion, but arose, by its mere analogy, in consequence of the greater tendency of the inventive mind to suggestions of this particular class.

Copious reading and a retentive memory may give to an individual, of very humble talent, a greater profusion of splendid images than existed in any one of the individual minds, on whose sublime conceptions he has dwelt till they have become, in one sense of the word, his own. There is scarcely an object which he perceives that may not now bring instantly before him the brightest imagery; but, for this suggestion, however instant and copious, previous coexistence, or succession of the images, was necessary; and it is his memory, therefore, which we praise. If half the conceptions which are stored in his mind, and which rise in it now in its trains of thought by simple suggestion, as readily as they arose in like manner in accordance with some train of thought in the mind of their original authors, had but risen by the suggestion of analogy, as they now arise by the suggestion of former proximity, what we call memory, which is, in truth, only the same suggestion in different circumstances, would have been fancy or genius; and his country and age would have had another name to transmit to the reverence and the emulation of the ages that are to follow.

It is the same with inventive genius in the sciences and the severer arts; which does not depend on the mere knowledge of all the phenomena previously observed, or of the applications of them that have been made to purposes of art, but chiefly on the peculiar tendency of the mind to suggest certain analogous ideas, in successions, different from those ordinary successions of grosser contiguity, which occur to common minds. He may, perhaps, be called a philosopher, who knows accurately what others know, and produces, with the same means which others employ, the same effects which they produce. But he alone has philosophic genius, to whose speculations analogous effects suggest analogous causes, and who contrives, practically, by the suggestions of analogy, to produce new effects, or to produce the same effects by new and simpler means.

The primary laws of association, then, it appears, as far as they operate in our intellectual exertions, are greatly modified by original constitutional diversities. They are not less modified by constitutional diversities of another kind. These are the diversities of what is called temper, or disposition. It is thus we speak of one person of a gloomy, and of another of a cheerful disposition; and we avoid the one, and seek the company of the other, as if with perfect confidence, that the trains of thought which rise by spontaneous suggestion to the minds of each will be different, and will be in accordance with that variety of character which we have supposed. To the cheerful, almost every object which they perceive is cheerful as themselves. In the very darkness of the storm, the cloud, which hides the sunshine from their view, does not hide it from their heart: while, to the sullen, no sky is bright, and no scene is fair. There are future fogs, which, to their eyes, pollute and darken the purest airs of spring; and spring itself is known to them less as the season which follows and repairs the desolation of winter that is past, than as the season which announces its approaching return.

The next secondary law of suggestion to which I proceed, is one akin to the last which we have considered. The primary laws are modified, not by constitutional and permanent differences only, but by differences which occur in the same individual, according to the varying emotion of the hour. As there are persons whose general character is gloomy or cheerful, we have, in like manner, our peculiar days or moments in which we pass from one of these characters to the other, and in which our trains of thought are tinctured with the corresponding varieties. A mere change of fortune is often sufficient to alter the whole cast of sentiment. Those who are in possession of public station, and power and affluence, are accustomed to represent affairs in a favoura-

ble light; the disappointed competitors for place, to represent them in the most gloomy light: and, though much of this difference may, unquestionably, be ascribed to wilful mis-statement in both cases, much of it is, as unquestionably, referable to that difference of colouring in which objects appear to the successful and the unsuccessful.

"Ask men's opinions:—Scoto now shall tell
How trade increases, and the world goes well.
Strike off his pension, by the setting sun,
And Britain, if not Europe, is undone."*

The same remark may be applied to the different periods of life, to the happy thoughtlessness of youth, and to the cautious calculating sadness of old age. The comparative gaiety of our earlier years, is not merely a cause, but an effect also, of the tendency of the mind, at that period, to suggest images of hope and pleasure on almost every occasion.

If even a slight momentary feeling of joy or sorrow have the power of modifying our suggestions, in accordance with it, emotions of a stronger and lasting kind must influence the trains of thought still more;—the meditations of every day rendering stronger the habitual connexions of such thoughts as accord with the peculiar frame of mind. It is in this way that every passion which has one fixed object, such as love, jealousy, revenge, derives nourishment from itself, suggesting images that give it, in return, new force and liveliness. We see, in every thing, what we feel in ourselves; and the thoughts which external things seem to suggest, are thus, in part at least, suggested by the permanent emotion within.

When Eloisa, in Pope's celebrated Epistle, thinks of the invention of letters, the only uses which her train of thought suggests, are those which are analogous to the circumstances of her own passion.

"Heaven first taught letters for some wretch's aid,
Some banish'd lover, or some captive maid;
They live, they speak, they breathe what love inspires,
Warm from the soul, and faithful to its fires;
The virgin's wish without her fears impart,
Excuse the blush and pour out all the heart;
Speed the soft intercourse from soul to soul,
And waft a sigh from Indus to the Pole."†

The temporary diversities of state that give rise to varieties of suggestion are not mental only, but corporeal; and this difference of bodily state furnishes another secondary law, in modification of the primary. I need not refer to the extreme cases of intoxication or actual delirium,—to the copious flow of follies which a little wine, or a few grains of opium, may extract from the proudest reasoner. In circumstances less striking, how different are the trains of thought in health and in sickness, after a temperate meal and after a luxurious excess! It is not to the animal powers only that the burthen of digestion may become oppressive, but to the intellectual also; and often to the intellectual powers even more than to the animal. In that most delightful of all states, when the bodily frame has recovered from disease, and when, in the first walk beneath the open sunshine, amid the blossoms and balmy air of summer, there is a mixture of corporeal and mental enjoyment, in which it is not easy to discriminate what images of pleasure arise from every object, that, in other states of health, might have excited no thought or emotion whatever.

"See the wretch, that long has toss'd
On the thorny bed of pain,
At length repair his vigour lost,
And breathe and walk again!
The meanest flow'ret of the vale,
The simplest note that swells the gale,
The common sun, the air, the skies,
To him are opening paradise."‡

There is yet another principle which modifies the primary laws of suggestion with very powerful influence. This is the principle of habit. I do not speak of its influence in suggesting images which have been already frequently suggested in a certain order,—for it would then be simpler to reduce the habit itself to the mere power of association. I speak of cases in which the images suggested may have been of recent acquisition, but are suggested more readily in consequence of general tendencies produced by prior habits. When men of different professions observe the same circumstances, listen to the same story, or peruse the same work, their subsequent suggestions are far from being the same; and, could the future differences of the associate feelings that are to rise be foreseen by us at the time, we should probably be able to trace many of them to former professional peculiarities, which are thus always unfortunately apt to be more and more aggravated by the very suggestions to which they have themselves given rise. The most striking example, however, of the power of habit in modifying suggestion, is in the command which it gives to the orator, who has long been practised in extemporary elocution;—a command, not of words merely, but of thoughts and judgments, which, at the very moment of their sudden inspiration, appear like the long-weighed calculations of deliberative reflection. The whole divisions of his subject start before him at once; image after image, as he proceeds, arises to illustrate it; and

* Pope's Moral Essays, Ep. I. v. 158—161.
† V. 51—58.

‡ Gray's Ode, On the Pleasures arising from Vicissitude, Stanza vi.

proper words, in proper places, are all the while embodying his sentiments, as if without the slightest effort of his own.

In addition, then, to the primary laws of suggestion, which are founded on the mere relations of the objects or feelings to each other, it appears that there is another set of laws, the operation of which is indispensable to account for the variety in the effects of the former. To these I have given the name of *secondary laws of suggestion*;—and we have seen, accordingly, that the suggestions are various as the original feelings have been, 1st, Of longer or shorter continuance; 2dly, More or less lively; 3dly, More or less frequently present; 4thly, More or less recent; 5thly, More or less pure, if I may so express it, from the mixture of other feelings; 6thly, That they vary according to differences of original constitution; 7thly, According to differences of temporary emotion; 8thly, According to changes produced in the state of the body; and, 9thly, According to general tendencies produced by prior habits.

The first four laws, which relate rather to the momentary feelings themselves than to the particular frame of mind of the individual, have, it must be remembered, a double operation. When the two associate feelings have both together, or in immediate succession, been of long continuance, very lively, frequently renewed in the same order, and that recently, the tendency to suggest each other is most powerful. But the greater tendency, though then most remarkably exhibited, is not confined to cases in which these laws are applicable to both the associate feelings. It is much increased even when they apply only to that one which is second in the succession. The sight of an object which is altogether new to us, and which, therefore, could not have formed a stronger connexion with one set of objects than with another, will more readily recal to us, by its resemblance or other relation, such objects as have been long familiar to us, than others which may have passed frequently before us, but with which we are little acquainted. The sailor sees everywhere some near or distant similarity to the parts of his own ship; and the phraseology, so rich in nautical metaphors, which he uses and applies, with most rhetorical exactness, even to objects perceived by him for the first time, is a proof that, for readiness of suggestion, it is not necessary that the secondary laws of suggestion should, in every particular case, have been applicable to both the suggesting and the suggested idea.

Even one of these secondary laws alone may be sufficient to change completely the suggestion which would otherwise have arisen from the operation of the primary laws; and it is not wonderful, therefore, that when many of them, as they usually do, concur in one joint effect, the result in different individuals should be so various. Of the whole audience of a crowded theatre, who witness together the representation of the same piece, there are probably no two individuals who carry away the same images, though the resemblances, contiguities, contrasts, and in general what I have called the primary, in opposition to the secondary, laws of suggestion, may have been the same to both. Some will perhaps think afterwards of the plot and general development of the drama; some, of the merits of the performers; some will remember little more than that they were in a great crowd, and were very happy; a gay and dissipated young man will perhaps think only of the charms of some fascinating actress; and a young beauty will as probably carry away no remembrance so strong as that of the eyes which were most frequently fixed upon hers.

By the consideration of these secondary laws of suggestion, then, the difficulty which the consideration of the primary laws left unexplained is at once removed. We see now how one suggestion takes place rather than another, when, by the operation of the mere primary laws, many suggestions might arise equally; the influence of the secondary laws modifying this general tendency, and modifying it, of course, variously, as themselves are various.

LECTURE XXXVIII.

THE DEGREE OF LIVELINESS OF THE SUGGESTING FEELINGS INFLUENCES GREATLY THAT OF THE FEELINGS SUGGESTED.

My last Lecture, Gentlemen, was employed in an inquiry which very naturally arises from the consideration of the various relations according to which suggestion may take place;—why, if the same object, as either perceived or imagined by us, is capable, by its almost innumerable relations, of suggesting the conception of various other objects, it suggests, at any particular time, one of these rather than another? To say that certain objects suggest certain other objects which are similar to them, opposite to them in quality, or formerly proximate in place or time, is to say nothing in explanation of this difficulty, but only to state the very difficulty itself; since it is to state various relations, according to which various conceptions may indifferently arise. It is evident, therefore, that whatever may be the number of these primary laws of suggestion, or general circumstances of relation, according to which the parts of our trains of thought may suggest each other, there must be other circum-

stances which modify and direct the operation of the primary laws. To these modifying circumstances I gave the name of *secondary laws of suggestion*; the classification of which—though not less interesting or important than the classification of the general circumstances which constitute the primary laws—has been altogether neglected even by those philosophers who have endeavoured to arrange the primary relations.

The chief part of my last Lecture was employed, accordingly, in inquiring into the general circumstances which constitute the secondary laws of suggestion; those circumstances by which it happens, that one suggestion takes place rather than another, when, according to the mere primary laws, either suggestion might equally occur.

To repeat, then, briefly, that enumeration which was the result of our inquiry, the occasional suggestions that flow from the primary laws on which our trains of thought depend, are various, as the original feelings have been, 1st, Of longer or shorter continuance; 2dly, More or less lively; 3dly, Of more or less frequent occurrence; 4thly, More or less recent; 5thly, More or less pure from the occasional and varying mixture of other feelings; 6thly, They vary according to differences of original constitution; 7thly, According to differences of temporary emotion; 8thly, According to changes produced in the state of the body; and, 9thly, According to general tendencies produced by prior habits. Many of these differences, it is evident, may concur; but even a single difference in any one of these respects may be sufficient to account for the particular varying suggestion of the moment.

The next inquiry to which I would direct your attention, is to the difference of liveliness of the feeling which forms a part of a train of thought, according as that which suggested it may have been itself more or less lively.

The conception of an object may, it is evident, be suggested in two ways,—by the perception of some other object really existing without; or by some other conception, previously existing in a train of internal thought. But, though it may be suggested in either way, it is by no means indifferent, with respect to it, in which of the two ways the suggestion has taken place.

"The influence of perceptible objects," says Mr. Stewart, "in reviving former thoughts and former feelings, is more particularly remarkable. After time has, in some degree, reconciled us to the death of a friend, how wonderfully are we affected the first time we enter the house where he lived! Every thing we see,—the apartment where he studied,—the chair upon which he sat,—recal to us the happiness we have enjoyed together; and we should feel it a sort of violation of that respect we owe to his memory, to engage in any light or indifferent discourse when such objects are before us. In the case, too, of those remarkable scenes, which interest the curiosity from the memorable persons or transactions which we have been accustomed to connect with them in the course of our studies, the fancy is more awakened by the actual perception of the scene itself, than by the mere conception or imagination of it. Hence the pleasure we enjoy in visiting classical ground; in beholding the retreats which inspired the genius of our favourite authors, or the fields which have been dignified by exertions of heroic virtue. How feeble are the emotions produced by the liveliest conception of modern Italy, to what the poet felt, when, amidst the ruins of Rome,

> "He drew th' inspiring breath of ancient arts,
> ———And trod the sacred walks,
> Where, at each step, imagination burns!"
> *Thomson.*

"The well-known effect of a particular tune on Swiss regiments when at a distance from home, furnishes a very striking illustration of the peculiar power of a perception, or of an impression on the senses, to awaken associated thoughts and feelings; and numberless facts of a similar nature must have occurred to every person of moderate sensibility, in the course of his own experience.

"'Whilst we were at dinner,' says Captain King, 'in this miserable hut, on the banks of the river Awatska,—the guests of a people with whose existence we had before been scarce acquainted, and at the extremity of the habitable globe,—a solitary half-worn pewter spoon, whose shape was familiar to us, attracted our attention; and, on examination, we found it stamped on the back with the word, *London*. I cannot pass over this circumstance in silence, out of gratitude for the many pleasant thoughts, the anxious hopes, and tender remembrances, it excited in us. Those who have experienced the effects that long absence, and extreme distance, from their native country, produce on the mind, will readily conceive the pleasure such a trifling incident can give.'"*

Of the truth of these delightful influences, who is there that can doubt? Distant as we are from those lands, which, in the studies of our boyhood, endeared and consecrated by so many remembrances, were to us almost like the very country of our birth, it is scarcely possible to think of ancient Rome or Greece, without mingling, with an interest more than passive, in the very ages of

* Philosophy of the Human Mind, Chap. V. Part I, Sect. 1.

their glory. Some name or exploit instantly occurs to our mind; which, even in the faintness of our conception, is sufficient to transport us, for some few moments, from the scene of duller things around. But, when we tread on the soil itself,—when, as Cicero says, speaking of Athens, "Quocunque ingredimur, in aliquam historiam vestigium ponimus,"—all which history has made dear to us is renewed to our very eyes. There are visionary forms around us, which make the land on which we tread, not the country that is, but the country that has been. We see again the very groves of Academus;

> "And Plato's self
> Seems half-emerging from his olive bowers,
> To gather round him all the Athenian Sons
> Of Wisdom."

"Tanta vis admonitionis est in locis," says Cicero, in a passage of his work *De Finibus*, in which he describes the peculiar vividness of our conceptions, on the actual view of scenes, ennobled by the residence of those whom we have been accustomed to revere,—"Naturâne nobis datum dicam, an errore quodam, ut cum ea loca videamus, in quibus memoriâ dignos viros acceperimus multùm esse versatos, magis moveamur, quam siquando eorum ipsorum aut facta audiamus aut scriptum aliquod legamus? Velut ego nunc moveor. Venit enim mihi Platonis in mentem, quem accepimus primum hic disputare solitum; cujus etiam illi hortuli propinqui, non memoriam solùm mihi afferunt, sed ipsum videntur in conspectû meo hic ponere. Hic Speusippus,—hic Xenocrates,—hic ejus auditor Polemo, cujus ipsa illa sessio fuit quam videamus."*

After these observations of Cicero, at a time when Greece was to him, in a great measure, that land of former greatness, which his own country now is to us, it may be interesting to you to compare with the impression, thus described by him, the impression as described by one of our own contemporaries, after an interval of so many ages. I shall quote to you, therefore, a few passages of a Letter, written from Athens, by the very ingenious French poet, the Abbé de Lille, who visited Greece in company with his friend M. de Choiseul, the ambassador from France to Constantinople.

"At length," says he, "we were forced to lie to, by a contrary wind, if I can call that a contrary wind, which gave an opportunity of beholding Athens.

"I shall not endeavour to express to you the pleasure which I felt, on setting my foot on that celebrated land. I could have wept for joy. I saw, at last, what I had only read before. I recognised every thing which I had known from my infancy;—all was at once familiar to me and new. That was my emotion on seeing the first monument of that city, which is destined to be for ever interesting!

"I gazed and gazed again, as if my eyes could never be weary, on those magnificent columns of the finest Parian marble, interesting by their own beauty,—by that of the temples which they adorned,—by the glorious ages which they recal to memory, and by their eternal influence, as the standard of good and bad taste, in every nation and age that for ever will be striving to imitate their noble proportions. I passed from one to the other,—I touched them,—I measured them, with insatiable avidity. In vain were they falling to ruins;—I could not hinder myself from looking on them as imperishable,—I believed that I was making the fortune of my name, in engraving it on their marble. But, too soon, I perceived with grief my illusion. These precious remains have more than one enemy; and, of their enemies, Time is far from being the most terrible. The barbarous ignorance of the Turks destroys, sometimes in a single day, what whole ages had spared. I saw lying at the gate of the commandant one of those beautiful columns which I mentioned to you. An ornament of the Temple of Jupiter was about to adorn his Haram. The Temple of Minerva, the finest work of antiquity,—the magnificence of which was so ruinous to Pericles, is inclosed, as it were, in a citadel, constructed partly at its expense. We mounted to it by steps, composed of its precious fragments, treading under foot the sculptures of Phidias and Praxiteles. I felt as if to tread on them was to be an accomplice in the profanation, and I avoided them as carefully as I could, shrinking back almost involuntarily wherever I set my foot.

"There are still to be seen seventeen beautiful columns, the remains of one hundred and ten, which supported what is said to have been the Temple of Adrian. Before these is a threshing-floor, paved with its magnificent fragments. Between two of these pillars, a Greek hermit had made his dwelling a few years back, to live and die there,—more proud of the homage of the populace who fed him, than Themistocles of the acclamations of Greece. These detached columns excite a sort of pity, even by their magnificence. I asked who it was who had mutilated them, for it was easy to see that it was not the effect of time. I was told that they had been broken down for making mortar. I wept with very rage.

"Everywhere through the city is there the same cause for grief; not a threshold of a door,—not a step of a stair, which is not a fragment of ancient marble, torn by force from some monument,—the whole one mix-

* Lib. V. c. 1.

ture of meanness and magnificence,—a wretched rafter of fir resting, perhaps, on columns that had supported the Temple of a God.

"With what a mixture of pain and pleasure did I see everywhere, some portion of an inscription, certainly the epitaph of a great man,—an arm,—a foot that might have belonged to a Venus or a Minerva, fixed among common stones, in a common wall! I perceived, in a court, a marble fountain,—I entered to take a nearer view,—It had been formerly a magnificent tomb, adorned with the finest sculptures,—I threw myself prostrate before it, and kissed the tomb. In the heedlessness of my adoration I overturned the pitcher of a child who was laughing at my strange behaviour. From laughter he passed to tears and cries,—I had nothing on me to appease him with; and Heaven knows when he would have been comforted, if my Turks, good souls, had not threatened to beat him.

"Shall I tell you all the folly of the emotions which I felt? At the moment when I entered Athens, almost palpitating, the least relics of it appeared sacred. You know the story of the savage who had never seen any pebbles. I did like him: I filled first the pockets of my coat, then the pockets of my waistcoat, with bits of sculptured marble; and then, like the savage, but with how much more regret! I threw them all away."

I must not extend any further, however, a quotation which is already too long. Some of the actions described,—the prostrations, the tears, the kisses, may appear a little beyond the sageness of British enthusiasm. But the picture is not the less striking for that air of national emotion which runs through it,—an emotion which harmonizes so well with the quick feelings of that people, by the remembrance of whom it was kindled,—and which makes the visitor seem almost a native of the very soil which he describes.

Even to the sober temperance of our enthusiasm, however, such a spectacle as that of Athens would be a little dangerous. We may think of it calmly, we may read of it calmly. But he must be cold indeed, who could set his foot on the very soil, or see but a single column of all those ruins of which he had calmly read and thought, without some feelings that might have appeared extravagant, even to himself, if described as the feelings of any other being.

In such circumstances, the Genius of ancient Greece himself might almost seem present to a poetic mind, like that which, warmed by the mere images of her departed glory, could so beautifully invoke his descent:—

"Genius of Ancient Greece! whose faithful steps,
Well pleased, I follow through the sacred paths
Of Nature and of Science; nurse divine
Of all heroic deeds and fair desires!
Descend, propitious, to my favour'd eye
Such in thy mien, thy warm exalted air,
As when the Persian tyrant, foil'd and stung
With shame and desperation, hid his face
Among the herd of satraps and of kings,
And at the lightning of thy lifted spear,
Crouch'd like a slave!—Bring all thy martial spoils,
Thy palms, thy laurels, thy triumphal songs,
Thy smiling band of arts, thy godlike sires
Of civil wisdom, thy heroic youth
Warm from the schools of glory. Guide my way
Through fair Lyceum's walk, the green retreats
Of Academus, and the thymy vale,
Where oft enchanted with Socratic sounds,
Ilissus pure devolved his tuneful stream
In gentler murmurs. From the blooming store
Of these auspicious fields, may I, unblamed,
Transplant some living blossoms, to adorn
My native clime;—while, far above the mead
Of Fancy's toil* aspiring, I unlock
The springs of ancient Wisdom! while I join
Thy name thrice honour'd! with the immortal praise
Of Nature;—while to my compatriot youth
I point the high example of thy sons,
And tune to Attic themes the British lyre."†

It is this peculiar tendency of objects of perception, to throw a brighter colouring on the ideas they suggest, that gives the chief value to the monuments of national gratitude. The conquest of the Roman generals must have been known to all the citizens of Rome; but it was in the triumphal procession to the Capitol they must have felt most proudly the grandeur of the Republic, and the honour of the individual victor; and must have caught that emulation, which was to lead them afterwards through fields of equal danger, to ascend the same glorious car. Themistocles, we are told, could not sleep for thinking of the trophies of another distinguished chief; and it was thus, perhaps, that the victory of Marathon, in the combat of a later period, again delivered Greece. The trophy, the obelisk, the triumphal arch, would, indeed, be of little interest, if they were only to recal to us the names and dates of the actions they commemorate; but, while they record past honours, they are, in truth, the presages, and more than presages of honours to come. In Sparta, an oration, was every year pronounced on the tomb of Leonidas. Is it possible to suppose, that, in such a scene, and with such an object before them, the orator, and the assembled nation who listened to him, felt no deeper emotion than they would have done, if the same language had been addressed from any other place, unconnected with so sacred a remembrance? "To abstract the mind," says Dr. Johnson, in a passage which has become almost trite from frequent quotation, and which is strongly marked with all the peculiarities of his style,—"to abstract

* Fancy's plume, Orig.

† Pleasures of Imagination, v. 567—601, with the exclusion of v. 571—579; and the substitution, from the second form of the poem, (B. I. v. 707-8.) of "hid his face," &c. to "Kings," instead of

"gnashed his teeth
To see thee rend the pageants of his throne."—v. 583-4

the mind from all local emotion would be impossible, if it were endeavoured, and would be foolish if it were possible. Whatever withdraws us from the power of our senses, —whatever makes the past, the distant, or the future, predominate over the present,— advances us in the dignity of thinking beings. Far from me and from my friends," he continues, "be such frigid philosophy, as may conduct us, indifferent and unmoved, over any ground which has been dignified by wisdom, bravery, or virtue. That man is little to be envied, whose patriotism would not gain force upon the plains of Marathon, or whose piety would not grow warmer among the ruins of Iona."*

When Antony, in his funeral eulogium of Cæsar, uncovered the body before the people, he knew well what powerful persuasion the wounds which he pointed out would give to his oratory. It has been well remarked, "that never had funeral eloquence so powerful an impression, for it prepared the slavery of twenty nations. The dead body of Lucretia had freed Rome from the fetters of its tyrants,—the dead body of Cæsar fastened on it again its chains."

"This influence of perceptible objects in awakening associated thoughts and associated feelings," says Mr. Stewart, "seems to arise, in a great measure from their permanent operation as exciting or suggesting causes. When a train of thought takes its rise from any idea or conception, the first idea soon disappears, and a series of others succeeds, which are gradually less and less related to that with which the train commenced; but, in the case of perception, the exciting cause remains steadily before us; and all the thoughts and feelings which have any relation to it crowd into the mind in rapid succession; strengthening each other's effects, and all conspiring in the same general impression."†

This explanation of a very striking phenomenon is simple and beautiful; and it may be remarked, in confirmation of it, that it is not every object of perception which renders the trains of ideas that succeed it more vivid, but only such objects as are, in themselves, interesting; and, therefore, lead the mind to dwell on them, giving that time, therefore, which Mr. Stewart supposes to be necessary for gathering and bringing forward the crowd of associate ideas which conspire in heightening the particular emotion. The sight of any thing indifferent to us may suggest various conceptions, without any peculiar liveliness of the conceptions suggested. In the instance of the pewter spoon, so pathetically related by Captain King—an instance, I may remark by the way, which shows how much it is in the power of circumstances to give interest and even a species of dignity to the most vulgar object—there can be no doubt that, often before the discovery of it, innumerable objects, familiar to all the crew, must have brought their distant home to their remembrance. But such a spoon, found in a country so distant, must have been an object of astonishment; and the importance, which the surprise at the discovery gave to it, must have caused them to dwell on it, till it awakened all those tender remembrances, which an object more familiar, and therefore less interesting, would have failed to excite.

Just, however, as I conceive Mr. Stewart's explanation to be, to the whole extent to which the circumstances assigned by him can operate, I am inclined to think that there is another circumstance which concurs very forcibly in the effect, and is probably the chief source of the vivid emotion. That there is something more than the mere permanence of the object of perception concerned in giving additional liveliness to the ideas it suggests, is, I think, evident from this, that, when the external object is very interesting, it produces a considerable effect, before the permanence can have operated so far as to have collected and condensed, if I may so express it, any very considerable number of ideas. After the first impulse of emotion, indeed, the longer the object continues present, so as to produce a greater number of associate thoughts and feelings,—all, as Mr. Stewart says, "strengthening each other's effects, and all conspiring in the same general impression," the more lively of course, or, at least, the more permanent must the emotion become. Yet still the first burst of feeling, almost at the very moment of the perception, remains unexplained. To a woman of lively sensibility, who, after many years of happy wedlock, has been deprived by death of the father of her children, and who has learned, at length, that sort of tender resignation which time alone inspires, so as to think of his memory not indeed without sorrow, but with a sort of tranquil sadness,—to such a person, the discovery of a letter, a book, a drawing, or any other trifling and unexpected memorial, is sufficient to fill the eyes and the heart with instant and overwhelming emotion. It is probable that Captain King had often thought, for a longer time together, of Britain, and had thus gathered in his imagination more circumstances connected with his home, than at the moment when he began to be powerfully affected by the sight of the spoon. Beside the mere permanence, therefore, of objects of perception, there must be some other circumstance of influence which precedes the effects of the permanence, and probably continues to augment it.

This additional circumstance appears to me

* Journal of a Tour, &c.—Works, v. IX. p. 319. Edit. Edin. 1806.

† Philosophy of the Human Mind, Chap. V. Part I. Sect. I.

to be the following: When any object of perception is so interesting as to lead us to pause in considering it, the associate feelings which it suggests are not consecutive merely to the perception; but, as the perception is continued for a length of time, they coexist and are mingled with it, so as to form with it one complex feeling. With the perception, however, is of course combined the belief of the actual external reality of its object; and this feeling of reality being a part of that complex whole, of which the coexisting associate ideas are also constituent parts, mingles with them all, so as, when the imaginary part readily harmonizes with the real, to diffuse over the whole, which is felt as if one scene or group, a sort of faint temporary impression of reality. In such a process, the illusive impression of reality, which the perception communicates to the coexisting associate ideas, must of course be greater in proportion as the perception is itself more lively; and in proportion, too, as by the interest which it excites, it leads the mind to dwell on it longer so as to produce that heightened effect of emotion, so justly ascribed by Mr. Stewart to the groups of kindred ideas and feelings. Yet, independently of the influence of these groups, as a number of conceptions, the mere illusion produced by the mingling reality of the perception, with which they blend and harmonize, may, of itself, in very interesting cases, be sufficient to account for that sudden burst of overpowering emotion, which, otherwise, it would be so difficult to explain.

It is not to be supposed, indeed, that the illusion remains very long. On the contrary, there is reason to believe that almost every moment the conviction of the absolute unreality of what is merely conceived recurs, and the whole which seemed to exist before us vanishes again and is lost; but almost every moment, likewise, the illusion itself recurs, by the mere coexistence of the perception of the real object with the unreal, but harmonizing conceptions. That the illusion is frequently broken, however, and the feeling of the presence of a number of beloved objects renewed and lost in rapid succession, is far from unfavourable to the violence of the emotion which it produces; since innumerable facts show that the mind is never so readily moved to extreme emotion as when it fluctuates between two opposite feelings. In the sudden alternations of joy and grief, hope and fear, confiding love and jealousy, the agitation of each seems not to lessen the violence of the other, but to communicate to it, in addition, no small portion of its own violence. Hence it happens, that eyes which can retain their tears, with firm and inflexible patience, under the pressure of any lasting affliction, dissolve instantly into the very softness of sorrow, not on any increase of misery, but on the sudden impulse of some unexpected joy. The agitation of an interesting allusion, therefore, rapidly conceived and rapidly dispelled, is the very state which, from our knowledge of the analogous phenomena of mind, might be supposed the most likely to produce an overflow of any tender emotion.

I have already stated the general mode in which I conceive perception to give peculiar vividness to the associate feelings which it suggests.

The general doctrine, however, will perhaps be best illustrated by the analysis of what takes place in a particular instance. When the Swiss is at a distance from his country, some accidental image, in a train of thought, may lead him in fancy to his native mountains; but, in this case, the ideas of his imagination are not attached to any thing external and permanent, and are, therefore, comparatively faint. When, however, he actually hears, in all the vividness of external sense, the song of his home, the conception of his home is immediately excited, and continues to coexist with the impression produced by the well-known air. That air, however, is not a faint imagination, but a reality. It is not the remembrance of a perception, but is, in truth, the very same perception which once formed a part of his complicated sensations when the song was warbled along his valley, and the valley and the song were together present to his eye and ear. That actual song, and not the perception indeed, but the conception of the valley, are now again present to his mind: and it is not wonderful, therefore, that the reality of the song, as actually coexisting and blending with the conception of the scene, in the same manner as they had often been mingled when both were real, should communicate to it, in the momentary illusion, a portion of its own vividness.

There is a very pleasing example of the influence which we are at present considering, related by the late Dr. Rush of Philadelphia, in the volume which he published of his Introductory Lectures. "During the time I passed at a country-school in Cecil County, in Maryland," says this ingenious and amiable medical philosopher, "I often went, on a holiday, with my schoolmates, to see an eagle's nest, upon the summit of a dead tree in the neighbourhood of the school, during the time of the incubation of that bird. The daughter of the farmer in whose field this tree stood, and with whom I became acquainted, married, and settled in this city about forty years ago. In our occasional interviews, we now and then spoke of the innocent haunts and rural pleasures of our youth, and, among other things, of the eagle's nest in her father's field. A few years ago I was called to visit this woman when she

was in the lowest stage of a typhus fever. Upon entering her room, I caught her eye, and, with a cheerful tone of voice, said only, *The eagle's nest.* She seized my hand, without being able to speak, and discovered strong emotions of pleasure in her countenance, probably from a sudden association of all her early domestic connexions and enjoyments with the words I had uttered. From that time she began to recover. She is now living, and seldom fails, when we meet, to salute me with the echo of the 'eagle's nest.'"*

In this very striking case, according to the theory which I have stated to you, it was not, I conceive, the mere remembrance of the nest, and of her early enjoyments, that produced the excitement of lively feeling so delightful at the moment, and so salutary in its seeming consequences. This mere remembrance might have been produced by the same words, uttered in any tone, by any speaker. But, if the suggestion had arisen from the voice of a stranger, how very different, we have every reason to suppose, would the effect have been, to the mind in which the images were awakened! It was the presence of him, who had been her companion, in the years, and scenes, and pleasure recalled, that made the remembrance, for the time, something more than mere imagination,—his felt reality as a part of the former whole, all present to her mind,—a reality, the illusive effects of which were probably aided in a high degree by the cheerful tone that harmonized with the images excited, when a sudden or more serious tone would perhaps have dissolved or lessened the illusion. The friend of her youth was present, while some of the most interesting events of her youth, of which his presence and cheerful voice formed a part, were suddenly brought before her; and it is not wonderful, therefore, that, in the sudden happiness of the remembrance, the whole, for the moment, should have seemed present with him.

"A house, a farm, a fruit-tree, and a classical book," says the same writer, "have often carried the mind back to the innocent and delightful scenes of a country school. A peculiar colour in dress, a tune, and a line of poetry, have often revived the raptures of courtship; while the fife and the drum have renewed, in a veteran soldier, the transports of his youthful victories and glory. An old native African obtained permission from his master, some years ago, to go from home, in order to see a lion that was conducted as a show through the State of New Jersey. The moment he saw him, in spite of the torpid habits of mind and body contracted by fifty years' slavery, he was transported with joy, which he vented by jumping, dancing, and loud acclamations. He had been familiar with that animal, when a boy, in his native country; and the sight of him suddenly poured upon his mind the recollection of all his enjoyments, from liberty and domestic endearments, in his own country, in the early part of his life."†

In these cases, in like manner, I conceive the chief influence of the perception to have consisted in the diffusion of its own felt reality, over the associate feelings with which it continued to coexist and blend. It is not the mere remembrance, therefore, of the military music, to which he marched, in days of long past fatigue, or peril and glory, that produces in the veteran the vivid emotion. It must be the very sound itself. The drum, or the trumpet, must be heard by him, so as to restore to him the past, as if present again with all the lively feelings of other years;—while every other moment, breaking the charm, and convincing him of the unreality of the scenes and persons that are only imagined, gives a melancholy tenderness to the pleasure, as if the objects of it were alternately recovered and lost. The tumultuous emotions of the old negro did, indeed, arise, as Dr. Rush says, from the sudden pouring on his mind of early and delightful remembrances, but not, as he supposes, from this alone; since these very remembrances had probably recurred innumerable times when the emotion was far weaker. It was because the lion, with the sight of which the African had been familiar in his youth, and which, after so long and so sad an interval, brought before him again, by suggestion, the woods or the wastes of his native land,—was a living thing truly existing before him,—a part of that complex group of images which formed the conception of the land of his birth, of his parental home, of his early friendships, of his freedom; and, as itself real, shedding, in some measure a part of its own reality on the other images that co-existed with it. It seems probable, even that the strong emotion of terror, or of adventurous daring, which, in his own land, had been excited by the presence of that mighty animal,—and which the mere sight of the formidable object could scarcely fail to awaken again, in some slight degree, by the influence of mere association,—would tend very powerfully to increase the influence of the mere reality, by the additional liveliness which it would give to the harmonizing parts of the remembered scene.

It may perhaps be thought, that, in supposing this diffusion of the feeling of external reality,—from an object perceived, to the suggested conceptions that co-exist with it,—I assume more, in the present case, than any

* Lect. XI. On the Utility of a Knowledge of the Faculties of the Mind to a Physician, p. 268-9.

† Lect. ult. On the Pleasures of the Mind, p. 418-8.

analogous phenomena justify. To those, however, who are acquainted with the theory of vision,—as explained to you in former Lectures,—it must on tne contrary appear, that the explanation takes for granted nothing more, than the possibility of that which must be allowed to take place, during almost every moment of our waking hours, in by far the most important class of our perceptions. All, which we see by the eye, even if superficial extension be truly seen by it, is a mere expanse of light, various perhaps in tint, more or less brilliant, and more or less extended. It is by the suggestion and combination of the associate ideas of another sense, that we seem to perceive longitudinal distance, and all the figures which depend on it. Yet the associate ideas, which are of course only imaginary, and the real sensations, are so blended in our mind, that we ascribe external reality equally to both parts of the complex whole. We do not see, and remember, or infer; but the sight, and the mere remembrance, or inference, form, as it were, one common and equal sensation, which we term *vision*. The diffusion, of which I spoke, or, in other words, the communication of the feeling of reality from an object of perception to conceptions suggested by it, and continuing to co-exist with the direct perception, here unquestionably takes place,—and takes place at every moment of vision. When I suppose, therefore, the Swiss, on hearing the familiar song of his native cottage, to spread over the image of his cottage that reality, which is actually felt in the song, I suppose only an operation, of precisely the same kind with that which took place, as often as the cottage itself was a real object of his sight.

It is by a similar operation, that the superstitious, in twilight, incorporate their fears with the objects which they dimly perceive, till the whole, thus compounded, assumes the appearance of external reality. The moanings of the wind are the voice of a spirit, to which their apprehension readily invents a language; and the white sheet, or other shadowy outline, gives a sort of permanent and terrifying body to the spectres of their own mind. It is imagination, indeed, still;—but it is imagination combined with perception, and readily harmonizing with it; and the spectral forms and voices seem truly to exist, because there are forms which are truly seen, and sounds which are truly heard.

LECTURE XXXIX.

THE DEGREE OF LIVELINESS OF THE SUGGESTING FEELINGS AFFECTS THAT OF THE FEELINGS SUGGESTED.—ON THE VIRTUAL CO-EXISTENCE OF FEELINGS.

Gentlemen, my last Lecture was occupied with the consideration of a very important difference in our suggestions, according as they arise from the perception of objects really existing without, or from those mere conceptions of objects, which form a part of our trains of fancy. I quoted to you some ingenious remarks of Mr. Stewart on this subject, in which he endeavours to account for the difference, by the longer duration of the perception, which allows more thoughts and feelings, in unison with it, to mingle together, and thus to heighten, by combination, the emotion, which each, separately, would have produced.

Of the very powerful influence which the greater permanency of our perceptions, than of our mere conceptions, must have,—by giving room for the co-existence of various relative feelings,—there can be no doubt. But, as the emotion is, in many cases, almost instantaneous,—so rapid at least, that, if the difference of time were all, which, in ordinary circumstances, distinguished the effect of the perception from that of the conception, the mere remembrance of the object which affects us, (being, though fugitive, at leat as lasting as the momentary interval, between the primary perception and the burst of feeling,) might equally have produced the overwhelming tenderness of sorrow; it seemed to me necessary to have recourse to some other circumstance, in addition to that supposed by Mr. Stewart.

This circumstance, which I conceived to be necessary for explaining fully the phenomenon, I represented to you to be the felt reality of the object perceived, as co-existing and blending with the conception that harmonizes with it, and thus giving to the whole complex group the temporary illusion of reality. That this is only one of many analogous phenomena,—and, indeed, that nothing more is assumed, in the explanation, than must be allowed truly to take place, at almost every moment of our waking hours, I proved to you, by various examples;—particularly by the example of vision,—in which there is a constant extension to our mere conceptions of that external reality, which exists only in a part of the complex whole which we seem to perceive;—the form which we give to the bodies seen by us, and which we believe to be as much an object of our sight, as their colour, being the suggestion of our memory only, and as imaginary, in relation to our percipient mind, as any other conceptions, which any other perceptions excite. If, indeed, we admit, as we cannot but admit, that we do not see, visually, any space, larger than the mere plane of the nervous expansion in the eye—or rather, as I endeavoured to show you in a former Lecture, that we do not see directly and originally any space whatever—and that, on either of these suppositions, the forms and distances which we perceive, derive all their felt present reality, from the reality of the

existing sensation of colour which blends with them,—it cannot surely seem a very bold assumption to suppose, that what is thus indisputably true, of one set of sensations, when co-existing with one set of conceptions, may be true, of the same set of sensations, when co-existing with another set of conceptions, at least as vivid as the former.

I may remark, as an analogous illustration of this tendency of the mind to combine the reality of perception with the harmonizing conceptions which it suggests, and with which it continues to blend, that an effect in some degree similar,—different, indeed, as might be supposed, in force, but analogous in kind,—seems to take place, in the combination of any very vivid conception with other mere conceptions, when these two harmonize and unite readily as a complex whole. There is, as it were, a diffusion of the vividness of the one over the faintness of the other. The more vivid,—that is to say, the more nearly approaching to the strength of reality,—the one conception may be, the more fully is it diffused in union with the other, and the more difficult, consequently, does it become, to regard this other as separate from it,—so difficult, indeed, in many cases, as almost to resist the influence of the most undoubting speculative belief. In the case of our emotions, the very nature of which is to throw a peculiar vividness on the conceptions that harmonize with them, there can be no doubt as to this diffusion of lively feeling,—by the influence of which, in impassioned reverie, our conceptions, that would otherwise be comparatively faint, sometimes appear to us more truly real than the objects really existing without. It is not wonderful, therefore, that the effect which our emotions, as mere lively feelings harmonizing with certain conceptions, produce in vivifying those conceptions with which they harmonize, should be produced, in some degree, by our conceptions; when these, too, as feelings, are comparatively lively, in diffusing their own liveliness over the fainter conceptions that may harmoniously mingle with them. When, for example, by the classical studies of our early years, our minds have become almost as well acquainted with the warriors of Greece and Troy, as with the warriors of our own time, and the gates and towers of Ilium seem, as it were, to be present to our very eyes,—if we strive to think of the Troad, in its present state of desolation, it is scarcely possible for us to conceive it as it is. Our livelier conception of the past diffuses itself in some measure over our conception of the present scene; and, notwithstanding all the information which we have received, and the full credit which we give to the veracity of the travellers from whose report we receive it, we still, when we think of the scene, imagine on it at least some vestiges of past grandeur existing, with a sort of shadowy reality. If we were on the very spot, our eye would still look in vain for these, as if the monuments that are present to our thought, were necessarily to be as lasting as that remembrance of them which is never to fade; and there can be no question that, even now, when so many ages have intervened, and when our knowledge of the state of the country admits not of the slightest doubt, we should feel, from moment to moment, some portion of the expectation, and in no slight degree, the disappointment also, which Cæsar must have felt, in that visit to the ancient seat of his fabled ancestors, of which the Poet of Pharsalia has given so picturesque a narrative:—

"Circuit exustæ nomen memorabile Trojæ,
Magnaque Phœbei quærit vestigia muri.
Jam silvæ steriles et putres robore trunci
Assaraci pressere domos, et templa Deorum
Jam lassa radice tenent:—ac tota teguntur
Pergama dumetis: etiam periere ruinæ.
Aspicit Hesiones scopulos, silvasque latentis
Anchisæ thalamos;—quo judex sederit antro;
Unde puer raptus cœlo;—quo vertice Nais
Luserit Oenone;—nullum est sine nomine saxum.
Inscius in sicco serpentem pulvere rivum
Transierat, qui Xanthus erat:—securus in alto
Gramine ponebat gressus:—Phryx incola manes
Hectoreos calcare vetat. Discussa jacebant
Saxa, nec ullius faciem servantia sacri:—
Hercæas, monstrator ait, non respicis aras?"*

The difficulty which we feel in this case, in imagining the absolute desolation of the Troad, arises from the greater vividness of our conception of ancient Troy, than of our conception of the scene which the same spot now presents,—a vividness which almost incessantly mingles the more lively with the fainter conception, in spite of our effort to separate them. Our calm belief attends the latter of these conceptions; but there is an illusion of reality attached to the greater vividness of the former, which is almost every moment mingling with the other; though it is, every other moment, overcome by the opposite belief, which is too strong to be wholly subdued. This constant mingling and separation of the two, forms that feeling of perplexity and effort of which we are conscious, in attempting to consider, for any length of time, the scene as it truly is, and as we truly believe it to be.

To lessen this feeling of effort, as if by a more ready transition, nothing is so effectual as the conception of that state of decay which is intermediate between grandeur and absolute desolation.

"Aspice murorum moles, præruptaque saxa,
Obrutaque horrenti vasta theatra situ!
Hæc sunt Roma. Viden, velut ipsa cadavera tantæ
Nobis adhuc spirent imperiosa minas."

"See the wide waste of all-devouring years!
How Rome her own sad sepulchre appears!

* Pharsalia, lib. ix. v. 964—979.

With nodding arches, broken temples spread!
The very tombs now vanish like their dead.
Perhaps, by its own ruins saved from flame,
Some buried marble half-preserves a name."*

Rome, thus in ruins, is easily conceived by us; for the ruins, in their magnificent decay, are themselves a vivid picture of that grandeur of which we have been accustomed to think. But Rome, if it had no monument of art remaining, and had only its seven naked hills to mark its ancient site, scarcely could be conceived by us for a few moments in succession; its former grandeur rising on our remembrance, without any intermediate conception into which it might softly fade; and mingling, therefore, its own entire reality, as vividly conceived by us, with the fainter conception of that bare soil on which all its miracles of splendour arose.

This influence of our mere conceptions, however, even when comparatively vivid, though illustrating by analogy the influence of perception, is still, as might be supposed, far inferior to the influence of that of actual perception, which I consider as diffusing its felt reality over the associate conceptions that blend and harmonize with it.

With respect to the more important theory of this influence, I may remark, that even though the perception of the kindred harmonizing object were not to operate positively, by blending the feeling of its own reality with the conceptions that mingle with it, its negative influence would still be very powerful. It would at least tend, by occupying our perception with a harmonizing object, to diminish the impressions produced by other objects,—impressions which, not harmonizing with the particular associate ideas, would at once break the illusion which gives substance and colouring to their shadowy forms. It is, indeed, this inconsistency of our perceptions with our ideas of suggestion, which, in our waking hours, in almost every instance, prevents that belief of the reality of the objects of our imagination, which otherwise we should be disposed to entertain. Though no other effect, therefore, were allowed to be produced by a perception which interests us, and which itself harmonizes with the trains of thought suggested by it, its negative influence would still be very powerful. It would be, in a slight degree, like that of sleep, which excludes, or nearly excludes, all sensation, and allows the trains of ideas which pass through the mind,—the hills, and lakes, perhaps, and pastimes and friends of our youth,—to assume, for the time, an impression of actual reality, as if present with us once more.

In many of these cases, in which the perception of new, or long-lost objects, gives warmth and animation to our trains of thought, there is another circumstance which must have considerable influence. An object that is daily before our eyes becomes associated with innumerable ideas, which have no peculiar harmony or agreement with each other; and though it may suggest these variously, at different times, it is still apt to mingle some of them together, especially if it occupy the attention for any length of time. A memorial which we have received from a friend, for example, must, in a very short time, if it remain in our possession, be associated with many events and feelings that have no relation to our friend. These, as more recent, may become of readier suggestion, in conformity with that secondary law which I stated to you; and, at least, by mingling in the suggestion many irrelative remembrances, cannot fail to weaken, more and more, the interest which the primary and more tender image would otherwise afford. But an object newly discovered, such as any unexpected relict of a long-lost friend, presents the instant image of him to our mind, and presents it unmixed with other conceptions, that could not have co-existed with it, without weakening its particular impression.

There is yet another circumstance which I conceive must be taken into account, in every such case of unexpected discovery:—This is the influence of the feeling of astonishment itself. In common circumstances, for which we are prepared, we readily, and almost unconsciously, exercise a self-command, which keeps down any violent emotion. But, when we are struck with new and unexpected circumstances, this self-command is often completely suspended; and we yield to the first emotion that arises, however inconsistent it may be with the general character of our mind. The sudden appearance of a foe in ambush spreads terror to the breasts of those who would have marched undaunted in the open field, in the face of any danger that could have been opposed to them. It is probable, therefore, that when, in the instance quoted to you yesterday, the crew of Captain King's ship melted into tears on discovering, in a remote and barbarous country, a pewter spoon stamped with the word "London," it was partly under the influence of the sudden astonishment which they must have felt,—an astonishment which, if it had arisen from circumstances of a different kind, might perhaps have excited a panic of terror, as it then excited what, in relation to the rugged sternness of a ship's company, might almost be considered as a sort of panic of tender emotion.

I have already instanced, as illustrative of the diffusion of the felt reality of a perception over the co-existing imagery of our internal thought, the terrors of the superstí-

* Pope's Epistle to Addison, on his Medals, v. 1—4, and 15, 16.

tious, to whom the wild moanings of the wind, and the shadowy forms seen in the obscurity of twilight, realize, for the moment, the voices and the spectral shapes which their fancy has readily mingled with them. I might show, in like manner, various other instances, since the whole field of mind seems to me to present examples of this species of illusive combination supposed by me, in which the felt reality of something truly existing, is diffused over images of unexisting things. There is scarcely one of our moral affections which it may not, as I conceive, augment or variously modify, as, in an after-part of the course, I shall have frequent opportunities of pointing out to you. In the case of jealousy, for example,—to hint merely at present what is afterwards to be more fully developed,—what undue importance does the slightest fact, that harmonizes with the suspicions previously entertained, give to those very suspicions in the minds of persons, whose better judgment, if free from the influence of that gloomy passion, could not have failed to discover the futility of the very circumstances to which they attach so much importance;—the felt truth of the single fact observed communicating, as I conceive, for the time, to the whole co-existing and blending and harmonizing images of suspicion, that reality which it alone possessed. Who is there, in like manner, who must not frequently have observed the influence of a single slight success, in vivifying to the sanguine their most extravagant hopes? the reality of this one happy fact giving instantly a sort of obscure reality even to those extravagant conceptions which are all considered, together with the realized wish, as parts of one great whole. Slight as these hints are, they may serve, at least for the present, to give you some notion of the extensive applicability of a principle, which is, in truth, as wide as the wide variety of feelings that may relate to an imaginary object.

These observations on the influence which objects of perception have, by their permanence, as well as by their reality, in giving additional liveliness to our associate feelings, lead me to remark a property of the suggesting principle, which, however much neglected, seems to me, in the various applications that may be made of it, of the greatest importance, since, without it, it is impossible to explain many of the most striking phenomena of thought. We are so much accustomed to talk of the successions of our ideas, of the trains of our ideas, of the current of our thought; and to use so many other phrases of mere succession, to the exclusion of all notions of co-existence, in speaking of the modifications of the principle of suggestion, that, by the habitual use of these terms, we are led to think of our ideas as consecutive only, and to suppose that, because there is truly a certain series of states of the mind in regular progression, the state of mind at one moment must be so different from the state of mind of the moment preceding, that one idea must always fade as a new one arises. That the sequence may sometimes be thus exclusive in the very moment of all that preceded the particular suggestion I do not deny, though there are many circumstances which lead me to believe that, if this ever occur, it is at least far from being the general case.

Thus, to take an instance in some degree similar to those which we have before considered,—when, at a distance from home, and after an interval of years, we listen to any simple song with which the remembrance of a friend of our youth is connected, how many circumstances not merely rise again, but rush upon us together? The friend himself,—the scene where we last sat and listened to him,—the domestic circle that listened with us,—a thousand circumstances of that particular period, which had perhaps escaped us, are again present to our mind: and with all these is mingled the actual perception of the song itself. As the parts of the song succeed each other, they call up occasionally some new circumstances of the past; but we do not, on that account, lose the group which were before assembled. The new circumstance is only added to them, and the song still continues to blend with the whole the pleasure of its own melody, or rather, mingling with them in mutual diffusion, at once gives and borrows delight.

If this virtual co-existence, in the sense now explained, which, I trust, you will always understand as the sense intended by me, be true, of the case in which perception mingles with suggestion,—it is true, though in a less remarkable degree, of our conceptions alone. Had the same ballad, as in the former case, not been actually sung, but merely suggested by some accidental circumstance, though our emotion would have been less lively, and though fewer objects and events, connected with the scene, might have arisen, it would still probably have suggested the friend, the place, the time, and many other circumstances, not in separate and exclusive succession, like the moving figures of a continued train, but multiplying and mingling as they arose. Of the innumerable objects of external sense which pass before our eyes in the course of a day, how many are there which excite only a momentary sensation, forgotten almost as soon as it is felt? while, on many others, we dwell with the liveliest interest. In like manner, there are many of our ideas of suggestion which are as indifferent to us as the thousand objects that flit before our eyes. They exist, therefore, but for a moment, or little more than a moment,

and serve only for the suggestion of other ideas, some of which, perhaps, may be equally shortlived, while others, more lively and interesting, pause longer in the mind; and, though they suggest ideas connected with themselves, continue with them, and survive, perhaps, the very conceptions which they suggest. I look at a volume on my table; it recals to me the friend from whom I received it,—the remembrance of him suggests to me the conception of his family,—of an evening which I spent with them,—and of various subjects of our conversation. Yet the conception of my friend may continue, mingled, indeed, with various conceptions, as they rise successively, but still coexisting with them,—and is, perhaps, the very part of the complex group, that, after a long train of thought, during which it had been constantly present, suggests at last some new conception, that introduces a different train of its own, of which the conception of my friend no longer forms a part.

But for this continuance and coexistence, of which I speak, I cannot but think that the regular prosecution of any design would be absolutely impossible. When we sit down to study a particular subject, we must have a certain conception, though probably a dim and shadowy one, of the subject itself. To study it, however, is not to have that conception alone, but to have successively various other conceptions, its relations to which we endeavour to trace. The conception of our particular subject, therefore, must, in the very first stage of our progress, suggest some other conception. But this second conception, if it alone were present, having various relations of its own, as well as its relation to the subject which suggested it, would probably excite a third conception, which had no reference to the original subject,—and this third, a fourth,—and thus a whole series, all equally unrelated to the subject which we wished to study. It would hence seem impossible to think of the same subject even for a single minute. Yet we know that the fact is very different, and that we often occupy whole hours in this manner, without any remarkable deviation from our original design. Innumerable conceptions, indeed, arise during this time, but all are more or less intimately related to the subject, by the continued conception of which they have every appearance of being suggested; and, if it be allowed that the conception of a particular subject both suggests trains of conception, and continues to exist together with the conceptions which it has suggested, every thing for which I contend, in the present case, is implied in the admission.

What would be that selection of images of which poets speak, if their fancy suggested only a fleeting series of consecutive images? To select, implies not the succession, but the coexistence of objects of choice; and there can be no discrimination and preference of parts of a train of thought, if each separate part have wholly ceased to exist, when another has arisen. The conception of beauty calls up some immediate image to the poetic mind, and kindred images after images arise,—not fading, however, at each suggestion, but spreading out all their mingled loveliness to that eye which is to choose and reject. With what exquisite truth and beauty is this process described by one to whom the process was familiar, and who knew well to draw from it its happiest results!

"Thus at length
Endow'd with all that nature can bestow,
The child of Fancy oft in silence bends
O'er these mix'd treasures of his pregnant breast,
With conscious pride. From them he oft resolves
To frame he knows not what excelling things,
And win he knows not what sublime reward
Of praise and wonder. By degrees the mind
Feels her young nerves dilate:—the plastic powers
Labour for action:—blind emotions heave
His bosom;—and with loveliest frenzy caught,
From earth to heaven he rolls his daring eye,
From heaven to earth. Anon ten thousand shapes,
Like spectres trooping to the wizard's call,
Flit swift before him. From the womb of earth,
From ocean's bed they come:—the eternal heavens
Disclose their splendours, and the dark abyss
Pours out her births unknown. With fixed gaze
He marks the rising phantoms:—now compares
Their different forms, now blends them, now divides,
Enlarges and extenuates by turns,
Opposes, ranges in fantastic bands,
And infinitely varies. Hither now,
Now thither, fluctuates his inconstant aim,
With endless choice perplex'd. At length his plan
Begins to open. Lucid order dawns;
And as from Chaos old the jarring seeds
Of nature, at the voice divine repair'd
Each to its place, till rosy earth unveil'd
Her fragrant bosom, and the joyful sun
Sprung up the blue serene; by swift degrees
Thus disentangled, his entire design
Emerges. Colours mingle, features join,
And lines converge:—the fainter parts retire.
The fairer, eminent in light, advance,
And every image on its neighbour smiles."*

There is, then, it appears, a continued coexistence of some of our associate feelings, with the feelings which they suggest. And it is well for us that nature has made this arrangement. I do not speak at present of its importance to our intellectual powers, as essential to all continuity of design, and to every wide comparison of the relations of things, for this I have already endeavoured to demonstrate to you. I speak of the infinite accession which it affords to our happiness and affections. By this, indeed, we acquire the power of fixing, in a great degree, our too fugitive enjoyments, and concentrating them in the objects which we love. When the mother caresses her infant, the delight which she feels is not lost in the moment in which it appears to fade. It still lives in the innocent and smiling form that inspired it, and is suggested again, when the idea of that smile passes across her mind. An infinity of other pleasures are, in the pro-

* Pleasures of Imagination, Book III. v. 373—408.

gress of life, associated in like manner; and with these additional associations, the feeling which her child excites, becomes proportionately more complex. It is not the same unvarying image, exciting the remembrance, first of one pleasure, and then of another, for in that case the whole delight would not, at any one moment, be greater than if the two feelings alone coexisted; but a thousand past feelings are present together, and, continuing with the new images which themselves awake, produce one mingled result of tenderness, which it would be impossible distinctly to analyse. Why is it, that the idea of our home, and of our country, has such powerful dominion over us,—that the native of the most barren soil, when placed amid fields of plenty, and beneath a sunshine of eternal spring, should still sigh for the rocks, and the wastes, and storms which he had left?

"But where to find that happiest spot below,
Who can direct, when all pretend to know?
The shuddering tenant of the frigid zone
Boldly proclaims that happiest spot his own;
Extols the treasures of his stormy seas,
And his long night of revelry and ease.
The naked negro, panting at the Line,
Boasts of his golden sands, and palmy wine,
Basks in the glare, or stems the tepid wave,
And thanks his gods for all the good they gave."*

In vain may we labour to think, with Varro, as a consolation in banishment, that, "wherever we go, we must still have the same system of nature around us,"—or, with Marcus Brutus, that, whatever else may be torn from the exile, "he is still permitted at least to carry with him his own virtues." In vain may we peruse the arguments with which Seneca quaintly attempts to show, that there can be no such thing as banishment, since the country of a wise man is, wherever there is good,—and the existence of what is good for him, depends, not on the accident of place, but on his own will. "Exulabis. Non patria mihi interdicitur, sed locus. In quamcunque terram venio, in meam venio. Nulla terra exilium est. Altera patria est. Patria est, ubicunque bene est; illud autem, per quod bene est, in homine, non in loco est. In ipsius potestate est, quæ sit illi fortuna. Si sapiens est, peregrinatur; si stultus, exulat." All this reminds us of the Stoic, who, tortured with bodily pain, and expressing the common signs of agony, still maintained, at intervals, with systematic obstinacy, that this was no affliction:—

"Pain's not an ill, he utters—with a groan."

And if it was truly during the period of his dismal residence in Corsica, that the philosopher made this vain attempt to prove the impossibility of banishment, it is probable, that, while he was thus laboriously endeavouring to demonstrate that his country was still with him, on the barren rocks to which he was condemned, his own Corduba or Rome was rising on his memory, with painful tenderness; and that the very arguments, with which he strove to comfort himself, would be read by him, not with a groan, perhaps, but at least with an inward sigh. His poetry was, unquestionably, far more true to nature than his philosophy,—if he was indeed the author of those pathetic poems on his exile, in some verses of which, he speaks of the banished, as of those on whom the rites of burial, that separate them from the world, had been already performed, and prays the earth of Corsica to lie light on the ashes of the living—

"Parce relegatis, hoc est jam parce sepultis.†
Vivorum cineri sit tua terra levis."‡

In the instance of Seneca, indeed, whose relegation was not the effect of crime on his part, but of the artifices of an adulterous empress, the remembrances attached to the land from which he was separated, may be supposed to have been more powerful, because they were not accompanied with feelings of remorse and shame, that might have rendered the very thought of return painful to the criminal. But, in the bosom of the criminal himself, there is still some lingering affection, which these dreadful feelings are not able wholly to subdue; and he returns, at the risk of life itself, to the very land which had thrown him from her bosom, and marked him with infamy. There is, perhaps, no human being, however torpid in vice, and lost to social regard, who can return, after a long absence, to the spot of his birth, and look on it with indifference, and to whom the name of his country presents no other image than that of the place in which he dwells.

What, then, is this irresistible power which the mere sound of home can exercise over our mind? It surely does not arise from the suggestion of a number of conceptions, or other feelings, in separate succession; for no single part of this succession could of itself be sufficiently powerful. It is because home does not suggest merely a multitude of feelings, but has itself become the name of an actual multitude; and though, in proportion as we dwell on it longer, it suggests more and more additional images, still these are only added to the group which formerly existed, and increase the general effect; which could not be the case, if the suggestion of a single new idea extinguished all those which had preceded it. It is probable even, that there is no one interesting object, which has been of frequent occurrence, that is precisely the same as it arises to our mind at different times, but that it is

* Goldsmith's Poems,—Traveller,—v. 65—72.

† Al. solutis. ‡ Senecæ Epig. ad Corsicam, v. 7, 8.

always more or less complex, being combined with conceptions or other feelings that coexisted with it when present to the mind on former occasions. The very circumstance of its being interesting, and therefore lively, will render it less fugitive whenever it occurs in a train of thought, and will thus give it an opportunity of combining itself with more ideas of the train, which, though accidentally mingled with it at the time, may still, from the laws of suggestion, form with it, afterwards, one complex and inseparable whole.

What extensive applications may be made of this doctrine of the continuance of the suggesting feeling, in coexistence with the feelings which it suggests, will be seen, when we proceed to the consideration of various intellectual phenomena, and still more, of our emotions in general, particularly of those which regard our taste and our moral affections. It is this condensation of thoughts and feelings, indeed, on which, in a great measure, depends that intellectual and moral progress, of which it is the noblest excellence of our being, even in this life, to be susceptible, and which may be regarded as a pledge of that far nobler progression which is to be our splendid destiny in the unceasing ages that await us, when the richest acquisitions of the sublimest genius, to which we have looked almost with the homage of adoration, on this mortal scene, may seem to us like the very rudiments of infant thought. Even then, however, the truths which we have been capable of attaining here, may still, by that condensation and diffusion of which I have spoken, form an element of the transcendent knowledge which is to comprehend all the relations of all the worlds in infinity, as we are now capable of tracing the relations of the few planets that circle our sun; and, by a similar diffusion, those generous affections, which it has been our delight to cultivate in our social communion on earth, may not only prepare us for a purer and more glorious communion, but be themselves constituent elements of that ever-increasing happiness, which, still prolonging, and still augmenting the joys of virtue, is to reward, through immortality, the sufferings, and the toils, and the struggles of its brief mortal career.

LECTURE XL.

REASONS FOR PREFERRING THE TERM SUGGESTION, TO THE PHRASE ASSOCIATION OF IDEAS.

THE latter part of my Lecture of yesterday, Gentlemen, was employed in illustrating a distinction which seems to me of great consequence in its applications to the whole theory of the intellectual phenomena, the distinction of the trains of our thought from other trains of which we are accustomed to speak, in this most important circumstance, that, in our mental sequences, the one feeling which precedes and induces another feeling, does not, necessarily, on that account, give place to it; but may continue in that virtual sense of combination, as applied to the phenomena of the mind, of which I have often spoken, to coexist with the new feeling which it excites, outlasting it, perhaps, and many other feelings to which, during its permanence, it may have given rise. I pointed out to you how important this circumstance in our mental constitution is to us, in various ways; to our intellectual acquirements; since, without it, there could be no continued meditation, but only a hurrying confusion of image after image, in wilder irregularity than in the wildest of our dreams; and to our virtue and happiness, since, by allowing the coexistence and condensation of various feelings in one complex emotion, it furnishes the chief source of the delight of those moral affections which it is at once our happiness to feel, and our virtue to obey.

After these remarks on a distinction which it appears to me of essential importance to make, I proceed to the consideration of a question of still more importance in the theory of our trains of thought, at least in the light in which these have been commonly regarded by philosophers. Its importance in this respect, is, however, I must confess, its principal attraction; and it will require from you a little more attention and patience than the greater number of the discussions which have recently engaged us.

Before entering on this particular part of my Course, which treats of the phenomena commonly classed together under the general term *association of ideas*, I remarked the error of this seeming limitation to our ideas, of a tendency which is common to them with all our other feelings; and at the same time mentioned, that there were other reasons afterwards to be stated, which led me to prefer to this phrase a term more strictly indicative of the simple fact of the rise of certain states or affections of the mind, after certain other states or affections of mind; unwilling as I was to alter, without some urgent motives, a phrase which the universal language of philosophers, and even the popular language on this most popular part of intellectual philosophy, might be considered almost as having fully and finally established. The term which I preferred, as most strictly expressive of the simple fact of the mere antecedence of one feeling, and sequence of another feeling, was *suggestion*; and instead, therefore, of inquiring into the laws of association, I inquired into the general circumstance on which suggestion de-

pends. In the course of our discussions, indeed, I have continued sometimes to avail myself, as you must have remarked, of the more familiar phrase association. But I have done this only in cases in which the use of it appeared without danger, or at least when any misconception that might arise from it, was sufficiently obviated, by the use of the corresponding term suggestion, as explaining and restricting its meaning. The examination of the question on which we are about to enter will show the reason which chiefly led me to the preference of the one of these terms to the other; and though, as I have already said, the discussion is not of a kind that admits of pleasing illustration, I trust that you are sufficiently impressed with the paramount importance in science of the useful to the agreeable, or rather, that the useful is itself agreeable to you, by the mere circumstance of its utility.

That, when two objects have been perceived by us in immediate succession, the presence of the one will often suggest the other, —though this second object, or a similar external cause, be not present,—it is that great fact of association or suggestion, which we must admit, whatever opinion we may form with respect to its nature, or whatever name we may give to it. But when the former of these two objects first suggests the conception of the latter, in the absence of this latter, and at a considerable interval of time after the first coexistence of the two perceptions, or their first proximity to each other, we may inquire whether the suggestion be the consequence of a law or general tendency of the mind, first operating at that moment of the suggestion itself;—or the consequence of another earlier law of mind, distinct from that of the mere perception itself, but operating at the time when both objects were originally perceived together, whether, during the original perception of the two objects, at the period long preceding the first suggestion of one by the other, there was, beside the simple perception of each, some other intellectual process or operation, by which a union might be supposed to be formed of the two conceptions in all their future recurrences,—or, simply, whether such be not the natural constitution of the mind, that one affection of it succeeds another affection of it, and that the successions occur in a certain order; in short, whether the laws that regulate the recurrence be laws of association, in the strictest sense of that word, as expressive of some former connecting process, or merely laws of suggestion, as expressive of the simple tendency of the mind, in the very moment in which it is affected in a certain manner, to exist immediately afterwards in a certain different state.

At first sight, the question which this distinction implies may seem to be a question only as to the use of a term, and to involve little actual difference; or, if the actual difference which it involves be admitted, it may seem a question which it is not in our power to solve; since, on either supposition, whether the suggestions arise from some earlier process of mysterious association, at the time of the first coexistence or proximity of the perceptions, or from some equally mysterious limitation of the subsequent spontaneous suggestions to a certain series, the suggestions themselves must be the same, and must follow in the same order.

It will appear, however, on a more attentive consideration, that the distinction, far from being verbal merely, is, in truth, a most important one, and has had a powerful, and, as I conceive, a most injurious influence on all the arrangements which have been made of them by philosophers,—and that the discovery of the period of the primary influence of the laws that regulate suggestion is not beyond the reach of observation,—on that view of the phenomena which supposes them to result from tendencies to suggestion of various kinds, such as the resemblances, contrasts, and contiguities, of which writers on this branch of intellectual physiology are accustomed to speak.

It is, indeed, chiefly with a view to this belief, that I think it necessary to enter into the discussion, since the assertors of a connecting process of association, as that on which suggestion in every case depends, have been also strenuous assertors of various forms of association itself; and have, in consequence of the perplexities in which this double belief has involved them, been led into those cumbrous arrangements of the intellectual phenomena, from the error of which I am desirous of freeing you.

I have already, in treating of the primary laws of suggestion, stated to you my belief, that, by a more refined analysis than writers on this subject have been accustomed to make, the varieties of suggestion might all be found to be reducible to one general tendency of succession, according to the mere order of former proximity or coexistence; and I cannot but think that this reduction has appeared more difficult than it truly is, in consequence of the unfortunate phrase *association of ideas*,—which, seeming to confine the tendency of suggestion to our ideas alone, made it impossible, in many cases, to discover the necessary proximity—when the proximity had never really existed, with respect to the ideas in the train, but was to be found only in some emotion, or internal sentiment or judgment, that was common to the two.

In treating of the suggestions of resemblance, accordingly, I ventured to give you an example of this very nice analysis, in which similar objects were supposed to be

suggested by similar objects, in consequence merely of some part which was the same in both, and which excited, by the influence of former proximity, the other parts, which coexisted with it, as one great whole.

In cases of the more shadowy resemblance of analogy, in like manner,—as in those comparisons of objects with objects which constitute the similes and metaphors of poetry,—though there may never have been in the mind any proximity of the very images compared, there may have been a proximity of each to an emotion of some sort, which, as common to both, might render each capable indirectly of suggesting the other. When, for example, the whiteness of untrodden snow brings to our mind the innocence of an unpolluted heart,—or a fine morning of spring the cheerful freshness of youth,—they may do this only by the influence of a common emotion excited by them. The tendency to suggestions of analogy, which, in distinction from the tendency to suggestion of the grosser contiguities of objects themselves, or their direct images, I stated to be the great characteristic or constituent of inventive genius, may thus be only another form, or, at least, a very natural result, of that susceptibility of vivid emotion, which, even by those who have not formed the same theory of genius, is usually conceived to be characteristic of the poetic temperament. The livelier the emotion may be, the longer must it continue to coexist with objects, and the quicker and surer, therefore, must it be to recal such objects as have at any time coexisted with it. There may, therefore, when there is no proximate association of ideas, be a proximity as real in the mixed suggestions of ideas and emotions.

In contrast, I might perhaps say, in like manner, that suggestion takes place, not indeed by the union of causation with resemblance, as Mr. Hume strangely supposed, but by resemblance alone, and therefore, according to the view now given, by proximity,—a resemblance, however, not in the contrasted object itself, but in some emotion, or other secondary feeling, to which that contrasted object gives rise. All objects that are strikingly contrasted must agree, at least, in this one respect, that they are very strange of their kind. When we see any one, for example, with a single feature of his face of very unusual dimensions, as a very large nose, the feeling that rises in our mind almost immediately after gazing on it, is the reflection how very singular a nose this is. This reflection is itself a certain state of the mind, which, if produced in any way, may afterwards excite, as in the ordinary cases of suggestion, the accompanying conception of the object which first produced it. When we happen afterwards to see an individual with a nose as remarkably short, the very same reflection will as instantly arise; and this sameness of the proximate feeling may be sufficient, by mere proximity, to induce, on the perception of one of the objects, the conception of the contrasted object—that is contrasted in form, indeed, but still similar in the sentiment which it excites. In the case of every other relation, too, it may be said, in like manner, that the relative suggests its correlative; because, whatever be the circumstance of agreement in which the relation consists, this circumstance is common to both, and may form a connecting link of mere proximity, as in any other case of resemblance, when the common circumstance is suggested by either of the two.

That some such fine and minute proximity as this, may be detected in every case of suggestion, seems to me in the highest degree probable at least. But still, as the process by which I evolve it, is a very subtile one, and there is, therefore, from its subtilty, a greater possibility of its being fallacious;—as the suggestions of contrast and analogy seem, in the retrospects of our consciousness, equally immediate as those of proximity itself,—and as, whether the feelings have been at any time truly proximate or not, the great mystery of the suggestion itself remains the same,—I thought it safer, in our illustration of them, to consider them as distinct tribes.

In my own view of suggestion, however, in which I regard all our associate feelings as admitting of a possible reduction to a fine species of proximity, I do not consider any influence distinct from that of the mere existence of the original feelings themselves, in their state of proximity, to be indicated by our consciousness, or at all necessary to the subsequent suggestions; but, as the assertors of this necessity, with whom I contend, are all assertors of distinct species of suggestions, my argument with them will proceed on their own principles, and take for granted, that there are suggestions of resemblance, contrast, &c. which are not specifically the same as those of mere proximity. You will remember, then, that my argument is a relative argument, and view it always in the relation which it is meant to bear to the opinions of others rather than my own.

Proceeding, accordingly, on the general belief of distinct tribes of suggestions, in our inquiry into the evidence which the phenomena afford of a previous influence of association, let us take for an example, then, a case of contrast, in which the perception or conception of one object suggests immediately the conception of some other object, of which the qualities are so dissimilar, as to be absolutely opposite to those qualities which we are perceiving or conceiving at the moment.

The first sight of a person, of stature remarkably beyond the common size, is sufficient, in many cases, to bring instantly before us, in conception, the form of some one, with whom we may happen to be acquainted, of stature as remarkably low. In consequence of what law of mind does this suggestion take place?

If we say merely that such is the nature of the mind that it is not affected by external objects alone, but that the state or affection of mind which we call a conception or idea of an object, in whatever manner excited, may give immediate rise to other ideas, of which no external cause at the moment exists before us; that one idea, however, does not suggest indifferently any other idea, but only such as have some peculiar relation to itself; that there is a considerable variety of such relations, resemblance, contiguity, and others; and that of this variety of relations, according to which ideas may spontaneously suggest each other, contrast is one;—we deliver an accurate statement of the facts, and of the whole facts; and whatever goes beyond this, to some earlier mysterious process of union,—even though it could, by a skilful effort of ingenuity, be reconciled with the phenomena,—must still be a supposition only; for, if we trust the evidence of our consciousness, which affords the only evidence, we have no knowledge of any intermediate process that can have the name of association, but simply of the original perceptions, and the subsequent suggestion. Of this the slightest retrospect will convince any one. It is to our consciousness, then, at the time of the perception and the time of the suggestion that we must look. Now, all of which we are conscious at the time of perception might be precisely the same, though there were no memory whatever after perception ceases, or though, in remembrance, there were no such order of suggestions afterwards, as is supposed to justify the supposition of some pre-existing association, but, on the contrary, the utmost irregularity and confusion. Our consciousness during perception, is thus far from indicating any process of association; and all of which we are conscious at the time of the suggestion itself, is the mere succession of one feeling to another, not certainly of any prior process on which this suggestion has depended. The laws of suggestion, then, as opposed to what may be called association, —or, in other words, the circumstances which seem to regulate the spontaneous successions of our ideas, without reference to any former intellectual process, except the simple primary perceptions from which all our corresponding conceptions are derived, —form a legitimate theory, being a perfect generalization of the known facts, without a single circumstance assumed. To these laws, which require no prior union of that which suggests with that which is suggested, the particular case which we are considering is easily referable, being one of the very cases comprehended in the generalization. The sight of a gigantic stranger brings before us the image of our diminutive friend; because such is the nature of the mind, that, —in whatever manner the primary ideas may have been induced, and though there may never have been any coexistence or immediate succession of them before,—opposites, by the very circumstance of their opposition, suggest opposites. It is as much a law of mind that one perception or conception shall introduce, as it were spontaneously the conception of some similar object,—or of one so dissimilar as to be contrasted with it,—or of one which formerly succeeded it,—or of one in some other way related to it,—and that it shall introduce such relative conceptions alone as it is a law of mind that the influence of light on the retina, and thus indirectly on the sensorium, shall be followed by the sensation of vision and not of sound; and, however mysterious and inexplicable the one process may be, it is not more inexplicable than the other. It is as little necessary to the suggestion that there should be any prior union or association of ideas, as, to vision, that there should be any mysterious connexion of the organ with light, at some period prior to that in which light itself first acted on the organ, and the visual sensation was its consequence. As soon as the presence of the rays of light at the retina has produced a certain affection of the sensorium, in that very moment the mind begins to exist in the state which constitutes the sensation of colour;—as soon as a certain perception or conception has arisen, the mind begins to exist in the state which constitutes what is said to be some associate conception. Any prior connexion or association is as little necessary in the one of these cases as in the other. All that is prior, is not any process connecting light with the organ, or the conception of a giant with the conception of a dwarf, but only certain original susceptibilities of the mind by which it is formed, to have in the one case some one of the sensations of vision when light is at the retina,—in the other case to have, in certain circumstances, the conception of a dwarf as immediately consecutive to that of a giant.

In tracing, accordingly, each separate suggestion in the trains of our thought to the nature of the mind, its original energies or susceptibilities, as operating at the time of the suggestion, and to the laws which then regulate its affections, we find a place for the instance of contrast which we are considering, and see how, when one external object alone is present, a giant may suggest a dwarf, or a dwarf a giant. The laws of mind, like

the laws of matter, are only the brief expression of certain general circumstances, in which many phenomena agree; and the laws of suggestion,—if we do not look back to any association or connexion previous to the suggestion itself,—do fairly comprehend the particular case considered by us.

Let us next consider whether this suggestion can be accounted for on the other supposition, which ascribes our trains of ideas to associations previous to the suggestion itself —to laws of association, in short, in the sense in which that phrase is distinguishable from laws of suggestion.

To treat the question with all due candour, I shall make no objection to the term *association*, as if it implied too gross an analogy to corporeal things; for, unfortunately, it has this fault only in common with almost every current phrase in the Philosophy of Mind. If we are obliged to speak of mental analysis, of complex affections, of groups of images, and trains of thought, we may well be allowed to speak of the images of these trains as associated, if no objection but that of its seeming materialism can be urged against the phrase. Nor could any objection be fairly made to the association of ideas, as implying a sort of connexion which it is impossible to explain, if there truly were any consciousness of more than the original perceptions at the time when the association is supposed; but, when there is no consciousness of any thing more, it may be allowed us, at least, to require some proof of the connecting process that is supposed, more than the mere fact of a subsequent suggestion that may be explained without it.

Even though we were not to require any proof of this kind, however,—making all the admissions which in candour we are bound to make, and more than candour requires of us, —to the hypothesis which ventures, in the case of suggestion, to go beyond the tendency of the mind at the moment of the suggestion itself, and to ascribe it to some prior mental state or process, of which we are unconscious, but which the hypothesis supposes to be necessary for the subsequent suggestion, and to which unknown state or process it gives the name of association, we are not, because we make these admissions, to make any farther concession,—such, at least, as would imply in itself an absolute contradiction. If suggestion, in every case, depend on association,—that is to say, if, before objects or feelings can suggest each other, they must have been, at some former period, associated together in the mind, it is evident, that, at some former period, at whatever distance of time it may have been before suggestion, both ideas or feelings must have existed together; for it would surely be absurd to speak of associations actually formed between feelings which either had not begun, or had already ceased, before the supposed association. But this supposition of prior co-existence, though it might explain the mutual suggestion of objects that have been contiguous, as Hume expresses it, in place or time, cannot explain the case at present under consideration, if contrast be considered as different from contiguity; for it is the very first perception of the giant which is supposed by us to induce the conception of the dwarf. It, therefore, cannot admit of being associated with the idea of the dwarf till it have actually suggested it; for, till the moment of the actual suggestion, the two ideas never have existed together; and if it have already suggested it, without any former association, it is surely absurd to have recourse to a subsequent association, to account for the prior suggestion, and to say, that that which is first in a series of changes, owes its existence to that which is second, and is produced by that which itself produces.

The particular case of suggestion which we have supposed, then, if contrast be truly a simple principle of suggestion, seems absolutely decisive of the question, because it excludes every association of the two ideas prior to the suggestion itself. In suggestions of objects formerly contiguous, it might have been supposed by those who, in explaining the phenomena of our consciousness, trust more to a gratuitous hypothesis, than to the evidence of consciousness itself, that, as the perceptions originally co-existed, or were immediately successive, some mysterious connexion of those states of mind might be formed at the time of this co-existence, or immediate proximity, that might deserve to be expressed by the particular name of association, in consequence of which connexion, the one state afterwards was to induce the other. But when there has been no such co-existence or succession, as in the case of the first suggestions of contrast, what association can there have been on which the suggestions may be supposed to have depended? The association, in such a case, is manifestly nothing more than the momentary influence of the tendency of the suggestion itself; and to say that the suggestion depends on association, is the same thing as it would be to say, that suggestion depends upon suggestion. It depends, indeed, on the relation of the suggesting object to the object suggested,—as similar, opposite, contiguous in time or place, or in some other way related,—the tendency to suggest relative feelings after relative feelings being one of the original susceptibilities of the mind, essential to its very nature,—but it depends on nothing more; and an object, therefore, the very moment of our first perception of it, may suggest some object that is related

to it, in one or other of these ways, as readily as after we have perceived it a thousand times; though it surely would be a very strange use of a very common term to speak of any previous association in this case, and to say, that objects were associated before they had existence, as they must have been, if this first suggestion had depended on any prior union or process of any kind.

I need not repeat, that my argument, in this discussion, proceeds on that universal opinion of philosophers, in which our suggestions are considered as of various classes, and not on that more subtile analysis, by which I have endeavoured to show, that there may possibly be only a finer species of proximity in all,—though, in this case, too, it is equally evident, that the process of association, if it were gratuitously supposed as something different from the original feelings themselves, would be at once equally hypothetical and equally inefficacious for explaining the subsequent suggestions. That an object seen for the first time does suggest many relative conceptions, no one surely will deny; and this single consideration, I cannot but think,—if the distinction universally made, of various principles of suggestion, be admitted,—should, of itself, have led to juster notions of our trains of thought. It appears to me, indeed, as I have said on that view of our suggestions, to be absolutely decisive of the question; since, whatever might be supposed in other cases, in this case, at least, there cannot have been any previous connexion of that which suggests with that which is suggested. It proves that the tendency of the mind, in suggestion, is not to exist successively in states which have been previously associated, but simply to exist in successive states, which have to each other certain relations, permanent or accidental,—those relations which, in former lectures, were considered by us as reducible to certain primary laws of suggestion.

I am aware that this long argument on a single point, and that, in itself, not a very interesting one, must have appeared to you rather a heavy tax upon your patience. But, though it is a point not very interesting in itself, or in the sort of discussion and illustration which it admits, it is one which is very interesting in the applications that may be made of it; particularly as a clear view of the distinction which I wish to impress on your minds, will free you from much misconception, which has clouded the language and opinions of philosophers on this subject, and will prepare you, I flatter myself, for admitting, more readily, that simple arrangement of the intellectual phenomena, which I have ventured to submit to you.

In some former severe discussions like the present, I endeavoured to extract for you some little consolation, from that very fortitude of attention which the discussion required,—pointing out to you the advantage of questions of this kind, in training the mind to those habits of serious thought and patient investigation, which, considered in their primary relation to the intellectual character, are of infinitely greater importance than the instruction which the question itself may afford. "Generosos animos labor nutrit." In the discipline of reason, as in the training of the athlete, it is not for a single victory, which it may give to the youthful champion, that the combat is to be valued, but for that knitting of the joints, and hardening of the muscles,—that quickness of eyes and collectedness of effort, which it is forming for the struggles of more illustrious fields.

That the perception of a giant, which never before had coexisted with the idea of a dwarf, should yet be sufficient, without some prior association, to induce that idea, may seem very wonderful; but wonderful as it is, it is really not more mysterious, than if the two ideas had coexisted, or succeeded each other, innumerable times. The great mystery is in the simple fact of the recurrence or spontaneous rise of any idea, without the recurrence of the external cause which produced it, and when that external cause has ceased, perhaps, to have an existence. This fact, however, we must admit, whatever be our theory; and it is all which is necessary to the one theory: while the other, by supposing, or vaguely implying some actual union or association, prior to the suggestion, introduces a new mystery, and, in consequence of the very mystery, which it introduces, renders the phenomena which it professes to explain, still more difficult to be conceived; since the association, which it supposes to be necessary to the suggestion, must, on that supposition, in many cases, be the effect of that very suggestion to which it is supposed to give rise.

You will now then, I hope, perceive,—or, I flatter myself, may already have perceived, without the necessity of so much repetition of the argument,—the reasons which led me to prefer the term *suggestion* to *association*, as a more accurate general term for all the spontaneous successions of our thought; since, by making the suggestion itself to depend on an association or combination of ideas prior to it, we should not merely have assumed the reality of process, of which we have no consciousness whatever, but should have excluded, by the impossibility of such previous combination, many of the most important classes of suggestions,—every suggestion that arises from the relations of objects which we perceive for the first time, and, indeed, every suggestion that does not belong, in the strictest sense, to Mr. Hume's single class of *contiguity in time*.

That our suggestions do not follow each

other loosely and confusedly, is no proof of prior associations of mind, but merely of the general constitutional tendency of the mind, to exist, successively, in states that have certain relations to each other. There is nothing in the nature of our original perceptions, which could enable us to infer this regularity and limitation of our subsequent trains of thought. We learn these from experience alone; and experience does not teach us, that there is any such intervening process of mysterious union, as is supposed, but only, that when the mind has been affected in a certain manner, so as to have one perception or conception, it is, successively, and of itself, affected in certain other manners, so as to have other relative conceptions. If the association of ideas be understood to mean nothing more than this succession of ideas arising without an external cause, and involving no prior union of the ideas suggesting and suggested,—nor, in short, any influence previous to that which operates at the moment of the suggestion itself, though it would certainly, with this limited meaning, (which excludes what is commonly meant by the term association,) be a very awkward phrase,—still, if it were always understood in this limited sense alone, it might be used with safety. But, in this sense,—the only sense in which it can be used without error,—it must always be remembered, that the association of ideas denotes as much the successions of ideas of objects which never have existed together before, as the successions of ideas of objects which have been perceived together,—that there are not two separate mental processes, therefore, following perception, and necessary to the succession,—one by which ideas are primarily associated, and another by which they are subsequently suggested,—but that the association is, in truth, only another word for the fact of the suggestion itself. All this, however, being admitted, it may perhaps be said,—what advantage is to be gained from the use of a simpler term, or even from the more accurate distinction which such a term denotes?

The principal advantage that is to be derived from it, is the great simplification which it allows of the phenomena, by the removal of much of that mystery which a more complicated theory had made to hang over some of the processes of thought. When suggestion was supposed to depend on former associations of ideas, and when, in many cases, it must have been felt to be difficult, or rather impossible, to discover any co-existence or immediate succession of the primary perceptions, by which such association could be supposed to be formed, it could scarcely fail to happen, as, indeed, truly took place, that many cumbrous distinctions, and still more cumbrous hypotheses, would be formed, to account for the apparent anomalies.

It is the use of this unfortunate phrase, indeed, rather than of the simpler term suggestion, which appears to me to have filled our intellectual systems with the names of so many superfluous powers. The supposed necessity, in our trains of thought, of some previous association, of course rendered it necessary that the conceptions ascribed to this cause should be such as before existed in a similar form, since, without this previous existence, they could not be supposed to admit of previous connexion, and, therefore, when the suggestions were very different, so as to have the semblance almost of a new creation, it became necessary to invent some new power distinct from that of association, to which they might be ascribed. What was in truth a mere simple suggestion, flowing from the same laws with other suggestions, became in this manner something more, and was ranked as a product of fancy, or imagination,—nothing being so easy as the invention of a new name. A similar illusion gave rise to the supposition of various other intellectual powers,—or, at least, favoured greatly the admission of such powers, by the difficulty of accounting for suggestions which could not have arisen from previous associations; and one simple power or suceptibility of the mind was thus metamorphosed into various powers, all distinct from each other, and distinct from that power of which they were only modifications.

The chief circumstance which probably led to the belief of some actual union or association of ideas, previous to suggestion, I conceive to have been the peculiar importance of that order of suggestions, of which proximity, and therefore former coexistence, or immediate succession of the direct objects of thought, are the distinguishing characteristic. If there had been no such order of suggestions as this, but conception had followed conception merely according to the other relations, such as those of analogy or contrast, we never should have thought of any association, or other prior influence, distinct from the suggestion itself. But, when objects perceived together, or in immediate succession, arise again together, or in immediate succession, as if linked by some invisible bonds, it is a very natural illusion that the suggestion itself should seem to depend on a mysterious union of this kind. The illusion is greatly strengthened by the circumstance, that it is to the relation of direct proximity of objects we have recourse, in all those processes of thought, which have commonly been termed recollections, or voluntary reminiscences. We think of all the variety of events that happened at the time at which we know, that the same event, now forgotten by us, occurred, and we pursue this whole series, through its details, as if expecting to discover some tie that may give into

our hand the fugitive feeling which we wish to detect. The suggestion which we desire, does probably at length occur, in consequence of this process; and we are hence very naturally accustomed to look back to a period preceding the suggestion as to the real source of the suggestion itself.

It must be remembered, too, that although the mind were truly susceptible of the influence in its trains of thought, of various relations of a different kind, as well as those of contiguity, even these suggestions, though originally different, would seem, at length, reducible to this one paramount order; because, after the first suggestion which might have arisen from mere analogy or contrast, a real contiguity, in point of time, would be formed of the suggesting and suggested conception, which had become proximate in succession; and the same suggestion, therefore, when it recurred, might seem to have arisen as much from this contiguity, in a prior train of thought, as from the contrast or analogy, which of themselves might have been sufficient to produce it, without any such proximity of the direct images themselves.

In all these ways, it is very easy to perceive how, in considering every simple suggestion, our thought should be continually turned to the past, and the suggestion itself, therefore, be converted into association; the exceptions being forgotten, or receiving a different name, that we might satisfy ourselves with a general law, though exceptions, so important and so innumerable, might themselves have served for a proof that the general law was inaccurate.

After these remarks, then, I trust that you will not merely have seen the reasons which led me to prefer to the use of the ambiguous phrase *association*, the substitution of the simpler term *suggestion*, but that you will be disposed also to admit the justness of that distinction on which the substitution was founded. The importance of the distinction, however, you will perceive more fully, in the applications that are afterwards made of it, in reducing, under simple suggestion, phenomena ascribed by philosophers to many different intellectual powers.

To this I shall proceed in my next Lecture.

LECTURE XLI.

REDUCTION OF CERTAIN SUPPOSED FACULTIES TO SIMPLE SUGGESTION,—I. CONCEPTION,—II. MEMORY.

GENTLEMEN, my last Lecture was employed in considering the nature of that tendency of the mind, by which it exists, successively in the states which constitute the variety of our conceptions, in our trains of thought; my object being to ascertain whether this tendency depend on any previous intellectual process, constituting what has been termed a union or association of ideas, or, simply on the relations of the conceptions themselves, at the moment of suggestion, without any previous union or association whatever, of the idea or other feeling which suggests, with the idea or other feeling which is suggested. I explained to you the reasons which seem to lead us, in every case, in which conception follows conception, in trains that have a sort of wild regularity, to look back to the past, for some mysterious associations of our ideas, by which this regular confusion of their successions may be explained; though, in the phenomena themselves, there is no evidence of any such association, or earlier connecting process of any kind, all of which we are conscious being merely the original perception and the subsequent suggestion.

It is, in a great measure, I remarked, in consequence of obscure notions, entertained with respect to this supposed association of ideas, as something prior and necessary to the actual operation of the simple principle of spontaneous suggestion, that the phenomena of this simple principle of the mind have been referred to various intellectual powers, from the impossibility of finding, in many cases, any source of prior association, and the consequent necessity of inventing some new power for the production of phenomena, which seemed not to be reducible to suggestion, or to differ from its common forms, merely because we had encumbered the simple process of suggestion with unnecessary and false conditions.

My next object, then, will be to show, how truly that variety of powers, thus unnecessarily, and, therefore, unphilosophically devised, are reducible to the principle of simple suggestion; or, at least, to this simple principle, in combination with some of those other principles, which I pointed out, as parts of our mental constitution, in my arrangement of the phenomena of the mind.

It will be of advantage, however, previously, to take a slight retrospect of the principal points which may be considered as established, with respect to simple suggestion; that we may see more clearly what it is, from which the other supposed powers are said to be different.

In the first place, we can have no doubt of the general fact of suggestion, that conception follows conception, in our trains of thought, without any recurrence of the external objects, which, as perceived, originally gave occasion to them.

As little can we doubt that these conceptions, as internal states of the mind, independent of any immediate influence of external things, do not follow each other loosely,

but according to a certain general relation, or number of relations, which constitute what I have termed the primary laws of suggestion, and which exercise their influence variously, in different persons, and at different times, according to circumstances, which, as modifying the former, I have denominated secondary laws of suggestion.

In the third place, we have seen that they do not follow each other merely, the suggesting idea giving immediate place to the suggested; but that various conceptions, which arise at different moments, may coexist, and form one compound feeling, in the same manner as various perceptions, that arise together, or at different moments, may coexist, and form one compound feeling of another species,—all that complexity of forms and colours, for example, which gives a whole world of wonders at once to our vision, or those choral sounds which flow mingled from innumerable vibrations that exist together, without confusion, in the small aperture of the ear, and in a single moment fill the soul with a thousand harmonies, as if, in the perception of so many coexisting sounds, it had a separate sense for every separate voice, and could exist, with a strange diffusive consciousness, in a simultaneous variety of states.

Lastly, we have seen that no previous association, or former connecting process, of any kind, is necessary for suggestion,—that we have no consciousness of any intermediate process between the primary perception and the subsequent suggestion, and that we are not merely without the slightest consciousness of a process, which is thus gratuitously supposed, but that there are innumerable phenomena which it is not very easy to reconcile with the supposition, on any view of it, and which certainly, at least, cannot be reconciled with it, on that view of the primary laws of suggestion, which the assertors of a distinct specific Faculty of Association have been accustomed to take.

Let us now, then, apply the knowledge which we have thus acquired, and proceed to consider some of those forms of suggestion, which have been ranked as distinct intellectual powers.

That, which its greater simplicity leads me to consider first, is what has been termed by philosophers the *Power of Conception*, which has been defined, the power that enables us to form a notion of an absent object of perception, or of some previous feeling of the mind. The definition of the supposed power is sufficiently intelligible; but is there reason to add the power thus defined, to our other mental functions, as a distinct and peculiar faculty?

That we have a certain mental power or susceptibility by which, in accordance with this definition, the perception of one object may excite the notion of some absent object, is unquestionably true. But this is the very function which is meant by the power of suggestion itself, when stripped of the illusion as to prior association; and if the conception be separated from the suggestion, nothing will remain to constitute the power of suggestion, which is only another name for the same power. I enter, for example, an apartment in my friend's house during his long absence from home; I see his flute, or the work of some favourite author lying on his table. The mere sight of either of these awakes instantly my conception of my friend, though, at the moment, he might have been absent from my thought. I see him again present. If I look at the volume, I almost think that I hear him arguing strenuously for the merits of his favourite, as in those evenings of social contention when we have brought poets and philosophers to war against poets and philosophers. If I look at the flute, I feel instantly a similar illusion. I hear him again animating it with his very touch,—breathing into it what might almost, without a metaphor, be said to be the breath of life,—and giving it not utterance merely but eloquence. In these cases of simple suggestion, it is said the successive mental states which constitute the notions of my friend himself, of the arguments which I again seem to hear and combat, of the melodies that silently enchant me,—are conceptions indicating, therefore, a power of the mind from which they arise, that, in reference to the effects produced by it, may be called the power of conception. But if they arise from a peculiar power of conception,—and if there be a power of association or suggestion which is also concerned, how are these powers to be distinguished, and what part of the process is it which we owe to this latter power? If there were no suggestion of my friend, it is very evident that there could be no conception of my friend; and if there were no conception of him, it would be absurd to speak of a suggestion in which nothing was suggested. Whether we use the term suggestion or association in this case is of no consequence. Nothing more can be accurately meant by either term, in reference to the example which I have used, than the tendency of my mind, after existing in the state which constitutes the perception of the flute or volume, and of the room in which I observe it, to exist immediately afterwards in that different state which constitutes the conception of my friend. The laws of suggestion or association are merely the general circumstances according to which conceptions or certain other feelings arise. There is not, in any case of suggestion, both a suggestion and a conception, more than there is, in any case of vision, both a vision and a

sight. What one glance is to the capacity of vision one conception is to the capacity of suggestion. We may *see* innumerable objects in succession; we may *conceive* innumerable objects in succession. But we see them because we are susceptible of vision; we conceive them because we have that susceptibility of spontaneous suggestion by which conceptions arise after each other in regular trains.

This duplication of a single power, to account for the production of a single state of mind, appears to me a very striking example of the influence of that misconception with respect to association, which I occupied so much of your time in attempting to dissipate. If association and suggestion had been considered as exactly synonymous, implying merely the succession of one state of mind to another state of mind, without any mysterious process of union of the two feelings prior to the suggestion, the attention of inquirers would, in this just and simple view, have been fixed on the single moment of the suggestion itself:—and I cannot think that any philosopher would, in this case, have contended for two powers, as operating together at the very same moment, in the production of the very same conception; but that one capacity would have been regarded as sufficient for this one simple effect, whether it were termed, with more immediate reference to the secondary feeling that is the effect, the power of conception, or, with more immediate reference to the primary feeling which precedes it as its cause, the power of suggestion or association. It is very different, however, when the conception—the one simple effect produced—is made to depend not merely on the tendency of the mind to exist in that state at the particular moment at which the conception arises, but on some process of association, which may have operated at a considerable interval before; for in that case the process of association, which is supposed to have taken place at one period, must itself imply one power or function of the mind, and the actual suggestion, or rise of the conception, at an interval afterwards, some different power or function.

With respect to the supposed intellectual power of conception, then, as distinct from the intellectual power of association or suggestion, we may very safely conclude, that the belief of this is founded merely on a mistake as to the nature of association;—that the power of suggestion and the power of conception are the same, both being only that particular susceptibility of the mind from which, in certain circumstances, conceptions arise,—or at least, that if the power of conception differs from the more general power of suggestion, it differs from it only as a part differs from the whole,—as the power of taking a single step differs from the power of traversing a whole field,—the power of drawing a single breath from the general power of respiration,—the moral susceptibility by which we are capable of forming one charitable purpose from that almost divine universality of benevolence, in a whole virtuous life, to which every moment is either some exertion for good or some wish for good, which comprehends within its sphere of *action*, that has no limits but physical impossibility, every being whom it can instruct or amend, or relieve or gladden, and, in its sphere of generous *desire*, all that is beyond the limits of its power of benefiting.

The next supposed intellectual power to which I would call your attention, is the power of memory.

In treating of our suggestions, and consequently, as you have seen, of our conceptions, which are only parts of the suggested series, I have, at the same time, treated of our remembrances, or, at least, of the more important part of our remembrances, because our remembrances are nothing more than conceptions united with the notion of a certain relation of time. They are conceptions of the past, felt as conceptions of the past,—that is to say, felt as having a certain relation of antecedence to our present feeling. The remembrance is not a simple but a complex state of mind; and all which is necessary to reduce a remembrance to a mere conception, is to separate from it a part of the complexity,—that part of it which constitutes the notion of a certain relation of antecedence. We are conscious of our present feeling whatever it may be; for this is, in truth, only another name for our consciousness itself. The moment of present time, at which we are thus conscious, is a bright point, ever moving, and yet, as it were, ever fixed, which divides the darkness of the future from the twilight of the past. It is, in short, what Cowley terms the whole of human life,—

> "A weak isthmus, that doth proudly rise
> Up betwixt two eternities."*

The present moment, then, though ever fleeting, is to us, as it were, a fixed point; and it is a point which guides us in the most important of our measurements, in our retrospects of the past, and our hopes of the future. The particular feeling of any moment before the present, as it rises again in our mind, would be a simple conception, if we did not think of it, either immediately or indirectly, in relation to some other feeling earlier or later. It becomes a remembrance when we combine with it this feeling of relation—the relation which constitutes our no-

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* Cowley's Ode on Life and Fame, Stanza I. verses 10, 11, slightly altered.

"Vain weak-built Isthmus, that dost proudly rise
Up betwixt two eternities."—Orig.

tion of time; for time, as far as we are capable of understanding it, or rather of feeling it, is nothing more than the varieties of this felt relation, which, in reference to one of the subjects of the relation, we distinguish by the word *before*,—in reference to the other, by the word *after*. It is a relation, I may remark, which we feel nearly in the same manner as we feel the relation which bodies bear to each other, as coexisting in space. We say of a house, that it is two miles from a particular village, half a mile from the river, a mile from the bridge, with a feeling of relation very similar to that with which we say of one event, that it occurred a month ago,—of another event, that it occurred in the memorable year of our first going to school,—of another, that it happened in our infancy. There is some point to which, in estimating distance of space, we refer the objects which we measure, as there is a point of time in the present moment, or in some event which we have before learned to consider thus relatively, to which, directly or indirectly, we refer the events of which we speak as past or future, or more or less recent.

If we had been incapable of considering more than two events together, we probably never should have invented the word *time*, but should have contented ourselves with simpler words, expressive of the simple relation of the two. But we are capable of considering a variety of events, all of which are felt by us to bear to that state of mind which constitutes our present consciousness, some relation of priority or subsequence, which they seem to us to bear also reciprocally to each other; and the varieties of this relation oblige us to invent a general term for expressing them all. This general word, invented by us for expressing all the varieties of priority and subsequence, is *time*,—a word, therefore, which expresses no actual reality, but only relations that are felt by us in the objects of our conception. To think of time is not to think of any thing existing of itself, for time is not a thing but a relation; it is only to have some conceptions of objects which we regard as prior and subsequent; and, without the conception of objects of some kind, as subjects of the relation of priority and subsequence, it is as little possible for us to imagine any time, as to imagine brightness or dimness without a single ray of light, — proportional magnitude without any dimensions,—or any other relation without any other subject. When the notion of time, then, is combined with any of our conceptions, as in memory, all which is combined with the simple conception is the feeling of a certain relation. To be capable of remembering, in short, we must have a capacity of the feelings which we term *relations*, and a capacity of the feelings which we term *conceptions*, that may be the subjects of the relations; but with these two powers no other is requisite,—no power of memory distinct from the conception and relation which that complex term denotes.

When I say that time, as far as we are capable of understanding it, is nothing more than a certain felt relation of certain conceptions of our own mind, I am sufficiently aware of the necessity of this qualifying clause with respect to the limits of our understanding, and of the truth of the very striking remark of St. Austin on this most obscure subject, that he knew well what time was till he was asked about it, and that then he knew nothing of it:—"Quid ergo est tempus? Quis hoc facile explicuerit? Si nemo a me quærat, scio. Si quærenti explicare velim, nescio."

It is truly one of those subjects which, instead of growing clearer as we gaze upon it, grows more obscure beneath our very gaze. All of which we can be said to be conscious, is certainly the present moment alone. But of that complex state of mind which forms to us the present moment, there are parts which impress us irresistibly, and beyond all the power of scepticism, with the relation which, as I have already said, we term *priority*, in reference to the one, and *succession* or *subsequence* in reference to the other; time, as felt by us, being this relation of the two, and nothing more. It is not because we have a previous notion of time that we regard objects as prior and posterior, more than we regard objects as large or small, because we have a previous notion of magnitude; but time, as a general word, is significant to us merely of the felt varieties of the relation of priority and subsequence, as magnitude is a general word, expressive of the felt varieties of comparative dimensions.

But I have already dwelt too long on a point, which I may very probably have made darker to you than it was before; but which, impressed as I am with the truth of St. Austin's remark, I scarcely can venture to flatter myself with the hope of having made much more distinctly conceivable by you.

Obscure as the relation of priority and succession may be, however, which is all that mingles with conception in our remembrance, it is still only a certain relation; and the feeling of this relation does not imply any peculiar power, generically distinct from that which perceives other relations, whether clear or obscure; unless, indeed, we should be inclined to invent a separate name of some new faculty of the mind for every relation with which the mind can be impressed, in the almost infinite variety of these feelings. Memory, therefore, is not a distinct intellectual faculty, but is merely conception or suggestion combined with the feeling of a particular relation,—the relation to which we give the name of priority, a feeling that is not essential, indeed, to the accompanying

conception itself, but that admits of being combined with it, in the same manner as the relation of place, or any other relation, admits of being combined with other conceptions or perceptions. It cannot be denied, for example, that, in the darkness of the night, after an interval of many years, and at the distance probably of many thousand miles, we have the faculty of conceiving, or of beholding again, almost with the same vividness as when we trod its steep ascent, the mountain which we have been accustomed perhaps to ascend in our boyhood, for the pleasure of looking down, from its topmost rock, with a sort of pride at the height which we had mastered. To behold mentally this eminence again, without any feeling of the relation of past time, is to have only a conception of the mountain. We cannot think of the mountain itself, however, even for a few moments, without thinking also of the scene which we have been accustomed to survey from it,—the humbler hills around, that served only to make the valley between appear lower than we should otherwise have conceived it to be, and to make us feel still more proudly the height which we had attained,—the scattered villages,—the woods, the streams, in various directions, mingling and resting in the motionless expanse of the lake. By comprehending gradually more of these objects in our mental view, we have widened our conception, indeed, but it is still a conception only; and we are not said to exercise any power distinct from that of conception or suggestion. Yet we cannot thus conceive the landscape as a whole, without feeling various relations which its parts bear to each other in space, as near or distant, high or low,—the wood hanging over the village,—the spire gleaming through the trees,—the brook hurrying down to the mill, and the narrow pathway by its side. These relations, which give unity to the scene, are relations of space only, and they do not hinder our complex feeling from being denominated simply a conception. So far, then, no new power is said to be concerned. If, however, in addition to all these local relations, we introduce but a single relation of time,—the thought of the most trifling circumstance which occurred when we last ascended the same mountain, and beheld the same scene,—though this new part of the complex feeling have risen, according to the same exact laws of suggestion, as the conception of the mere scene, the conception is then instantly said to indicate a new power, and what was before a conception is a conception no longer. In one sense, indeed, there is truly the operation of a new power, for there is a new relation most certainly felt; and every relation felt implies a power or susceptibility in the mind of feeling this relation. But the relations of coexistence in space are not less relations than those of succession in time; and both or neither, therefore, when coexisting with our conceptions, should be said to indicate a new intellectual faculty.

The state of mind, in memory, is, as I have already said, a complex one,—a conception, and a feeling of relation. But it admits of very easy analysis into these two parts, and, therefore, does not require the supposition of any new power to comprehend it, more than the complex state of mind, which results from the combination of the simple sensations of warmth and fragrance, requires the supposition of a new power to comprehend it, distinct from the separate senses to which the elementary feelings, if existing alone, would be referred. The conception, which forms one element of the remembrance, is referable to the capacity of simple suggestion, which we have been considering; the feeling of the relation of priority, which forms the other element of the remembrance, is referable, like all our other feelings of relation, to the capacity of relative suggestion, which we are afterwards to consider. It is merely as this relation of priority is or is not felt, that the state of mind, in which there is pictured some absent object or past feeling, has the name of a conception or the name of a remembrance; and that part of the complex whole, which is a mere conception, does not differ from the common products of suggestion, but, as we have seen, in treating of our conceptions in general, is merely a particular form, or result, of that general power of suggestion, which gives a second being to the whole shadowy train of our thought. Indeed, since one of the relations, according to which association or suggestion is said to take place, is, by every writer who treats of the laws of association, allowed to be that of priority, or former succession in time, it would surely have been a very singular arrangement, if the conceptions, arising according to this very relation, were to be held as not fairly referable to the class to which they have previously been ascribed; and that what renders them associate should be itself the very cause, for which, and for which alone, they are to be excluded from the class of associations.

Simple memory, then, it appears, is nothing more than a particular suggestion, combined with the feeling of the relation of priority; and all the conceptions, therefore, which it involves, arise according to the laws which regulate suggestion in general. The same resemblances, contrasts, contiguities, give rise to our conceptions of objects, whether we do or do not consider those objects in the relation of priority, which they bear to our present feeling, or to any other event. In journeying along a road which I have never passed before, some form of the vary-

ing landscape may recal to me the scenery around the home which I have left; and it suggests it equally by its mere resemblance, whether it recal it to me as a simple picture, or remind me, at the same time, that it is the very home which I have left, and that, as many weeks have intervened since I saw it, many weeks are likely also to pass before I see it again.

In simple memory, then, it will be allowed, that conception follows conception by the ordinary laws of suggestion, as much as in those conceptions to which we do not attach, that is to say, with which there is not combined, any notion of time. But there is a species of memory, which is said to be under our control,—that memory combined with desire of remembering something forgotten, to which we commonly give the name of recollection. We will the existence of certain ideas, it is said, and they arise in consequence of our volition; though, assuredly, to will any idea, is to know what we will, and therefore to be conscious of that very idea, which we surely need not desire to know, when we already know it, so well as to will its actual existence.

The contradiction implied in this direct volition of any particular idea, is, indeed, so manifest, that the assertion of such a direct power over the course of our thought is now pretty generally abandoned. But still it is affirmed, with at least equal incongruity, that we have it in our power to will certain conceptions indirectly, and that there is, therefore, a species of memory which is not mere suggestion, but follows, in part, at least, other laws. This indirect volition however, as I have shown in some paragraphs of my Essay on Cause and Effect,* is only another form of that very direct volition of ideas, the absurdity of which it is introduced to obviate. Thus, if I wish to remember a piece of news which was communicated to me by a friend, it is acknowledged, indeed, that I cannot will the conception of this immediately and directly, since that would be to know it already; but I am said to have the power of calling up such ideas as I know to have coexisted with it, the place at which the news was told me, the person who told it, and various circumstances of our conversation, at the same time; and this supposed power of calling up such relative ideas, is that indirect power over our course of thought which we are said to possess. But, surely, if these ideas of the circumstances that formerly accompanied the event which I wish to remember, arise, of themselves, to the mind, according to the simple course of suggestion, there is not even indirect volition in the parts of the spontaneous train; and, if they do not arise of themselves, but are separately willed, there is then as direct volition, and consequently as much absurdity, involved in this calling up of the person, the place, and the other accompanying circumstances, as in calling up the very conception itself, which is the object of all this search. In either case, we must be supposed to will to know that, of which the will to know it implies the knowledge. The only difference is, that, instead of one direct volition, which is acknowledged, or which must be acknowledged to be absurd, we have now many separate direct volitions, and have consequently multiplied the inconsistency which we wished to avoid. The true and simple theory of the recollection is to be found in the permanence of the desire, and the natural spontaneous course of suggestion. I do not call up the ideas of the person and the place; but these, by their relations to the desire which I feel, arise uncalled; and when these have arisen, the suggestion of some part of the conversation at that place, and with that person, is a very natural effect of this mere conception of the person and of the place. If that particular part of the discourse be thus simply suggested, which I wished to remember, my object is gained, and my desire, of course, ceases; if not, my desire still continuing, and being itself now more strongly, because more recently associated with the conceptions of the person and the place, keeps them constantly before me, till, in the variety of suggestions to which they spontaneously give rise, I either obtain, at last, the remembrance which I wish, or, by some new suggestion, am led into a new channel of thought, and forget altogether that there was any thing which I wished to remember. What is termed voluntary recollection then, whether direct or indirect, is nothing more than the coexistence of some vague and indistinct desire with our simple trains of suggestion.

It is a complex feeling, or series of feelings, of which the continued desire, and a variety of successive relative conceptions, are parts; but the coexistence of the train of conceptions, with an unsatisfied desire, though a complex state of mind, is not the exercise of any new power, distinct from the elementary powers or feelings which compose it. We have only to perform our mental analysis, as in any other complex phenomenon of the mind, and the elements instantly appear.

Such, then, is memory, not a simple affection of the mind, the result of a peculiar power, but a combination of two elementary feelings, the more important of which is to be traced to the laws of simple suggestion, while the other element is referable to a

* See particularly, 2d Edit. p. 72—79. 3d Edit. p. 73—79. The whole question about the direct or indirect volition of Ideas, is fully discussed in Sect. III. of 3d Edit. of that Essay, p. 41—79.

power that is afterwards to be considered by us.

In my remarks on the secondary laws of suggestion, I considered, very fully, those circumstances which diversify the general power of suggestion, in different individuals, and which thus give occasion to all the varieties of conception or remembrance, in individuals, to whom the mere primary laws of suggestion may be supposed to have been nearly equal. It will not be necessary for me, therefore, to revert to these at present, as explanatory of the varieties of memory; since the same secondary laws, which diversify our suggestions as mere conceptions, without any notion of priority combined with them, diversify them, in like manner, when the notion of this relation is combined with them.

In estimating the power of memory, however, in those striking diversities of it which appear in different individuals, I must warn you against an error into which you may naturally fall, if you pay attention chiefly to the more obvious suggestions, which arise and display themselves in the common intercourse of life. It is in this way, that a good memory, which is, in itself, so essential an accompaniment of profound and accurate judgment, has fallen into a sort of proverbial disrepute, as if unfriendly to judgment, or indicative of a defect in this nobler part of our intellectual constitution. In the cases, however, which have led to this very erroneous remark, it is not the quantity, if I may so express it, of the power of memory, but the peculiar species of it, that, by the sort of connexions which it involves, presents itself to us more readily, and seems more absurd, merely by coming thus more frequently before our view.

What we are too ready to consider, exclusively as memory, is the suggestion which takes place, according to the mere relations of contiguity in time and place, of the very objects themselves, without regard to the conceptions, which arise, in our trains of thought, by the same power of spontaneous suggestion, but which arise according to other relations, and which, therefore, we never think of ascribing to the same simple power. It is not a good memory, in its best sense, as a rich and retentive store of conceptions, that is unfriendly to intellectual excellence, poetic or philosophic, but a memory of which the predominant tendency is to suggest objects or images which existed before in this very order, in which, as objects or images, they existed before, according to the merely imitative relations of contiguity. The richer the memory, and consequently the greater the number of images that may arise to the poet, and of powers and effects that may arise to the philosopher, the more copious, in both cases, will be the suggestions of analogy, which constitute poetic invention or philosophic discovery,—and the more copious the suggestions of analogy may be, the richer and more diversified, it is evident, must be the inventive power of the mind. It is the quality of memory, then, as suggesting objects in their old and familiar sequences of contiguity, not the quantity of the store of suggestions that is unfriendly to genius, though, as I before remarked, this very difference of quality may, to superficial observers, seem like a difference of the quantity of the actual power.

It is in common conversation chiefly that we judge of the excellence of the memory of others, and that we feel our own defects of it,—and the species of relation which forms by far the most important tie of things, in ordinary discourse, is that of previous contiguity. We talk of things which happened at certain times, and in certain places; and he who remembers these best, seems to us to have the best memory, though the other more important species of suggestion, according to analogy, may, in his mind, be wholly unproductive, and though no greater number of images, therefore, may be stored in it, and no greater number of spontaneous suggestions arise; but, on the contrary, perhaps, far fewer than in the more philosophic minds, whose admirable inventions and discoveries, as we term them, we admire, but whose supposed bad memories, which are in truth only different modifications of the same principle of suggestion, we lament.

The most ignorant of the vulgar, in describing a single event, pour out a number of suggestions of contiguity, which may astonish us indeed, though they are a proof not that they remember more, but only that their prevailing suggestions take place, according to one almost exclusive relation. It is impossible to listen to a narrative of the most simple event, by one of the common people who are unaccustomed to pay much attention to events but as they occur together, without being struck with a readiness of suggestion of innumerable petty circumstances which might seem like superiority of memory, if we did not take into account the comparatively small number of their suggestions of a different class. They do not truly remember more than others, but their memory is different in quality from the memory of others. Suggestions arise in their minds which do not arise in other minds; but there is at least an equal number of suggestions that arise in the minds of others, of which their minds, in the same circumstances, would be wholly unsusceptible. Yet still, as I have said, to common observers, their memory will appear quick and retentive, in a peculiar and far surpassing degree. How many trifling facts, for

example, does Mrs. Quickly heap together to force upon Sir John Falstaff's remembrance his promise of marriage. The passage is quoted by Lord Kames, as a very lively illustration of the species of recollections of a vulgar mind.

"In the minds of some persons, thoughts and circumstances crowd upon each other by the slightest connexions. I ascribe this to a bluntness in the discerning faculty; for a person who cannot accurately distinguish between a slight connexion and one that is more intimate is equally affected by each: such a person must necessarily have a great flow of ideas, because they are introduced by any relation indifferently; and the slighter relations, being without number, furnish ideas without end. This doctrine is, in a lively manner, illustrated by Shakspeare:—

'*Falstaff.* What is the gross sum that I owe thee?

'*Hostess.* Marry, if thou wert an honest man, thyself and thy money too. Thou didst swear to me on a parcel-gilt goblet, sitting in my Dolphin-chamber, at the round table, by a sea-coal fire, on Wednesday in Whitsun-week, when the Prince broke thy head for likening him to a singing man of Windsor; thou didst swear to me then, as I was washing thy wound, to marry me, and make me my lady thy wife. Canst thou deny it? Did not Goodwife Keech, the butcher's wife, come in then, and call me Gossip Quickly? coming in to borrow a mess of vinegar; telling us she had a good dish of prawns; whereby thou didst desire to eat some; whereby I told thee they were ill for a green wound. And didst not thou, when she was gone down stairs, desire me to be no more so familiarity with such poor people, saying, that ere long they should call me madam? And didst thou not kiss me, and bid me fetch thee thirty shillings? I put thee now to thy book oath, deny it if thou canst.—*Second Part, Henry IV. Act* 2, *Scene* 2.

"On the other hand, a man of accurate judgment cannot have a great flow of ideas; because the slighter relations, making no figure in his mind, have no power to introduce ideas. And hence it is, that accurate judgment is not friendly to declamation or copious eloquence. This reasoning is confirmed by experience; for it is a noted observation, That a great or comprehensive memory is seldom connected with a good judgment."*

It is not from any defect of memory, as Lord Kames thinks, that fewer of the ideas which prevail in common conversation, arise to a mind of accurate judgment; but because the prevailing tendencies to suggestion, in such a mind, are of a species that have little relation to the dates, &c. of the occurrences that are the ordinary topics of familiar discourse. The memory differs in quality, not in quantity; or, at least, the defect of these ordinary topics is not itself a proof that the general power of suggestion is less vigorous.

In the case of extemporary eloquence, indeed, the flow of mere words may be more copious in him who is not accustomed to dwell on the permanent relations of objects, but on the slighter circumstances of perception and local connexion. Yet this is far from proving that the memory of such a person, which implies much more than the recurrence of verbal signs, is less comprehensive; on the contrary, there is every reason to suppose, that, unless probably in a few very extraordinary cases, which are as little to be taken into account, in a general estimate of this kind, as the form and functions of monsters in a physiological inquiry, the whole series of suggestions, of which a profound and discriminating mind is capable, is greater, upon the whole, than the number of those which rise so readily to the mind of a superficial thinker. The great difference is, that the wealth of the one is composed merely of those smaller pieces which are in continual request, and therefore brought more frequently to view,—while the abundance of the other consists chiefly in those more precious coins, which are rather deposited than carried about for current use, but which, when brought forward, exhibit a magnificence of wealth, to which the petty counters of the multitude are comparatively insignificant.

* Elements of Criticism, Chap. I.

LECTURE XLII.

REDUCTION OF CERTAIN SUPPOSED MENTAL FACULTIES TO SIMPLE SUGGESTION.—III. IMAGINATION.

GENTLEMEN, the inquiries which have occupied us with respect to the phenomena of the principle of suggestion, have, I trust, shown you what that principle is, as distinguished from the other principles of our mental constitution. It becomes necessary, however, in justification of that simple arrangement which I ventured to propose to you, to consider this principle not merely in relation to the phenomena which I have included under it, but also in relation to other arrangements, and to show, that this one general tendency of the mind is sufficient to account for a variety of phenomena which have been referred to peculiar powers of the understanding. This I endeavoured to prove in my last lecture, with respect to two of

these supposed intellectual powers,—the powers, as they have been termed, of *Conception* and *Memory*.

In the first place, I showed, of conception, that, far from being distinguishable from suggestion, it is only a particular instance or operation of that very principle; what are called the laws of suggestion or association, in relation to our mere ideas, being nothing more than the general circumstances, according to which conceptions follow conceptions, in our trains of thought. A particular conception, indeed, as one state of mind, differs from that general tendency of suggestion, in consequence of which it arises; but it differs from it only in the same way as any other particular feeling differs from that general mental susceptibility to which we trace it; as our sensation of a particular sound or odour, for example, differs from the senses of smell and hearing, by which we are capable of perceiving all the varieties of sounds and odours. The power of suggestion is that capacity of the mind by which conceptions arise; as the power of vision is that capacity of the mind by which we are sensible of the varieties of light; and we might as well speak of a power of seeing a particular colour, distinct from vision, as of a power of conceiving the same particular colour, distinct from the influence of the general tendency of the mind that is termed by us suggestion. When I hear the sound of my friend's name,—and the conception of my friend immediately arises,—there is not, in the production of this one mental state, the operation both of a power of association or suggestion, and of a power of conception; but there is a development of that single capacity, or property of the mind, in consequence of which, certain conceptions arise, after certain other conceptions or perceptions. We may call this particular property either the capacity of conception, or the capacity of suggestion, as we please; the one term, *conception*, having more immediate reference to the object conceived,—the other, *suggestion*, to the conceiving mind; but the feeling itself of which we speak,—the particular conception suggested,—whether we regard it in reference to the mind in which it rises, or to the object which it seems to represent; and, by whatever word, or combination of words, we may choose to designate it, is still only one affection of the mind; as a man is still the same individual being, whatever name we may give to him, whether we call him simply a man, or speak of him by his own individual appellation, or in his different relations to other beings like himself, a son, a brother, a father. The mistake which has led to this distinction of the power of conception from the power of suggestion, by which our conceptions arise, I showed to be that vague, but universal mistake, as to the nature of association, which supposes a certain mysterious union of the suggesting and suggested idea, to precede their mutual suggestion, in which case this supposed mysterious union, and the rise of the conception itself, occurring at different periods, might indeed be allowed to be indicative of different mental powers or properties.

After showing our conceptions to be only particular modifications or examples of the general power of suggestion,—which would be a word absolutely without meaning, if nothing were suggested,—I proceeded to consider our remembrances, analyzing these into two distinct parts, a particular conception of some object or feeling remembered, and the accompanying feeling of a certain relation of priority to our present consciousness. The simple conception which forms one of the elements of the remembrance, and differs in no respect from the conceptions that are unaccompanied with the notion of a relation of time, is of course reducible to the power of simple suggestion, to which all our conceptions are to be referred; the feeling of the relation of priority, which forms its other element, is, like our feeling of every other relation, an effect of that general susceptibility of relation suggested, which we are to consider afterwards. The remembrance, therefore, being a complex feeling, is a proof of these two susceptibilities of the mind, to which we owe the constituent elementary feelings; but it is not a proof of any third power, more than the sight of a rose, combined with the perception of its fragrance, is a proof that we possess some third sense or power, distinct from those which give us the elementary sensations of colour and odour, of which our complex sensation is formed. What we term memory, then, in distinction from mere conception, is not a new power, but merely a complex result of different mental capacities; as my complex feeling, when I look at an extensive landscape, and regard the various contiguities, or other local relations of the parts to each other, high or low, above or beneath, remote or near, is a proof indeed that I have a capacity of discerning relations, as well as a capacity of vision, but not a proof of any power distinct from both, and requiring, therefore, a separate place in our primary classifications of the intellectual functions. The relations of time, in this respect, do not differ from the relations of place; our conceptions may be combined with the one as much as with the other; and the remembrance, in every case, is a mere conception, like any other mere conception, combined with a certain feeling of relation, and nothing more.

Of the inestimable advantages which we receive from that composition of feelings

which constitutes memory, I have already treated too fully to need to recal them to your attention. You know it as that to which we are indebted for all the knowledge which we possess,—not merely for every thing which raises us above the ignorance and superstition of the vulgar, to the noble luxuries of science and enlightened belief, but for every thing which raises us above that state of unreflecting imbecility, compared with which the dull glimpses of thought that determine the half-instinctive actions of the idiot, in avoiding danger, and seeking the gratification of his animal appetites, would be wisdom and philosophy. In the rich, and ever-ready stores of a well-cultivated mind, we have the only image, which we can in any way acquire, of the Omniscience of the Sovereign Intellect, —of that BEING, to whom omniscience, in all its infinity of comprehension of whatever is, and of whatever is to be, is the knowledge only of the wonders of His own creative power. We acquire our knowledge slowly, but we retrace it rapidly. The universe itself, when we have enriched our memory with the knowledge of its laws, may thus, in some measure, be said to be comprized in a single retrospective thought of man,—in a single thought of the frail and dependent creature, who, as an individual, is scarcely to be counted as any thing in that very infinity which he comprehends and measures :—

> "What wealth, in Memory's firm record,
> Which, *should it perish*, could this world *recal*,
> In colours fresh, *originally* bright,
> From the dark shadows of o'erwhelming years."
> *Young.*

Nor is it only intellectual wealth which we thus acquire and preserve ; it is by our remembrances that we are truly moral beings, because we owe to them the very conception of every thing which can be the object of morality. Without them there could be no esteem, no gratification for kindness received, no compassion for those who are in sorrow, no love of what is honourable and benevolent. How many of our purest affections might we trace, through a long series of reciprocal kindnesses, to the earliest years of our boyhood—to the field of our sports— to the nursery— to the very cradle in which our smile answered only still fonder smiles that hung ceaseless around it! The Greeks, in their Theogony, by a happy allegorical illustration of the importance of this principle, to all the exercises of fancy and the understanding, fabled the Muses to be Daughters of Memory. They might, with equal truth, have given the same parentage to the Virtues.

The next class of phenomena, ascribed erroneously to a peculiar intellectual power, which remains to be considered by us, is that which comprehends the phenomena of imagination. We not merely perceive objects, and conceive or remember them simply as they were, but we have the power of combining them in various new assemblages, —of forming at our will, with a sort of delegated omnipotence, not a single universe merely, but a new and varied universe, with every succession of our thought. The materials of which we form them are, indeed, materials that exist in every mind ; but they exist in every mind only as the stones exist shapeless in the quarry, that require little more than mechanic labour to convert them into common dwellings, but that rise into palaces and temples only at the command of architectural genius.

> "Indistinct,
> In vulgar bosoms, and unnoticed, lie
> These stores of secret wealth. But some there are
> Conscious of Nature, and the rule which Man
> O'er Nature holds ; some who, within themselves
> Retiring, from the trivial scenes of chance
> And momentary passion, can at will
> Call up these fair exemplars of the mind,
> Review their features, scan the secret laws
> Which bind them to each other, and display
> By forms, or sounds, or colours, to the sense
> Their latent charms. The Bard, nor length, nor depth,
> Nor place, nor form controls. To eyes, to ears,
> To every organ of the copious mind,
> He offereth all its treasures. Him the hours,
> The seasons him obey ; and changeful time
> Sees him at will keep measure with his flight,
> At will outstrip it. To enhance his toil,
> He summoneth from the uttermost extent
> Of things, which God hath taught him, every form
> Auxiliar, every power ; and all beside
> Excludes imperious. His prevailing hand
> Gives to corporeal essence life and sense,
> And every stately function of the soul.
> The soul itself to him obsequious lies
> Like matter's passive heap ; and, as he wills,
> To reason and affection he assigns
> Their just alliances, their just degrees :
> Whence his peculiar honours ; whence the race
> Of men, who people his delighted world,
> Transcend as far the uncertain sons of earth
> As earth itself to his delightful world
> The palm of spotless beauty doth resign."*

Such are the sublime functions of imagination. But we must not conceive, merely because they are sublime, that they comprehend the whole office of imagination, or even its most important uses. It is of far more importance to mankind, as it operates in the common offices of life,—in those familiar feelings of every hour, which we never think of referring to any faculty, or of estimating their value in reference to other classes of feelings. What are all those pictures of the future, which are for ever before our eyes, in the successive hopes, and fears, and designs of life, but imaginations, in which circumstances are combined that never perhaps, in the same forms and proportions, have ex-

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* Pleasures of Imagination, second form of the poem, B. IV. v.—66—130,—with the substitution, in v. 68, of "Stores of secret wealth," instead of

> "Pleasing stores, unless the casual force
> Of things external prompt the heedless mind
> To recognize her wealth."

The addition after "sense," in v. 78. (or v. 11, as quoted,) of "Their latent charms ;" in the next verse the exclusion of the verses from 79 to "will," in v. 108 and the exclusion also of v. 127.

isted in reality, and which, very probably, are never to exist but in those very hopes and fears, which we have formed? The writer of romance gives secret motives and passions to the characters which he invents, and adds incident to incident in the long series of complicated action which he developes. What he does, we, too, are doing every hour;—contriving events that never are to happen, imagining motives and passions, and thinking our little romances, of which ourselves, as may be supposed, are the primary heroes, but in the plot of which there is a sufficient complication of adventures of those whom we love, and those whom we dislike, connected with the main piece, or episodically intermingled. Our romances of real life, though founded upon facts, are, in their principal circumstances, fictions still; and, though the fancy which they display may not be as brilliant, it is still the same in kind with that which forms and fills the history of imaginary heroes and heroines. The dullest plodder over the obscurest desk, who sums up, in the evening, his daily tables of profit and loss, and who rises in the morning with the sole object of adding a few ciphers to that book of pounds and pence, which contains the whole annual history of his life,—even he, while he half lays down his quill to think of future prices and future demands, or future possibilities of loss, has his visions and inspirations like the sublimest poet,—visions of a very different kind, indeed, from those to which poets are accustomed, but involving as truly the inspirations of fancy.

For these humble cases of imagination, it might perhaps be admitted, by those who are not aware how exactly they resemble in kind the sublimer examples of it, that no peculiar intellectual power different from simple suggestion is necessary. But is there not some peculiar power exerted in the splendid works of eloquence and poetic art,—in those fictions which seem to give all the reality of nature to ideal things, or to add some new majesty or loveliness even to the very magnificence of nature itself, and which would seem, therefore, to raise art above nature, if this very art were not one of the forms which nature itself assumes?

In these, too, if we analyze the phenomena with sufficient minuteness, we shall find results similar to those which we discovered in our analysis of the former tribes of phenomena, ascribed in like manner erroneously to peculiar powers.

To this analysis let us now proceed.

Imagination has been generally regarded as implying a voluntary selection and combination of images, for the production of compounds different from those which nature exhibits. This opinion, to whatever extent it may be true, is certainly false in part at least.

We have seen, in considering some other mental processes, that these are rendered very different in appearance by the union of desire; that mere perception, in this way, becomes attention—mere memory, recollection. A similar difference is produced by the union of the same feeling in the phenomena which we are at present considering.

Imagination, then, may be considered in two different lights; as it takes place without desire, or, as it takes place with desire or intention. Let us consider, then, in the *first* place, those new complex conceptions which, when there is no accompanying desire, arise and start, as it were, upon the mind, in its passive trains of thought.

That there is imagination, or new combination of images and feelings unaccompanied with any desire, and consequently, altogether void of selection, is as true as that there is memory without intentional reminiscence. In the trains of our thought, conceptions rise often simply as they have existed before; they rise often mixed in various forms and proportions as they never have existed before; and in both cases equally without any desire on our part. We as little will the varying scenery of our reveries, and all the strange forms which seem to people them, as we will the conception of any one with whom we are acquainted, when it rises to us in instant suggestion, merely on reading his familiar name.

I may conceive gold, it is said,—I may conceive a mountain; and these states of my mind, which are only faint transcripts of the past, are simple conceptions. But if I conceive a golden mountain, which I never saw, I must, it is said, have put together these two conceptions; and this conception, different from any thing in nature, is, in strict language, not a mere conception, but an imagination.

Has any thing, however, taken place in this last case, different from what occurred in the two former?

The argument which I used in treating of voluntary reminiscence, is equally applicable in the present instance. I then showed you the absurdity of supposing that we can will the existence of any particular idea; since this would be to suppose us either to will without knowing what we willed, which is absurd,—or to know already what we willed to know, which is not less absurd. In like manner, I cannot have selected the images of gold and a mountain with the intention of forming the compound of a golden mountain; since it is very evident that, if I willed that particular compound, I must have had the conception of a golden mountain previously to my conception of a golden mountain. The

argument in this case is surely demonstrative; and the same argument will apply equally to every other individual case that may be supposed, whether the images be few or many,—transient, or continued through the longest reveries. If we select images with the view of forming a particular compound, we must already have formed this compound; and to select them for no purpose whatever, is, in truth, not to select at all.

But if there cannot have been any selection of images for composing with them the notion of a golden mountain, how happens it that the conception of this object, so different from any thing we have ever seen, should arise in the mind?

For the solution of this supposed difficulty, I might remark, that it is far from necessary to suggestion, that there should be any complete resemblance of the object suggested to that which suggests it, or that they should formerly have been proximate as the direct images of things existing together; and that, on the same principle as that by which a giant suggests a pigmy, or, still more, as analogous objects suggest objects merely analogous,—a tempest, for example, the short violence of mortal tyranny, or a day of vernal sunshine, the serene benevolence of its God,—so the mere conception of a mountain of one substance or colour, may suggest the analogous conception of a mountain of gold. But, though this general tendency to analogous suggestions might seem, perhaps, sufficient to explain the whole difficulty, the true theory of this, and of every other species of complex conception, appears to me to depend, not on this general tendency merely, but, in a great degree also, on that fact with respect to suggestion, which I stated and illustrated in a former Lecture,—the fact that various conceptions, in that particular sense of coexistence or complexity, which I explained to you as all that can be understood in the case of mind, may exist together, forming one complex feeling, and that one part of this complexity may suggest one conception, while another part suggests a different conception, that may, in like manner unite, and form one harmonizing whole. The conception of the colour of gold, for example, and the conception of a mountain, may be thus, as it were, separately suggested, by parts of some preceding group of images coexisting in the mind; or the conception of a mountain remaining, its greenness or brownness, which are parts of the complex feeling, may, as colours, suggest various other colours, in the same way as if the conception of the form of the mountain had ceased; the colours thus suggested by some former colour,—that of gold among the rest,—coalescing, as they arise, with the remaining conception of the projecting mass; and all this happens, not in consequence of any selection of ours, but merely in conformity with the common laws of suggestion; with those laws by which, as I have shown to you in every instance of vision, a mere sensation of colour continues to coexist with what is in truth only an associate conception of some particular tangible form, and to blend itself in intimate diffusion with the conception which it has suggested, as if the eye were itself capable of originally distinguishing convexity, concavity, and every varied form of position and magnitude.

The momentary groups of images that arise, independently of any desire or choice on our part, and arise in almost every minute to almost every mind, constitute by far the greater number of our imaginations; and to suppose a predetermining selection necessary to every new complex conception, would therefore be almost to annihilate imagination itself. It might leave it, indeed, to the writers of poetry and romance, and to all who are in the habit of embellishing their conversation with the graces and the wonders of extemporary romance; but, in the greater number of mankind, it would be to annihilate it wholly; since in them, there is no intentional creation of images, but their fancy presents to them spontaneous images; or rather, to speak more accurately, since fancy is but a general term, expressive of the variety of these very states of the mind, their mind, in consequence of its own original susceptibilities of change, exists, of itself, successively, in those various states, which constitute the feelings referred to fancy or imagination.

Such is imagination, considered, as it most frequently occurs, without any accompanying desire,—a mode of the general capacity of simple suggestion, and nothing more. But there are, unquestionably, cases in which desire, or intention of some sort, accompanies it during the whole, or the chief part of the process; and it is of these cases chiefly that we are accustomed to think, in speaking of this supposed power. Such is the frame of the mind, in composition of every species, in prose or verse. In this state, conceptions follow each other, and new assemblages are formed. It is a continued exercise of imagination: What, then, is the analysis of our feelings in this state of voluntary thought, when there is a desire of forming new groups of images, and new groups of images arise?

In the first place, to sit down to compose, is to have a general notion of some subject which we are about to treat, with the desire of developing it, and the expectation, or perhaps the confidence, that we shall be able to develope it more or less fully. The desire, like every other vivid feeling, has a degree of permanence which our vivid feelings only possess; and, by its permanence, tends to keep the accompanying conception of the

subject, which is the object of the desire, also permanent before us; and while it is thus permanent, the usual spontaneous suggestions take place,—conception following conception, in rapid but relative series, and our judgment, all the time, approving and rejecting, according to those relations of fitness and unfitness to the subject, which it perceives in the parts of the train.

Such I conceive to be a faithful picture of the state, or succesive states of the mind, in the process of composition. It is not the exercise of a single power, but the development of various susceptibilities,—of desire, —of simple suggestion, by which conceptions rise after conceptions,—of judgment or relative suggestion, by which a feeling of relative fitness or unfitness arises, on the contemplation of the conceptions that have thus spontaneously presented themselves. We think of some subject; the thought of this subject induces various conceptions related to it. We approve of some, as having a relation of fitness for our end, and disapprove of others, as unfit. We may term this complex state, or series of states, imagination, or fancy, and the term may be convenient for its brevity. But, in using it, we must not forget that the term, however brief and simple, is still the name of a state that is complex, or of a succession of certain states; that the phenomena comprehended under it, being the same in nature, are not rendered, by this use of a mere word, different from those to which we have already given peculiar names, expressive of them as they exist separately; and that it is to the classes of these elementary phenomena, therefore, that we must refer the whole process of imagination in our philosophic analysis,—unless we exclude analysis altogether, and fill our mental vocabulary with as many names of powers as there are complex affections of the mind.

The feeling of which I have spoken, as most important in fixing our train of thought so as to allow continuous composition, is the vivid feeling of desire, coexisting with the conception of the particular subject; since this conception of the subject, which is essential to the desire itself, must exist as long as the particular desire or intention exists, and, from the influence of the common laws of suggestion, cannot thus continue in the mind without inducing successively various other conceptions related to the primary subject, and to each other.

There is another circumstance, however, which contributes very powerfully to keep the train of suggestion steadily related to the particular subject which we wish to consider, or, at least, to recal our thoughts to it, when they have wandered from it so far as to have introduced trains of their own absolutely unconnected with our subject. This is the constant presence of the same objects of perception around us. I remarked to you, when I treated of the secondary laws of suggestion, the important influence which our conceptions have in awaking each other, according as they have been more or less recently combined; even the worst memory being able to repeat a short line of poetry immediately after reading it, though, in a very short time, it might wholly forget it. There is, then, most unquestionably, a peculiar readiness of suggestion of recent images or feelings. Accordingly, when we sit down to compose, the thought of our subject is soon associated with every object around us,—with all that we see,—with every permanent sound, —with the touch of the pen or the pencil which we hold,—with our very tactual and muscular feelings as we sit. All these sensations, indeed, have been frequently connected with other subjects; but they more readily suggest our present subject, because they have coexisted with it more recently. When, therefore, we are led away, almost insensibly, to new trains of thought, which might not, of themselves, for a long period, lead us back again to those conceptions which occupied us, or to the desire which accompanied them, we are rapidly brought back to these by the sight of some book which meets our eye,—of the desk or table before us,— or by some other of those sensations which I have already mentioned. In our efforts of composition there is a constant action of these causes, some of which would lead us away, while others bring us back. The general laws of suggestion would, in many cases, fill our mind with conceptions foreign to our object, and they do frequently produce this effect; but as often are we recalled by the permanence of our desire, or still more frequently by the same laws of suggestion which had disturbed and distracted us, operating now, in their connexion with the objects of sense before us, in the way already mentioned, and thus repairing the very evil to which they had given occasion.

Such are the means with which nature has provided us for keeping the trains of our suggestion, not steadily indeed, but almost steadily related to one particular object, which we wish to consider, or to illustrate and adorn. Do the conceptions, however, which arise during this period, and which are ascribed to fancy or imagination, arise by the simple laws of suggestion? or are they to be ascribed to the operation of some distinct power?

According to the analysis which I have given you,—if that analysis be faithful,— there is no operation of any distinct power, but merely the rise of various images according to the ordinary laws of simple suggestion, in coexistence with feelings that arise from some other common principles of the

mind, particularly desire, and the feeling of of relation.

In the creations of our fancy, it is very evident that the conceptions which arise must all have some relation to each other, or the new combinations would be mere wildness and confusion; and to the relations, according to which conceptions may arise, there is scarcely any limit. The first line of a poem, if I have previously read the poem, may suggest to me the second line, by its relation of former contiguity; it may suggest, by resemblance of thought or language, some similar line of another author; it may suggest, by contrast, some of those ludicrous images which constitute parody; or it may suggest some image in harmony with its own subject, and some appropriate language with which to invest it, as when it suggested to its author the second line, and all the following lines of his poem. In this variety of suggestions, some of which would be called simple conceptions or remembrances, while others would be ascribed to the inventive power of imagination, it is precisely the same principle which operates,—that principle of our mental constitution, by which one conception existing induces, of itself, some other conception relating to it. In the inventive process, indeed, when it is long continued, there is this peculiarity to distinguish it from the suggestions to which we do not give that name, that the process is accompanied with intention, or the desire of producing some new combination, together with the expectation that such a combination will arise, and with judgment, as it is termed in science, that discerns the greater or less aptness of the means that occur to us, for that end which we have in view; or with taste, which is the name for the particular judgment in the fine arts, that discerns, in like manner, the aptness of the new combinations which arise for producing that end of pleasure which it is our wish to excite. But still the new suggestions or successions of thought, in which all that is truly inventive in the process consists, is nothing more than the operation of that principle of the mind to which memory itself is reducible,—the general tendency of our conceptions to suggest, in certain circumstances, certain other conceptions related to them.

This tendency, as we have already seen, is variously modified in various minds; and, in a former Lecture, I pointed out to you, and illustrated at considerable length, the nature of those peculiar tendencies of suggestion, which distinguish the conceptions of inventive genius from the humbler conceptions of common minds: the mystery of which difference,—that appears so wonderful when we consider only the products of suggestion in the two cases,—we traced to this very simple circumstance, that, in the mind of inventive genius, conceptions follow each other chiefly according to the relations of analogy, which are infinite, and admit, therefore, of constant novelty; while in the humbler mind the prevailing tendencies of suggestion are those of former contiguity of objects in place and time, which are, of course, limited, and by their very nature, limited to conceptions, that cannot confer, on the mind in which they arise, the honour of originality. In that process of fancy which we have now been considering, it must be remembered, that the splendid creations which it exhibits, when the process is complete, depend on this prevailing direction of the course of thought to analogous objects, rather than to such as have been merely proximate in time and place. But we must not conceive that the brilliant wonders, to which this tendency of suggestion gives birth, are to be referred, merely because they are brilliant and wonderful, to some power distinct from that simple suggestion to which they owe their being.

These remarks are, I trust, sufficient to show the nature of that simple and general principle on which the separate suggestions that become permanently embodied in the delightful pictures of fancy, depend. It may be necessary, however, to illustrate, a little more fully, the nature of that selection, of which writers on the subject of imagination so frequently speak.

I have already shown, that in far the greater number of imaginations,—in all those which enliven the momentary reveries that form so large a part of our mental history of each day, though, from the constant recurrence of objects of perception, more vivid and more intimately connected with our permanent desires, they pass away, and are forgotten almost as soon as they have arisen,—in all those visions of the future, which occupy, with their own little hopes and fears, the great multitude of mankind, the combinations of fancy which arise, are far from implying any selection by that mind to which they arise, but occur to it, independent of any choice, by mere suggestion, or by the coexistence and combination of some conception, as it arises, with that remaining perception or conception which suggested it, or with some other remaining conception of a complex group.

The selection, however, which we have to consider, is that which is supposed to take place in cases of imagination, where there is an undoubted desire of producing some new and splendid result.

"We seem to treat the thoughts that present themselves to the fancy in crowds," it has been said, "as a great man treats those [courtiers] that attend his levee. They are all ambitious of his attention—he goes round

the circle, bestowing a bow upon one, a smile upon another, asks a short question of a third, while a fourth is honoured with a particular conference; and the greater part have no particular mark of attention, but go as they came. It is true, he can give no mark of his attention to those who were not there; but he has a sufficient number for making a choice and distinction."*

Of this selection I may remark, in the first place, as, indeed, I have already repeatedly remarked,—that, when many images are together in our mind, we cannot combine two of them, with the view of forming a third, because this would be, in truth, to have already formed that third which we are supposed to will to form. In the second place, I may remark, that we cannot, by any direct effort of will, banish from our mind any thought which we may conceive to be incongruous to our subject, so as to retain only such as are congruous. To desire to banish, is, in truth, effectively to retain,—the very desire making the particular thought more vivid than it otherwise would have been.

"We vainly labour to forget
What by the labour we remember more."

We cannot select any two images, therefore, out of many, with the express design of forming that third which results from them, since the design itself would imply their previous combination. We cannot banish a third, fourth, or fifth image, coexisting with these two, from our feeling of their incongruity with the plan already conceived by us, since the wish of banishing them would only give to them a firmer place. We do not truly separate the two images from the group by any direct effort of our will—for our will could have no power of producing the separation; but Nature, by certain principles with which our mind is endowed, forms the separation for us, and consequently, the new assemblage which remains after the separation of the rejected parts. This it does for us, according to the simple theory which I have been led to form of the process, in consequence of our feeling of approbation—the feeling of the congruity of certain images with the plan already conceived by us; for this feeling of approbation, and therefore of increased interest, cannot arise and continue, without rendering more lively the conceptions to which it is attached, producing, in short, a prominence and vividness of these particular conceptions, in consequence of which, they outlast the fainter conceptions that coexisted with them. This vivifying influence of our mere approbation, operates very nearly in the same way as, in the process of attention formerly considered by us, we found, that of a multitude of objects, all equally present to our eye, and all producing, or at least capable of producing, an impression of some sort on the sentient mind, the mere feeling of interest, and the consequent desire of further knowledge, rendered some, in a single moment, more prominent than others, as if almost annihilating others that were equally before our view, but which faded more rapidly from their comparative indistinctness.

The vividness of our mere approbation, then, might be sufficient of itself to vivify, in some degree, the conceptions with which it harmonizes, as our desire in attention renders more vivid the perceptions to which it directly relates. But it is not merely as approbation that it operates—it operates also indirectly by inducing that very feeling, or combination of feelings, which we term attention; and adding, therefore, all the vivacity which attention gives to the relative and harmonizing image. When a conception arises to the poetic mind that seems peculiarly related to the primary conception of the subject, there is of course an instant approbation of it; and, in consequence of this approbation, an almost instant desire of considering the image more fully, and developing or embodying, in the most powerful language, that beautiful relation which is perceived. There arises, in short, as I have said, that complex feeling of attention, which consists in the union of a certain desire with a certain perception or conception; and when attention is thus excited, it is not wonderful that all the usual consequences of attention should follow, in the increased vividness of the conception to which we attend, and the lessened vividness, and therefore more rapid decay, of the coexisting images that have no relation to our desire.

Of the various images that exist in the mind of the poet, in those efforts of fancy which we term creative, because they exhibit to us results different from any that have been before exhibited to us, he does not, then, banish by his will, because he is not capable of thus directly banishing a single image of the confused group; but he has already some leading conception in his mind; he perceives the relation which certain images of the group bear to this leading conception; and these images instantly becoming more lively, and therefore more permanent, the others gradually disappear, and leave those beautiful groups which he seems to have brought together by an effort of volition, merely because the simple laws of suggestion that have operated without any control on his part, have brought into his mind a multitude of conceptions, of which he is capable of feeling the relation of fitness or unfitness to his general plan. What is suitable remains—not because he wills it to remain, but because it is

* Reid on the Intellectual Powers, Essay iv. chap. 4.

rendered more vivid by his approval and intent admiration. What is unsuitable disappears—not because he wills it to disappear—for his will would, in this case, serve only to retain it longer; but simply because it has not attracted his admiration and attention, and therefore fades like every other faint conception. Nature is thus, to him, what she has been in every age, the only true and everlasting muse—the Inspirer—to whom we are indebted as much for every thing which is magnificent in human art, as for those glorious models of excellence, which, in the living and inanimate scene of existing things, she has presented to the admiration of the genius which she inspires.

LECTURE XLIII.

REDUCTION OF CERTAIN SUPPOSED FACULTIES TO SIMPLE SUGGESTION—IV. HABIT—ADVANTAGES DERIVED FROM THE ACCURATE REFERENCE OF THE PHENOMENA OF SUGGESTION TO LAWS WHICH OPERATE ON THE TIME OF THE SUGGESTION ONLY, IN THE REFUTATION OF MECHANICAL THEORIES OF ASSOCIATION—REFUTATION OF HARTLEY'S THEORY.

Gentlemen, we were engaged yesterday in considering and analyzing the complex phenomena, usually referred to a distinct intellectual faculty, which has been termed the Power of Imagination or Fancy; and, particularly, in tracing the most important elements of these complex states, or successions of states of the mind, to that principle of simple suggestion which has been the subject of our late examination.

The various analyses into which we were led, in considering imagination, first, as it occurs without desire, in the short reveries of every hour, and afterwards, as it occurs in combination with desire, in the intentional processes of composition, were too long to admit of minute recapitulation; and, I flatter myself, that you do not need any recapitulation to bring their results, at least, fully before you.

That, in those short reveries which, intermingled as they are with our perceptions of actual things, and often giving their own colours to them, form so much of human happiness, and often too so much of human misery—imagination, the producer of new forms, does not imply any new or peculiar faculty distinguishable from common suggestion, was made, I hope, sufficiently apparent; and I trust you were equally convinced, that, in the longest process of intentional composition, the new combinations that arise to us are as little capable of being directly willed;—that they do not imply in us any power of combining by our will various conceptions, or of banishing from our mind, by any effort of our mere will, other conceptions which appear to us inappropriate.

As we cannot will the existence of any group of images, or of any image in a group, since this very will to produce it would imply its actual present existence as an object of our will; so, what we call selection, cannot single from the group an image to the direct exclusion of others, since the operation of the mere will to exclude any image, by rendering it more vivid as an object of our desire, would tend more effectually to retain it. But there are, in that selection of which we speak, a feeling of the relation of certain parts of a complex group, to one leading conception of a particular subject—a consequent approbation of them, as in preference fit for our purpose, and a continued exclusive attention to them; or, in other words, a continued desire of tracing and developing and embodying, in the fittest language, the peculiar relations which these parts of the complex group are felt by us to bear to the plan which we had primarily in view. The common effects, therefore, of attention or desire, take place in this, as in every other instance. The particular images to which we attend, become instantly more vivid, and, therefore, more prominent, so as to separate themselves, by their mere permanence, from the fainter conceptions that fade more rapidly; the remaining images, which were all that seemed to us to harmonize in the wider group, thus mingling together, as if we had formed by our very will the direct combination, and excluded by our very will those incongruous parts, which our will, if we had vainly attempted to make the experiment, could have served only to render more vivid, and, therefore, more lasting.

It is thus, without any exertion of faculties, different in kind from those which are exercised in the humblest intellectual functions of vulgar life,—by the mere capacity of simple suggestion, which, as long as the conception of any subject, or part of a subject, remains,—presents, in accordance with it, image after image, by the capacity of feelings of relation in the perceived fitness or unfitness of certain images for a particular design,—by that primary general desire, which constituted, or gave birth to the design itself, and other more particular and subordinate desires, which form the chief elements of the varying process of attention, to the varying images in the train of thought,—all those miracles of human art have arisen, which have not merely immortalized their authors, but which confer a sort of dignity,—and a dignity of no slight species, even on those who are capable merely of admiring

them, with an admiration that feels their real excellence. Indeed, next to the glory of producing them, and, perhaps, not inferior to it in happiness, is the pleasure of being able thus to appreciate and admire.

Simple as the faculties may be, however, which are concerned in the complex process of imagination, to the fancy itself, by which these miracles are produced, there are truly no limits,—not in external things, for these it can mingle at pleasure,—not in the affections of the soul, for these, in its spiritual creations, are as obedient to it as the mere forms of matter,—not even in infinity itself, for, after it has conceived one infinity, it can still, in its speculations, add to it another and another, as if what would be impossible in nature, were possible to it.

"What wealth in souls,
That, scorning limit, or from place or time,
Bold on creation's confines walk and view
What was and is, and *more than e'er shall be*,
Souls that can grasp whate'er the Almighty made,
And wander wild through things impossible."
Young.

The conceptions which rise and mingle in our living pictures of fancy, being derived, not merely from the various climes of the earth which we inhabit, but from every part of the immensity of the universe, give to our imagination, if we consider it relatively to the objects of conception, a species of virtual omnipresence, or a rapidity of passage almost as wonderful as omnipresence itself. "Tot virtutes accepimus, tot artes, animum denique," says Seneca, "animum denique, cui nihil non eodem quo intendit momento pervium est, sideribus, velociorem, quorum post multa sæcula futuros cursus antecedit."* To the same purpose, but more quaintly, says an ingenious French writer, comparing the velocity of our thought with that of the swiftest of material things:—"Whatever rapidity we may give to light, what is it to that of my imagination? I wish to rise to the planet Saturn, at the distance of three hundred millions of leagues from the earth. *I am there.* I will to ascend still higher, to the region of the fixed stars, at a distance from the earth which is no longer to be counted by millions of leagues, but by millions of millions. I have already passed over all this immensity that intervenes. Would I explore the twelve famous constellations of the Zodiac? The Sun takes twelve months to journey through them. I have already traversed them all, in less time than it would have taken for me to pronounce their names."

"Adde quod in terris nihil est velocius illâ,
Et formas subit extemplo quascunque, locosque;
Nunc fera, nunc volucris: nunc priscæ mœnia Romæ.
Nunc petit Ægyptum viridem, fontesque latentes
Ambiguos Nili, et Libyæ deserta peragrat.
Abdita nunc terræ ingreditur: nunc proxima Soli
Inter et errantes per cœlum volvitur ignes,
Et sola æternum videt indefessa Tonantem.
Proximaque assequitur, cœptisque audacibus urget.
Quoque magis toto diversa a corpore fertur,
Hoc magis immensas diversa a corpore vires
Explicat, ac victrix membrorum incedit, et ultro
Evolat ad superos, propriisque enititur alis."†

The next class of phenomena to which, as in their chief circumstances, modes of the principles of suggestion, I would direct your attention, are the phenomena of *Habit.*

The effects of habit, are, by Dr. Reid, ascribed to a peculiar ultimate principle of the mind; and though I flatter myself, after the discussions which have engaged us, you are not very likely to fall into this error, it may be proper to enter into some fuller illustration and analysis of an influence, which is unquestionably one of the most powerful in our mental constitution.

In treating of the secondary laws of suggestion, I before considered the effect of general habit, if it might so be termed, in modifying the suggestions of mere analogy. The habit which we are now to examine, however, is that in which the effects are not analogous merely, but strictly similar, in a tendency to the repetition of the same actions.

The nature of habit may be considered in two lights; as it thus produces a greater tendency to certain actions, and as it occasions greater facility and excellence in those particular actions.

The first form of its influence, then, which we have to consider, is that by which it renders us more prone to actions that have been frequently repeated.

That the frequent repetition of any action increases the tendency to it, all of you must have experienced in yourselves, in innumerable cases of little importance, perhaps, but sufficiently indicative of the influence; and there are few of you, probably, who have not had an opportunity of remarking in others the fatal power of habits of a very different kind. In the corruption of a great city, it is scarcely possible to look around, without perceiving some warning example of that blasting and deadening influence, before which, every thing that was generous and benevolent in the heart has withered, while every thing which was noxious has flourished with more rapid maturity; like those plants which can extend their roots, indeed, even in a pure soil, and fling out a few leaves amid balmy airs and odours, but which burst out in all their luxuriance, only from a soil that is fed with constant putrescency, and in an atmosphere which it is poison to inhale. It is not vice,—not cold, and insensible, and contented vice, that has never known any

* De Beneficiis, Lib. II. c. xxix.

† Heinsius de Contemptu Mortis, Lib. II.

better feelings,—which we view with melancholy regret. It is virtue,—at least what once was virtue,—that has yielded progressively and silently to an influence scarcely perceived, till it has become the very thing which it abhorred. Nothing can be more just than the picture of this sad progress described in the well known lines of Pope:—

"Vice is a monster of so frightful mien,
As, to be hated, needs but to be seen;
Yet, seen too oft, familiar with her face,
We first endure, then pity, then embrace."*

In the slow progress of some insidious disease, which is scarcely regarded by its cheerful and unconscious victim, it is mournful to mark the smile of gaiety as it plays over that very bloom, which is not the freshness of health, but the flushing of approaching mortality,—amid studies, perhaps, just opening into intellectual excellence, and hopes and plans of generous ambition that are never to be fulfilled. But how much more painful is it, to behold that equally insidious and far more desolating progress with which guilty passion steals upon the heart,—when there is still sufficient virtue to feel remorse, and to sigh at the remembrance of purer years, but not sufficient to throw off the guilt, which is felt to be oppressive, and to return to that purity in which it would again, in its bitter moments, gladly take shelter, if only it had energy to vanquish the almost irresistible habits that would tear it back!

"Crimes lead to greater crimes, and link so streight,
What first was *accident* at last is *fate:*
The unhappy servant sinks into a slave,
And virtue's last sad strugglings cannot save."
Mallet.

We must not conceive, however, that habit is powerful only in strengthening what is *evil*,—though it is this sort of operation which of course forces itself more upon our observation and memory,—like the noontide darkness of the tempest, that is remembered, when the calm, and the sunshine, and the gentle shower are forgotten. There can be no question that the same principle which confirms and aggravates what is evil, strengthens and cherishes also what is good. The virtuous, indeed, do not require the influence of habitual benevolence or devotion to force them, as it were, to new acts of kindness to man, or to new sentiments of gratitude to God. But the temptations, to which even virtue might sometimes be in danger of yielding, in the commencement of its delightful progress, become powerless, and free from peril, when that progress is more advanced. There are spirits which, even on earth, are elevated above that little scene of mortal ambition with which their benevolent wishes for the sufferers there, are the single tie that connects them still. All with them is serenity; the darkness and the storm are beneath them. They have only to look down, with generous sympathy, on those who have not yet risen so high; and to look up, with gratitude, to that Heaven which is above their head, and which is almost opening to receive them.

To explain the influence of habit, in increasing the tendency to certain actions, I must remark,—what I have already more than once repeated,—that the suggesting influence, which is usually expressed in the phrase *association of ideas*, though that very improper phrase would seem to limit it to our ideas or conceptions only, and has unquestionably produced a mistaken belief of this partial operation of a general influence,—is not limited to these more than to any other states of the mind, but occurs also with equal force in other feelings, which are not commonly termed ideas or conceptions; that our desires or other emotions, for example, may, like them, form a part of our trains of suggestion; and that it is not more wonderful, therefore, that the states of the mind, which constitute certain desires, after frequently succeeding certain perceptions, should, on the mere renewal of the perceptions, recur once more, than that any one conception should follow, in this manner, any other conception,—that the mere picture of a rose, for example, should suggest its fragrance; or that verses, which we have frequently read, should rise once more successively in our memory, when the line which precedes them has been repeated to us, or remembered by us. To him who has long yielded servilely to habits of intoxication, the mere sight, or the mere conception of the poisonous beverage, to which he has devoted and sacrificed his health, and virtue, and happiness, will induce, almost as if mechanically, the series of mental affections, on which the worse than animal appetite, and the muscular motions necessary for gratifying it depend. Perhaps, at the early period of the growth of the passion, there was little love of the wine itself, the desire of which was rather a consequence of the pleasures of gay conversation that accompanied the too frequent draught. But whatever different pleasures may originally have accompanied it, the perception of the wine and the draught itself were frequent parts of the complex process; and, therefore, those particular mental states, which constituted the repeated volitions necessary for the particular muscular movements; and it is not wonderful, therefore, that all the parts of the process should be revived by the mere revival of a single part.

What is called the power of habit is thus suggestion, and nothing more. The sight

* Essay on Man, Ep. II. v. 217—220.

of the wine before him has coexisted innumerable times with the desire of drinking it. The state of mind, therefore, which constitutes the perception, induces, by the common influence of suggestion, that other state of mind which constitutes the desire, and the desire all those other states or motions which have been its usual attendants.

This influence of habit, then, in increasing the tendency to certain motions, is not very difficult of explanation, without the necessity of having recourse to any principle of the mind distinct from that on which all our simple suggestions depend. If feelings tend to induce other feelings, in consequence of former proximity or coexistence, it would, indeed, be most wonderful if habitual tendencies were not produced. But the tendency to certain actions is not merely increased; the action itself, in cases of complicated motion, becomes easier.

In what manner is this increased facility to be explained?

If any of you were to try, for the first time, any one of the wondrous feats of the circus,—vaulting, dancing on the rope, or some of the more difficult equestrian exercises,—there is very little reason to think that the individual, whatever general vigour and agility he might possess, would be successful; and if he were so singularly fortunate as to perform the feat at all, there can be no doubt that he would perform it with great labour and comparative awkwardness. A certain series of muscular contractions, alone, are best fitted for producing a certain series of attitudes; and, though we may all have the muscles necessary for these particular attitudes, and the power of producing in them the requisite contractions, we have not merely from the sight or conception of the particular attitude, a knowledge either of the particular muscles that are to be moved, or of the particular degrees of motion that may be necessary. In our first attempts, accordingly, though we may produce a rude imitation of the motion which we wish to imitate, the imitation must still be a very rude one; because, in our ignorance of the particular muscles and particular quantities of contraction, we contract muscles which ought to have remained at rest, and contract those which ought to be contracted only in a certain degree, in a degree either greater or less than this middle point. By frequent repetition, however, we gradually learn and remedy our mistakes; but we acquire this knowledge very slowly, because we are not acquainted with the particular parts of our muscular frame, and with the particular state of the mind, necessary for producing the motion of a single muscle separately from the others with which it is combined. The most skilful anatomist, therefore, if he were to venture to make his appearance upon a tight-rope, would be in as great danger of falling as any of the mob (who might gather around him, perhaps, in sufficient time at least to see him fall) would be in his situation; because, though he knows the various muscles of his frame, and even might be capable of foretelling what motions of certain muscles would secure him in his perilous elevation, he is yet unacquainted with the separate states of mind that might instantly produce the desired limited motions of the desired muscles; since these precise states of mind never have been a part of his former consciousness.

But, though our command over our separate muscles is not a command which we can exercise with instant skill, and though it is, and must be at all times exercised by us blindly, without any accurate perception of the nice parts of the process that are going on within us at our bidding, we do certainly acquire this gradual skill. In the long series of trials, we find what volitions have produced an effect that resembles most the model which we have in view. At almost every repetition, either some muscle is left at rest, which was uselessly exerted before, or the degree of contraction of the same muscles is brought nearer and nearer to the desired point; till, at length, having found the particular volitions which produce the desired effect, we repeat these frequently together, so that, on the general principles of suggestion, they arise together afterwards with little risk of the interference of any awkward incongruous volition which might disturb them, and destroy the beauty of the graceful movements, that seem now scarcely to require any effort in the performer, but to be to him what the muscular motions necessary for simple walking or running are to us,—motions that, easy as they now seem to us all, were once learned by us as slowly, and with as many painful failures, as the more difficult species of motions, which constitute their wonderful art, were learned in maturer life by the rope-dancer and the juggler.

The painfulness and labour of our first efforts in such attempts, it must be remembered, do not arise merely from our bringing too many muscles into play, with the view of producing a certain definite effect; but also, in a great measure, from the absolute necessity of bringing more into play than we intended, for the purpose of counteracting and remedying the evil occasioned by former excess of motion. We lose our balance; and, merely in consequence of this loss of exact equilibrium, we are obliged to perform certain other actions, not directly to execute the particular movement originally intended by us, but simply to restore that equilibrium, without which it would be vain for us to attempt to execute it. All this unnecessary

labour,—which is a mere waste of strength, and a painful waste of it,—is of course saved to us, when we have made sufficient progress to be able at least to keep our balance; and the desired motion thus becomes easier in two ways, both positively, by our nearer approximation to that exact point of contraction which constitutes the perfect attitude, and, negatively, by the exclusion of those motions which our own awkwardness had rendered unavoidable.

We have seen, then, in what manner, in conformity with that great principle of the mind considered by us, the phenomena of our habitual actions may be explained, both in the increased tendency to such actions, and the increased facility of performing them.

I cannot quit the subject of our suggestions without remarking the advantage which we derive from the accurate reference of these to laws of mind, that operate at the time of the suggestion only, and not to any previous mysterious union of the parts of the train,—in refuting the mechanical theories of association, and of thought and passion in general, which, in some degree in all ages, but especially since the publication of the work of Dr. Hartley, have so unfortunately seduced philosophers from the proper province of intellectual analysis, to employ themselves in fanciful comparisons of the affections of matter and mind, and at length to conceive that they had reduced all the phenomena of mind to corpuscular motions. The very use of the term *association* has, unquestionably, in this respect, been of material disadvantage; and the opinion, which it seems to involve, of the necessity of some connecting process, prior to suggestion, some coexistence of perceptions, linked, as it were, together, by a common tie, has presented so many material analogies, that the mind which adopted it would very naturally become more ready to adopt that general materialism, which converts perception and passion, and the remembrances of these, into states of sensorial particles, more easily produced, as more frequently produced before, in the same manner as a tree bends most readily in the direction in which it has most frequently yielded to the storm. Had the attention been fixed less on the suggestions of grosser contiguity, than on the more refined suggestions of analogy or contrast, or on those which arise from the perception of objects seen for the first time,—the analogy of all the increased flexibilities of matter would have been less apt to occur, or, at least, its influence would have been greatly lessened; and the readers of many of those romances, which call themselves systems of intellectual philosophy, would have viewed, with astonishment, the hypotheses of sensorial motions, and currents of animal spirits, and furrows in the brain, and vibrations, and miniature vibrations, which false views of the mere time of association, in a connecting process of some sort prior to suggestion, have made them, in many cases, too ready to embrace.

It is chiefly in the southern part of the island that the hypothesis of Dr. Hartley has met with followers; and his followers have generally been extravagant admirers of his philosophical genius, which I own, seems to me to be very opposite to the genius of sound philosophy. That there is considerable acuteness, however, displayed in his work, and that it contains some successful analyses of complex feelings, I am far from denying; and, as intellectual science consists so much in the analysis of the complex phenomena of thought, its influence, in this respect, has unquestionably been of service, in promoting that spirit of inquiry, which, in a science that presents no attraction to the senses, is so easily laid asleep, or at least so readily acquiesces, as if to justify its indolence, in the authority of great names, and of all that is ancient in error and venerable in absurdity. But, though the influence of his philosophy may have been of service in this respect, the advantage which has perhaps flowed from it in this way must have been inconsiderable compared with the great evil which has unquestionably flowed from it in another way, by leading the inquirer to acquiesce in remote analogies, and to adopt explanations and arrangements of the phenomena of mind,—not as they agree with the actual phenomena, but as they chance to agree with some supposed phenomena of our material part. Dr. Hartley, indeed, does not consider materialism as a necessary consequence of his theory. He does not say that the vibrations and vibratiuncles of the medullary parts of the sensorium constitute the very sensations and passions, but merely that they are changes necessary to every mental affection. Yet, by adopting a supposed analogy of a particular species of motion, as common to all the intellectual functions, and thus imposing the necessity of finding, or attempting to find, in every case, some exact correspondence of the mental phenomena, with the varieties and combinations of this particular species of motion, he has done as much to distract the attention of the intellectual inquirer as if he had made all the phenomena to consist of this particular motion; and, without contending for materialism, or even believing in materialism, has produced this belief in the minds of those who have adopted his general system, as effectually as if he had himself believed and contended that the soul is a cube or a cone, or some irregular solid of many sides.

If we admit—as in sound philosophy it is

impossible not to admit—the existence of mind as a substance not cubical, conical, nor of many sides, regular or irregular, but one and simple, different from matter, and capable, by the affections of which it is susceptible, of existing in all those various states which constitute the whole history of our life, as sentient and intelligent, and moral beings, though we must allow that its sense of external things, and perhaps some of its other susceptibilities, require certain previous sensorial changes or affections, not for constituting its feelings, but merely for giving occasion to them as any other cause gives occasion to any other effect;—there is no reason for believing that such changes of the material organs are necessary for every feeling or affection of the mind, even as the mere occasions on which the feelings arise. Though we were to admit this necessity, however, without any reason for admitting it, and were to think ourselves obliged, therefore, to have recourse to some analogy of matter, we must still reject the hypothesis of vibrations; since of all the corporeal changes that could be imagined, in the soft medullary matter of the brain and nerves, vibrations seem the least likely,—certainly, at least, the worst fitted for marking accurately the nice distinctions of things. Indeed it has always seemed to me peculiarly wonderful that such an hypothesis should have been formed by a physician, to whom the structure of the brain and its appendages must have been familiar. If we wished to have a substance that should damp and deaden every species of vibration, so as to prevent a single vibration from being accurately transmitted, it would not be very easy to find one better suited for this purpose than that soft pulpy matter which is supposed, by Dr. Hartley, to transmit, with most exact fidelity, all the nicest divisions of infinitesimal vibratiuncles.

Of the system of vibrations and vibratiuncles, which has now fallen into merited disrepute even with those who are inclined, in other respects, to hold in very high estimation the merits of Hartley, as an intellectual analyst, it is scarcely necessary to offer any serious confutation. The very primary facts of association or suggestion on which the whole of his metaphysical system is founded have always appeared to me a sufficient confutation of that very hypothesis which is adduced to explain them; and as these are his favourite phenomena, on which he constantly insists, they may fairly be taken as the most suitable instances in which to examine the force of the analogy which he wishes to establish. Though the sensorium, then, were allowed to be, in almost every circumstance, the very opposite of what it is—to be finely elastic, and composed of chords adapted in the best possible manner for the nicest differences of vibrations; and though varieties, in the mere times of vibration of the same strings, were allowed to be sufficient for explaining all the infinite diversities of sensation; still the influence of that very association on which Hartley founds so much, would remain wholly unexplained. We may suppose, indeed, any two of these chords, from accidental simultaneous impulse, to have vibrated together; but this can be no reason, even though the accidental concurrence of vibrations should have taken place one thousand times at the same moment, that there should be any greater tendency in the second chord than there was originally, to vibrate, without a repetition of the primary impulse, in consequence of the mere vibration of the first. If the chords, or series of vibratory particles, still retain the same length and tension, the motion of the second may indeed be allowed to be producible indirectly, by an impulse given only to the first, if the strings truly harmonize; but in this case the motion of the second must have been produced in like manner, originally, by the first vibrations of the other, when external force was applied to it alone; and, if the two series of vibratory particles be of such a kind as not to harmonize, a thousand accidental coexistences or successions of their vibrations cannot make them harmonize more than at first. Association, therefore, or habit, on such an hypothesis, would not be necessary to account for phenomena which must have taken place equally by the mere laws of harmonics, without association. If the sight of a pictured rose recal to me its fragrance, or the fragrance of a rose in the dark recal to me its form and colour, it is a proof that the sensorial chords, of which the vibrations give rise to these conceptions, are of such a length as to harmonize, and to admit, therefore, o joint vibration from a single impulse. But in this case it is surely unnecessary that both the sight and smell should ever have existed before. Though I had never *seen* a rose, the mere *smell* of one in the dark should have brought before me instantly the form and colour which I never had beheld, because it should instantly have produced this particular corresponding vibration in the harmonizing strings; and though I had never enjoyed its delightful fragrance, the mere picture of the flower on paper or canvass should have given me, in the very instant, by a similar correspondence of vibration, the knowledge of its odour.

All this, it may perhaps be said, would be very true, if the vibrations, of which metaphysical physiologists speak, were meant in their common physical sense. But if they are not used in their common physical sense, what is it that they are intended to denote? and why is not the precise difference pointed out? Nothing can be simpler than the meaning of the term vibration—an alternate

approach and retrocession of a series of particles; and if this particular species of motion be not meant, it is certainly most absurd to employ the term, when another term could have been adopted or invented without risk of error; or at least to employ it without stating what is distinctly meant by it, as different from the other vibrations of which we are accustomed to speak. If it be not understood in its usual meaning, and if no other meaning be assigned to the term, the hypothesis, which expresses nothing that can be understood, has not even the scanty glory of being an hypothesis. The same phenomena might, with as much philosophic accuracy, be ascribed to any other fanciful term—to the Entelecheia of Aristotle, or to the Abracadabra of the Cabalists. Indeed, they might be ascribed to either of these magnificent words with greater accuracy, because, though the words might leave us as ignorant as before, they at least would not communicate to us any notion positively false. There is certainly very little resemblance of memory to an effervescence, yet we might theorize as justly in ascribing memory to an effervescence as to a vibration, if we be allowed to understand both terms in a sense totally different from the common use, without even expressing what that different sense is; and if the followers of Hartley, in preferring vibratiuncles to little effervescences, profess to understand the term vibration as it is commonly understood, and to apply to the phenomena of association the common laws of vibrating chords, they must previously undertake to show that the phenomena of musical chords, on which they found their hypothesis, are the reverse of what they are known to be,—that strings of such a length and tension as to harmonize, are not originally capable of receiving vibrations from the motions of each other, but communicate their vibrations mutually only after they have repeatedly been touched together,—and that musical chords, of such a length and tension as to be absolutely discordant, acquire notwithstanding, when frequently touched with a bow or the finger, a tendency to harmonize, and at length vibrate together at the mere touch of one of them. Then, indeed, when the tendencies to vibratory motion are shown to be precisely the reverse of what they are, the phenomena of suggestion might find some analogy in the phenomena of vibration; but, knowing what we know of musical chords, it is impossible to bring their phenomena to bear, in the slightest degree, on the phenomena of association, unless, indeed, by convincing us that, little as we know positively of the mysterious principle of suggestion, we may at least negatively have perfect knowledge that it is not a vibration or a vibratiuncle.

LECTURE XLIV.

ON THE INFLUENCE OF PARTICULAR SUGGESTIONS ON THE INTELLECTUAL AND MORAL CHARACTER.

Gentlemen, having now endeavoured to lay before you, and explain, as far as the limited nature of these Lectures allows, the general phenomena which flow from the principle of simple Suggestion, I shall conclude this part of my Course with some remarks on the Influence of Particular Associations on the Intellectual and Moral Character. The speculation, if we had leisure to enter upon it fully, would be one of the most extensive and interesting in the whole field of philosophic inquiry. But so many other subjects demand our attention, that a few slight notices are all which my limits at present permit.

In these remarks I use the familiar term *associations* for its convenient brevity, as expressive of the suggestions that arise from former coexistence or successions of feelings, with perfect confidence that you can no longer be in any danger of attaching to it erroneous notions, as if it implied some mysterious process of union of the feelings suggesting and suggested, or any other influence than that which, at the moment of suggestion, certain feelings have as relative, (our proximate feelings among the rest,) to suggest other correlative feelings.

In this tendency to mutual suggestion, which arises from the relation of former proximity, there is not a single perception or thought, or emotion of man, and consequently not an object around him, that is capable of acting on his senses, which may not have influence on the whole future character of his mind, by modifying, for ever after, in some greater or less degree, those complex feelings of good and evil, by which his passions are excited or animated, and those complex opinions of another sort, which his understanding may rashly form from partial views of the moment, or adopt as rashly from others, without examination. The influence is a most powerful one, in all its varieties, and is unquestionably not the less powerful, when it operates, for being in most cases altogether unsuspected. It has been attempted to reduce to classes the sources of our various prejudices, those idols of the tribe, and of the cave, and of the forum, and of the theatre, as Lord Bacon has quaintly characterized them. But, since every event that befalls us may add, to the circumstances which accidentally accompany it, some permanent impression of pleasure or pain, of satisfaction or disgust, it must never be forgotten that the enumeration of the pre-

judices, even of a single individual, must, if it be accurate, comprehend the whole history of his life, and that the enumeration of the sources of prejudice in mankind, must be, like the celebrated work of an ancient naturalist, as various as nature herself, "tam varium quam natura ipsa." It is not on their truth alone, that even the justest opinions have depended for their support; for even truth itself may, relatively to the individual, and is, relatively to all, in infancy, and, to the greater number of mankind for life, a prejudice into which they are seduced by affection or example, precisely in the same way as, on so many other occasions, they are seduced into error. Could we look back upon the history of our mind, it would be necessary, in estimating the influence of an opinion, to consider as often the lips from which it fell, as the certainty of the opinion itself, or perhaps even to take into account some accidental circumstance of pleasure or good fortune, which dispelled for a moment our usual obstinacy. We may have reasoned justly on a particular subject for life, because, at some happy moment,

> Perhaps Prosperity becalm'd our* breast;
> Perhaps the wind just shifted from the East.†

I have already alluded to the influence of professional habits, in modifying the train of thought; and the observation of the still greater influence, which they exercise, in attaching undue importance to particular sets of opinions, is probably as ancient as the division of professions. The sciences may, in like manner, be considered as speculative professions; and the exclusive student of any one of these is liable to a similar undue preference of that particular department of philosophy which afforded the truths that astonished and delighted him in his entrance on the study, or raised him afterwards to distinction by discoveries of his own. We know our own internal enjoyments; but we have no mode of discovering the internal enjoyments of others; and a study, therefore, on which we have never entered, unless its ultimate utility be very apparent, presents to our imagination only the difficulties that are to oppose us, which are always more immediately obvious to our thought than the pleasure to which these very difficulties give rise. But the remembrance of our own past studies, is the remembrance of many hours of delight; and even the difficulties which it brings before us, are difficulties overcome. The mere determination of the mind, therefore, in early youth, to a particular profession or speculative science,—though it may have arisen from accidental circumstances, or parental persuasion only, and not in the slightest degree from any preference or impulse of genius at the time, is thus sufficient, by the elements which it cannot fail to mingle in all our complex conceptions and desires, to impress for ever after the intellectual character, and to bend it, perhaps, from that opposite direction into which it would naturally have turned. It has been said, that Heaven, which gave great qualities only to a small number of its favourites, gave vanity to all, as a full compensation; and the proud and exclusive preference which attends any science or profession, hurtful as it certainly is, in preventing just views, and impeding general acquirements, has at least the advantage of serving, in some measure, like this universal vanity, to comfort for the loss of that wider knowledge, which, in far the greater number of cases, must be altogether beyond attainment. The geometer, who, on returning a tragedy of Racine, which he had been requested to read, and which he had perused accordingly with most faithful labour, asked, with astonishment, what it was intended to demonstrate? and the arithmetician, who, during the performance of Garrick, in one of his most pathetic characters, employed himself in counting the words and syllables which that great actor uttered, only did, in small matters, what we are, every hour, in the habit of doing, in affairs of much more serious importance.

How much of what is commonly called genius,—or, at least, how much of the secondary direction of genius, which marks its varieties, and gives it a specific distinctive character,—depends on accidents of the slightest kind, that modify the general tendencies of suggestion, by the peculiar liveliness which they give to certain trains of thought; I am aware, indeed, that, in cases of this sort, we may often err,—and that we may probably err, to a certain extent, in the greater number of them,—in ascribing to the accident, those mental peculiarities, which existed before it unobserved, and which would afterwards, as original tendencies, have developed themselves, in any circumstances in which the individual might have been placed; but the influence of circumstances, though apt to be magnified, is not on that account the less real; and though we may sometimes err, therefore, as to the particular examples, we cannot err as to the general influence itself. We are told, in the life of Chatterton, that, in his early boyhood, he was reckoned of very dull intellect, till he "fell in love," as his mother expressed it, with the illuminated capitals of an old musical manuscript in French, from which she taught him his letters; and a black-letter Bible was the book from which she afterwards taught him to read. It is impossible to think of the subsequent history of this wonderful young man, without tracing a pro-

* His.—Orig.
† Pope's Moral Essays, Ep. II.

bable connexion of those accidental circumstances, which could not fail to give a peculiar importance to certain conceptions, with the character of that genius, which was afterwards to make grey-headed erudition bend before it, and to astonish at least all those on whom it did not impose.

The illustrious French naturalist Adanson, was in very early life distinguished by his proficiency in classical studies. In his first years at college, he obtained the highest prizes in Greek and Latin poetry, on which occasion he was presented with the works of Pliny and Aristotle. The interest which such a circumstance could not fail to give to the works of these ancient inquirers into nature, led him to pay so much attention to the subjects of which they treated, that when he was scarcely thirteen years of age, he wrote some valuable notes, on the volumes that had been given to reward his studies of a different kind.

Vaucanson, the celebrated mechanician,—who, in every thing which did not relate to his art, showed so much stupidity, that it has been said of him, that he was as much a machine as any of the machines which he made,—happened, when a boy, to be long and frequently shut up in a room, in which there was nothing but a clock, which, therefore, as the only object of amusement, he occupied himself with examining, so as at last to discover the connexion and uses of its parts; and the construction of machines was afterwards his constant delight and occupation. I might refer to the biography of many other eminent men, for multitudes of similar incidents, that appear to correspond, with an exactness more than accidental, with the striking peculiarities of character afterwards displayed by them; and it is not easy to say, if we could trace the progress of genius from its first impressions, how very few circumstances of little apparent moment might have been sufficient,—by the new suggestions to which they would have given rise, and the new complex feelings produced,—to change the general tendencies that were afterwards to mark it with its specific character.

Indeed, since all the advantages of scientific and elegant education must, philosophically, be considered only as accidental circumstances, we have, in the splendid powers which these advantages of mere culture seem to evolve, as contrasted with the powers that lie dormant in the mass of mankind, a striking proof how necessary the influence of circumstances is for the development of those magnificent suggestions which give to genius its glory and its very name.

If the associations and consequent complex feelings which we derive from the accidental impression of external things, or which we form to ourselves by our exclusive studies and occupations, have a powerful influence on our intellectual character, those which are transmitted to us from other minds are not less powerful. We continue to think and feel as our ancestors have thought and felt; so true, in innumerable cases, is the observation, that "men make up their principles by inheritance, and defend them as they would their estates, because they are born heirs to them." It has been justly said, that it is difficult to regard that as an evil which has been long done, and that there are many great and excellent things, which we never think of doing, merely because no one has done them before us. This subjection of the soul to former usage, till roused by circumstances of more than common energy, is like the *inertia* that retains bodies in the state in which they happen to be, till some foreign force operate to suspend their motion or their rest. And it is well, upon the whole, that, in the great concerns of life,—those which relate, not to speculative science, but to the direct happiness of nations,—this intellectual inertia subsists. The difficulty of moving the multitude, though it may often be the unfortunate cause of preventing benefits which they might readily receive, still has the important advantage of allowing time for reflection, before their force, which is equally irresistible for their self-destruction as for their preservation, could be turned to operate greatly to their own prejudice. The restless passions of the individual innovator, *man*, thus find an adequate check in the general principles of mankind. The same power who has balanced the causes of action and repose in the material world, has mingled them, with equal skill, in the intellectual; and, in the one as much as in the other, the very irregularities that seem, at first sight, to lead to the destruction of that beautiful system of which they are a part, are found to have in themselves the cause that leads them again, from apparent confusion, into harmony and order.

But though, in affairs which concern immediately the peace and happiness of society, it is of importance, that there should be, in those who lead, and still more in those who follow, some considerable obstinacy of attachment to ancient usage, this does not apply to the speculative sciences, in which error does not extend in its consequences beyond the self-illusion of those who embrace it. Yet the history of science, for a long series of ages,—if the science of those ages can be said to afford a subject of history,—exhibits a devotion to ancient opinion more obstinately zealous than that which marks the contemporary narrative of domestic usages or political events. To improve, in some respects, the happiness of a nation, though it was indeed a difficult, and perilous,

and rare attempt, was not absolutely impious. But what a spectacle of more hopeless slavery is presented to us in those long ages of the despotism of authority, when Aristotle was every thing, and reason nothing, and when the crime of daring to be wiser, was the worst species of treason, and almost of impiety; though it must be owned, that this rebellion against the right divine of authority, was not a guilt of very frequent occurrence.

> "With ensigns wide unfurl'd
> She rode, triumphant, o'er the vanquish'd world.
> Fierce nations own'd her unresisted might;
> And all was ignorance, and all was night."

It is at least as melancholy as it is ludicrous to read the decree which was passed, so late as the year 1624, by the Parliament of Paris, in favour of the doctrines of Aristotle, in consequence of the rashness of three unfortunate philosophers, who were accused of having ventured on certain theses, that implied a want of due respect for his sovereign infallibility. In this, all persons were prohibited, under pain of death, *(à peine de la vie,)* from holding or teaching any maxim against the ancient and approved authors, *(contre les anciens auteurs et approuvés.)* In this truly memorable edict, the Parliament seem to have taken for their model the *letters patent*, as they were termed, which, about a century before, had been issued against Peter Ramus, by Francis the First, a sovereign who, for the patronage which he gave to literature, obtained the name of *protector of letters;* but who, as has been truly said, was far from being the *protector of reason.* Yet this proclamation, which condemns the writings of Ramus for the enormous guilt of an attempted improvement in dialectics, and which prohibits him, "under pain of corporal punishment, from uttering any more slanderous invectives against Aristotle, and other ancient authors received and approved," professes, in its preamble, to have been issued by the monarch from his great desire for the progress of science and sound literature in France. "This philosophy of Aristotle, so dear to our kings, and to our ancient parliaments," says D'Alembert, "did not always enjoy the same gracious favour with them, even in times of superstition and ignorance. It is true, that the reasons for which it was sometimes proscribed were very worthy of the period. In the early part of the thirteenth century, the works of this philosopher were burnt at Paris, and prohibited, under pain of excommunication, from being read or preserved, 'because they gave occasion to new heresies.' It thus appears," he continues, "that there is really no sort of folly into which the philosophy of Aristotle has not led our good ancestors."

Such is the sway of long-established veneration over our judgment, even in the province of severer science. The influe which the authority of antiquity exerc over our taste is not less remarkable. "What beauty," it has been said, "would not think herself happy, if she could inspire her lover with a passion as lively and tender as that with which an ancient Greek or Roman inspires his respectful commentator?" We laugh at the absurdity of Dacier, one of those most adoring commentators, who, in comparing the excellence of Homer and Virgil, could seriously say, that the poetry of the one was a thousand years more beautiful than the poetry of the other; and yet, in the judgments which we are in the habit of forming, or, at least, of passively adopting, there is often no small portion of this chronological estimation. The prejudice for antiquity is itself very ancient, says La Motte; and it is amusing, at the distance of so many hundred years, to find the same complaint, of undue partiality to the writers of other ages, brought forward against their contemporaries by those authors, whom we are now disposed to consider as too highly estimated by our own contemporaries on that very account.

How many are there, who willingly join in expressing veneration for works, which they would think it a heavy burthen to read from beginning to end! Indeed, this very circumstance, when the fame of an author has been well established, rather adds to his reputation than diminishes it; because the languor of a work, of course, cannot be felt by those who never take the trouble of perusing it, and its imperfections are not criticised, as they otherwise would be, because they must be remarked before they can be pointed out, while the more striking beauties, which have become traditionary in quotation, are continually presented to the mind. There is much truth, therefore, in the principle, whatever injustice there may be in the application, of the sarcasm of Voltaire, on the Italian poet Dante, that "his reputation will now continually be growing greater and greater, because there is now nobody who reads him."

It is not merely the prejudice of authority, however, which leads our taste to form disproportionate judgments. It is governed by the same accidental associations of every kind, of which I have already spoken, as giving a specific direction to genius. It is not easy to say, how much the simple tale and ballad of our infancy, or innumerable other circumstances still less important of our early life, may have tended to modify our general sense of the beautiful, as it is displayed even in the most splendid of those works of genius which fix our maturer admiration. But as this part of my subject is again to come before us, I shall not dwell on it any longer at present.

It is not in particular details, however, like those which have been now submitted to you, that the influence of association on the intellectual character is best displayed. It is in taking the aggregate of all the circumstances, physical and moral, in the climate, and manners, and institutions of a people.

"There Industry and Gain their vigils keep,
Command the waves, and tame the unwilling deep;
Here Force, and hardy deeds of blood prevail;
There languid Pleasure sighs in every gale."*

The character and turn of thought, which we attach, in imagination, to the satrap of a Persian court, to a citizen of Athens, and to a rude inhabitant of ancient Sarmatia, are as distinct as the names which we affix to their countries. I need not enter into the detail of circumstances which may be supposed to have concurred in the production of each of these distinct characters. It will be sufficient to take the Athenian for an example, and to think of the circumstances in which he was placed. I borrow a description of these from an eloquent French writer.

"Among the Greeks, wherever the eyes were cast, there monuments of glory were to be found. The streets, the temples, the galleries, the porticos, all gave lessons to the citizens. Every where the people recognised the images of its great men; and, beneath the purest sky, in the most beautiful fields, amid groves and sacred forests, and the most brilliant festivals of a splendid religion—surrounded with a crowd of artists, and orators, and poets, who all painted, or modelled, or celebrated, or sang their compatriot heroes,—marching as it were to the enchanting sounds of poetry and music, that were animated with the same spirit,—the Greeks, victorious and free, saw, and felt, and breathed nothing but the intoxication of glory and immortality."†

"Hence flourish'd Greece, and hence a race of men
As Gods by conscious future times adored;
In whom each virtue wore a smiling air,
Each science shed o'er life a friendly light,
Each art was nature."‡

How admirably does the eloquent writer, from whom I have just quoted, express the peculiar effect of a popular constitution, in giving animation to the efforts of the orator; —and if oratory were all which rendered a people happy, and not rather those equal laws, and that calm security, which render oratory almost useless, how enviable would be that state of manners which he pictures!

"In the ancient republics," he observes, "eloquence made a part of the constitution. It was it which enacted and abolished laws, which ordered war, which caused armies to march, which led on the citizens to fields of battle, and consecrated their ashes, when they perished in the combat. It was it which from the tribune kept watch against tyrants, and brought from afar, to the ears of the citizens, the sound of the chains which were menacing them. In republics, eloquence was a sort of spectacle. Whole days were spent by the people, in listening to their orators,—as if the necessity of feeling some emotion were an appetite of their very nature. The republican orator, therefore, was not a mere measurer of words, for the amusement of a circle, or a small society. He was a man, to whom Nature had given an inevitable empire. He was the defender of a nation,—its sovereign,—its master. It was he who made the enemies of his country tremble. Philip, who could not subdue Greece as long as Demosthenes breathed,—Philip, who at Cheronea had conquered an army of Athenians, but who had not conquered Athens, while Demosthenes was one of its citizens—that this Demosthenes, so terrible to him, might be given up, offered a city in exchange. He gave twenty thousand of his subjects, to purchase such an enemy."

"Oratori clamore plausuque opus est, et velut quodam theatro; qualia quotidie antiquis oratoribus contingebant; cum tot pariter ac tam nobiliter forum coartârint; cum clientelæ quoque, et tribus, et municipiorum legationes, ac partes Italiæ, periclitantibus assisterent; cum, in plerisque judiciis crederet populus Romanus, sua interesse, quod judicaretur."

In situations like these, who can doubt of the powerful influence which the concurrence of so many vivid perceptions and emotions must have had in directing the associations, and, in a great measure, the whole intellectual and moral character, of the young minds that witnessed and partook of this general enthusiasm?—an enthusiasm that never can be felt in those happier constitutions, in which the fortunes of individuals, and the tranquillity and the very existence of a state, are not left to the caprice of momentary passion. "Nec tanti Reipublicæ Gracchorum eloquentia fuit, ut pateretur et leges."

Of the influence of association on the moral character of man, the whole history of our race, when we compare the vices and virtues of ages and nations with each other, is but one continued though varied display. We speak of the prevailing manners and dispositions, not merely of savage and civilized life in their extremes, but of progressive stages of barbarism and civilization, with terms of distinction, almost as clear and definite, as when we speak of the changes which youth and age produce in the same

* Gray on the Alliance of Education and Government, v. 42—45.
† Thomas.
‡ Thomson's Liberty, Part II. v. 175—179.

individual; not that we believe men in these different stages of society to be born with different natural propensities, which expand themselves into the diversities afterwards observed, but because there appears to us to be a sufficient source of all these diversities in the circumstances in which man is placed —in the elementary ideas and feelings which opposite states of society afford, for those intimate, and perhaps indissoluble complexities of thought and passion, that are begun in infancy, and continually multiplied in the progress of life. To bring together, in one spectacle, the inhabitants of the wild, of the rude village, and of the populous city, would be to present so many living monuments of the dominion of that principle which has been the subject of our investigation.

When we descend, from the diversities of national character, to the details of private life, we find the elements of the power which produced those great results. It has been said, that the example, which it is most easy to follow, is that of happiness; and the happiness, which is constantly before us, is that to which our early wishes may be expected to turn. We readily acquire, therefore, the desires and passions of those who surround us from our birth; because we consider that as happiness, which they consider as happiness. There may be vice in this indeed, and vice, which, in other circumstances, we should readily have perceived; but it is the vice of those who have relieved our earliest wants, and whose caresses and soothings, long before we were able to make any nice discriminations, have produced that feeling of love, which commends to us every thing, that forms a part of the unanalysed remembrance of our parents and friends. Even in more advanced life, it is not easy to love a guilty person, and to feel the same abhorrence of guilt; though vice and virtue have been previously distinguished in our thought with accuracy:—and therefore, in periods of savage or dissolute manners, and at an age, when the ideas of virtue and vice are obscure, and no analysis has yet been made of complex emotions, it is not wonderful that the child, whose parents are, perhaps, his only objects of love, should resemble them still more in disposition than in countenance.

> "Here vice begins then: At the gate of life,—
> Ere the young multitude to divers roads
> Part, like fond pilgrims on a journey unknown,
> Sits Fancy, deep enchantress; and to each,
> With kind maternal looks, presents her bowl,
> A potent beverage. Heedless they comply:
> Till the whole soul, from that mysterious draught
> Is tinged, and every transient thought imbibes
> Of gladness or disgust, desire or fear,
> One home-bred colour."*

It would, indeed, be too much to say, that the virtues of their offspring are comprehended in the virtues of the parents, as the embryo blossom in the seed from which it is to spring; but, at least, it may be truly said, that the parental virtues are not more a source of happiness to the child, than they are a source of moral inspiration; and that the most heroic benevolence of him, to whose glory every voice is joining in homage, may often be nothing more than the development of that humbler virtue which smiled upon his infancy,—and which listens to the praise with a joy that is altogether unconscious of the merit which it might claim.

When the passion of ambition begins to operate, the principle which we are considering acquires more than double energy. Each individual is then governed, not merely by his own associations, but by the whole associations of the individuals surrounding him, that seem to be transferred, as it were, to his breast. He seeks distinction, and he seeks that species of distinction which is to make him honourable in their eyes. He is guided, therefore, by views of good, which have been the gradual growth of the nation, of circumstances that might perhaps never have affected him personally, and he acts, accordingly, not as he would have acted, but as it is the fashion of the time to act. To be informed of the circumstances which, among the leading orders of society, are reckoned glorious or disgraceful, would be to know, with almost accurate foresight, the national character of the generation that is merely rising into life; if it were not for those occasional sudden revolutions of manners, produced by the shock of great political events, or the energies of some extraordinary mind; though, even then, the associating principle, in changing its direction, is far from losing any part of its efficacy. More than half of the excessive austerity of manners, in the time of Cromwell, was produced by the same passion, which, after the restoration of Charles, produced perhaps an equal proportion of the dissipation and general profligacy of that licentious and disgraceful reign. A very few words of ridicule, if they have become fashionable, may render virtue more than a man of ordinary timidity can venture to profess or practise; and the evil which hypocrisy has done in the world, has not arisen so much from the distrust which it has produced of the appearances of morality, as from the opportunity which it has afforded to the profligate of fixing that name on the real sanctity of virtue and religion, and of thus terrifying the inconsiderate into a display of vices which otherwise they would have hated, and blush to embrace.

What irresistible effect in the rejection of opinions, has been produced by the terms of

* Pleasures of Imagination, second form of the Poem, B. II. v. 445—454.

contempt that have been affixed to them, sometimes from accidental circumstances, and still more frequently from intentional malice, and which have continued ever after to associate with the opinions an ignominy which did not belong to them! The most powerful of all persecution has often been not the axe and the faggot, but the mere invention of a name. To this sort of persecution all our passions lend themselves readily, because, though we may be quite unable to understand the distinctions which have given rise to opposite names,—and though often there may be no real distinction beyond the name itself,—we are all capable of understanding that a name which does not include our own sect or party, implies an opposition to us of some kind or other; and we have all vanity enough to feel such a difference of sentiment,—though it may be on subjects which neither we nor our opponents comprehend,—to be an implied accusation of error, and therefore an insult to the dignity of our own opinion. In the history of ecclesiastical and civil affairs, what crowds of heretics and political partisans do we find whom the change of a few letters of the alphabet would have converted into friends, or have reversed their animosities; and many Homoousians, and Homoiousians, and Tories and Whigs, have reciprocally hated each other, who, but for the invention of the names, would never have known that they differed!

It would be but a small evil if the vices of the great were confined to that splendid circle which they fill. But how difficult is it for those who are dazzled with that splendour, and who associate it with every thing which it surrounds, to think that the vices of the great *are* vices:—

> "The broad corruptive plague
> Breathes from the city to the farthest hut,
> That sits serene within the forest shade."

"The obscure citizen," says Massillon, "in imitating the licentiousness of the great, thinks that he stamps on his passions the seal of dignity and nobility; and thus vanity alone is sufficient to perpetuate disorder, which, of itself, would soon have passed away in weariness and disgust. Those who live far from you," says that eloquent prelate, addressing the great,—"those who live in the remotest provinces, preserve at least some remains of their ancient simplicity. They live in happy ignorance of the greater number of those abuses which your example has converted into laws. But the nearer the country approaches you, the more does morality suffer; innocence grows less pure, excesses more common; and the mere knowledge of your manners and usages is thus the chief crime of which the people can be guilty."

The Stoics, who were sufficiently aware of the influence of this principle on our moral character, seem, if I rightly understand many parts of their works, particularly those of Marcus Aurelius, to have supposed that we have the power of managing the combinations of our ideas with each other, in some measure at our will, and of thus indirectly guiding our subsequent moral preferences. It is this, I conceive, which forms that χρῆσις εἰα δεὶ φαντασιῶν, on which they found so much for the regulation of our lives. But, in whatever mode the regulation of these φαντασιαι may take place, it is evident that the sway which they exercise is one of no limited extent:—

> "For Action treads the path
> In which Opinion says, he follows good,
> Or flies from evil; and Opinion gives
> Report of good or evil, as the scene
> Was drawn by Fancy, lovely or deform'd.
> Is there a man, who, at the sound of death,
> Sees ghastly shapes of terrors, conjured up
> And black before him;—nought but death-bed groans
> And fearful prayers, and plunging from the brink
> Of light and being down the gloomy air
> And unknown depth?—Alas! in such a mind,
> If no bright forms of excellence attend
> The image of his country;—nor the pomp
> Of sacred senates, nor the guardian voice
> Of Justice on her throne, nor aught that wakes
> The conscious bosom, with a patriot's flame,—
> What hand can snatch the dreamer from the toils*
> Which Fancy and Opinion thus conspire
> To twine around his heart?—Or who shall hush
> Their clamour, when they tell him, that to die,
> To risk those horrors is a direr curse,
> Than basest life can bring?—Though Love, with prayers
> Most tender, with Affliction's sacred tears,
> Beseech his aid,—though Gratitude and Faith
> Condemn each step which loiters;—yet let none
> Make answer for him, that, if any frown
> Of danger thwart his path, he will not stay
> Content,—and be a wretch to be secure."†

In the remarks which have now been made on the influence of peculiar directions of the suggesting principle on the moral and intellectual character, we have seen it, in many instances, producing an effect decidedly injurious. But that power which in some cases combines false and discordant ideas, so as to pervert the judgment and corrupt the heart, is not less ready to form associations of a nobler kind; and it is consolatory to think, that, as error is transient, and truth everlasting, a provision is made, in this principle of our nature, for that progress in wisdom and virtue which is the splendid destiny of our race. There is an education of man continually going forward in the whole system of things around him; and what is commonly termed *education*, is nothing more than the art of skilfully guiding this natural progress, so as to form the intellectual and moral combinations in which wisdom and virtue consist. The influence

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* Then what hand
Can snatch this dreamer from the fatal toils.—Orig.

† Pleasures of Imagination, B. III. v. 23—27—v. 31—41; and second form of the Poem, B. II. v. 432—444.

of this, indeed, may seem to perish with the individual; but when the world is deprived of those who have shed on it a glory as they have journeyed along it in their path to heaven, it does not lose all with which they have adorned and blessed it. Their wisdom, as it spreads from age to age, may be continually awakening some genius that would have slumbered but for them, and thus indirectly opening discoveries that, but for them, never would have been revealed to man; their virtue, by the moral influence which it has gradually propagated from breast to breast, may still continue to relieve misery, and confer happiness, when generations after generations shall, like themselves, have passed away.

LECTURE XLV.

ON THE PHENOMENA OF RELATIVE SUGGESTION.—ARRANGEMENT OF THEM UNDER THE TWO ORDERS OF COEXISTENCE AND SUCCESSION.—SPECIES OF FEELINGS BELONGING TO THE FIRST ORDER.

In treating of our intellectual states of mind in general, as one great division of the class of its internal affections, which arise, without the necessary presence of any external cause, from certain previous states or affections of the mind itself, I subdivided this very important tribe of our feelings into two orders, those of simple suggestion, and of relative suggestion; the one comprehending all our conceptions and other feelings of the past, the other all our feelings of relation. I have already discussed, as fully as our narrow limits will admit, the former of these orders—pointing out to you, at the same time, the inaccuracy or imperfection of the analyses which have led philosophers to rank, under distinct intellectual powers, phenomena that appear, on minuter analysis, not to differ in any respect from the common phenomena of simple suggestion. After this full discussion of one order of our intellectual states of mind, I now proceed to the consideration of the order which remains.

Of the feelings which arise without any direct external cause, and which I have, therefore, denominated internal states or affections of the mind—there are many then, as we have seen, which arise simply in succession, in the floating imagery of our thought, without involving any notion of the relation of the preceding objects, or feelings, to each other. These, already considered by us, are what I have termed the phenomena of simple suggestion. But there is an extensive order of our feelings which involve this notion of relation, and which consist indeed in the mere perception of a relation of some sort. To these feelings of mere relation, as arising directly from the previous states of mind which suggest them, I have given the name of *relative suggestions*—meaning by this term very nearly what is meant by the term *comparison*, when the will or intention which comparison seems necessarily to imply, but which is far from necessary to the suggestions of relation, is excluded; or what is meant at least in the more important relations by the term *judgment*—if not used, as the term judgment often is, in vague popular language, to denote the understanding, or mental functions in general; and if not confined, as it usually is in books of logic, to the feeling of relation in a simple proposition,—but extended to all the feelings of relation, in the series of propositions which constitute reasoning, since these are, in truth, only a series of feelings of the same class as that which is involved in every simple proposition. Whether the relation be of two, or of many external objects, or of two or many affections of the mind, the feeling of this relation, arising in consequence of certain preceding states of mind, is what I term a relative suggestion; that phrase being the simplest which it is possible to employ, for expressing, without any theory, the mere fact of the rise of certain feelings of relation, after certain other feelings which precede them; and therefore, as involving no particular theory, and simply expressive of an undoubted fact, being, I conceive, the fittest phrase; because the least liable to those erroneous conceptions, from which it is so difficult to escape, even in the technical phraseology of science.

That the feelings of relation are states of the mind essentially different from our simple perceptions, or conceptions of the objects that seem to us related, or from the combinations which we form of these, in the complex groupings of our fancy; in short, that they are not what Condillac terms *transformed sensations*, I proved, in a former Lecture, when I combated the excessive simplification of that ingenious, but not very accurate philosopher. There is an original tendency or susceptibility of the mind, by which, on perceiving together different objects, we are instantly, without the intervention of any other mental process, sensible of their relation in certain respects, as truly as there is an original tendency or susceptibility of the mind, by which, when external objects are present, and have produced a certain affection of our sensorial organ, we are instantly affected with the primary elementary feelings of perception; and, I may add, that, as our sensations or perceptions are of various species, so are there various species of relations;—the number of relations, indeed, even of external things, being almost infinite, while the number of perceptions is, neces-

sarily, limited by that of the objects which have the power of producing some affection of our organs of sensation.

The more numerous these relations may be, however, the more necessary does some arrangement of them become. Let us now proceed, then, to the consideration of some order, according to which their varieties may be arranged.

In my Lectures on the objects of physical inquiry, in the early part of the Course, I illustrated very fully the division which I made of these objects, as relating to space or time; or, in other words, as coexisting or successive; our inquiry, in the one case, having regard to the elementary composition of external things; in the other case, to their sequences, as causes and effects; and in mind, in like manner, having regard, in the one case, to the analysis of our complex feelings; in the other, to the mere order of succession of our feelings of every kind, considered as mental phenomena. The same great line of distinction appears to me to be the most precise which can be employed in classing our relations. They are the relations either of external objects, or of the feelings of our mind, considered without reference to time, as coexisting; or considered, with reference to time, as successive. To take an example of each kind: I feel that the one half of four is to twelve, as twelve to seventy-two; and I feel this, merely by considering the numbers together, without any regard to time. No notion of change or succession is involved in it. The relation was and is, and will for ever be the same, as often as the numbers may be distinctly conceived and compared. I think of summer—I consider the warmth of its sky, and the profusion of flowers that seem crowding to the surface of the earth, as if hastening to meet and enjoy the temporary sunshine. I think of the cold of winter, and of our flowerless fields and frozen rivulets; and the warmth and the cold of the different seasons, I regard as the causes of the different appearances. In this case, as in the former, I feel a relation; but it is a relation of antecedence and consequence, to which the notion of time or change, or succession, is so essential, that without it the relation could not be felt.

It is not wonderful, indeed, that the classes of relations should be found to correspond with the objects of physical inquiry; since the results of all physical inquiry must consist in the knowledge of these relations. To see many objects,—or I may say even—to see all the objects in nature, and all the elements of every object—and to remember these distinctly as individuals, without regard to their mutual relations, either in space or time—would not be to have science. To have what can be called science is to know these objects, as coexisting in space, or as successive in time,—as involving certain proportions, or proximities, or resemblances, or certain aptitudes to precede or follow. Without that susceptibility of the mind, by which it has the feeling of relation, our consciousness would be as truly limited to a single point, as our body would become, were it possible to fetter it to a single atom. The feeling of the present moment would be every thing; and all beside, from the infinitely great to the infinitely little, would be as nothing. We could not know the existence of our Creator; for it is by reasoning from effects to causes, that is to say, by the feeling of the relation of antecedence and consequence, that we discover his existence, as the great cause or antecedent of all the wonders of the universe. We could not know the existence of the universe itself; for it is, as I have shown, by the consideration of certain successions of our feelings only, that we believe things to be external, and independent of our mind. We could not, even in memory, know the existence of our own mind, as the subject of our various feelings; for this very knowledge implies the relation of these transient feelings to one permanent subject. We might still have had a variety of momentary feelings, indeed, but this would have been all; —and, though we should have differed from them in our capacity of pleasure and pain, we should scarcely have been raised, in intellectual and moral dignity, above the organized beings around us, of a different class, that rise from the earth in spring, to flourish in summer, and wither at the close of autumn—and whose life is a brief chronicle of the still briefer seasons in which they rise, and flourish, and fade.

The relations of phenomena may, as I have already said, be reduced to two orders; —those of coexistence and succession;— the former of which orders is to be considered by us in the first place.

The relations of this order are either of objects believed by us to coexist without, or of feelings that are considered by us as if coexisting in one simple state of mind.

Of the nature of this latter species of virtual, but not absolute coexistence, I have already spoken too often to require again to caution you against a mistake, into which, I must confess, that the terms, which the poverty of our language obliges us to use, might, of themselves, very naturally lead you;—the mistake of supposing, that the most complex states of mind are not truly, in their very essence, as much one and indivisible, as those which we term simple—the complexity and seeming coexistence which they involve being relative to our feeling only, not to their own absolute nature. I trust

I need not repeat to you, that, in itself, every notion, however seemingly complex, is, and must be, truly simple—being one state, or affection, of one simple substance, mind. Our conception of a whole army, for example, is as truly this one mind existing in this one state, as our conception of any of the individuals that compose an army: Our notion of the abstract numbers, eight, four, two, as truly one feeling of the mind, as our notion of simple unity. But, by the very nature or original tendency of the mind, it is impossible for us not to regard the notion of eight as involving, or having the relation of equality to two of four, four of two, eight of one; and it is in consequence merely of this feeling of the virtual equivalence of one state of mind, which we therefore term complex, to many other states of mind, which we term simple, that we are able to perceive various relations of equality, or proportion, in the complex feeling which seems to us to embrace them all in one joint conception—not in consequence of any real coexistence of separate parts, in a feeling that is necessarily and essentially indivisible. It is, as I before stated to you, on this virtual complexity alone that the mathematical sciences are founded; since these are only forms of expressing the relations of proportion, which we feel of one seeming part of a complex conception, to other seeming parts of that complex conception, which appear to us as if mentally separable from the rest.

I proceed, then, now, to the consideration of the first of our classes of relations,—those of which the subjects are regarded, without reference to time. To this order of real coexistence, as in matter, or of seeming coexistence, as in the complex phenomena of the mind, belong the relations of position, resemblance or difference, proportion, degree, comprehension. I am aware, that some of these might, by a little refinement of analysis, be made to coincide,—that, for example, both proportion and degree might, by a little effort, be forced to find a place in that division which I have termed comprehension, or the relation of a whole to the separate parts included in it; but I am aware, at the same time, that this could not be done without an effort,—and an effort too, in some cases, of very subtile reasoning; and I prefer, therefore, the division which I have now made, as sufficiently distinct for every purpose of arrangement.

I look at a number of men, as they stand together. If I merely perceived each individually, or the whole as one complex group, I should not have the feeling of relation; but I remark one, and I observe who is next to him, who second, who third; who stands on the summit of a little eminence above all the rest; who on the declivity; who on the plain beneath; that is to say, my mind exists in the states which constitute the various feelings of the relation of position.

I see two flowers, of the same tints and form, in my path. I lift my eye to two cliffs of corresponding outline, that hang above my head. I look at a picture, and I think of the well-known face which it represents;—or, I listen to a ballad, and seem almost to hear again some kindred melody which it wakes in my remembrance. In each of these cases, if the relative suggestion take place, my mind, after existing in the states which constitute the perception, or the remembrance of the two similar objects, exists immediately in that state which constitutes the feeling of resemblance, as it exists in the state which constitutes the feeling of difference, when I think of certain circumstances in which objects, though similar, perhaps, in other respects, have no correspondence or similarity whatever.

I think of the vertical angles formed by two straight lines, which cut one another; of the pairs of numbers, four and sixteen, five and twenty,—of the dimensions of the columns, and their bases and entablatures, in the different orders; and my mind exists immediately in that state which constitutes the feeling of proportion.

I hear one voice, and then a voice which is louder. I take up some flowers, and smell first one, and then another, more or less fragrant. I remember many days of happiness, spent with friends who are far distant,—and I look forward to the day of still greater happiness, when we are to meet again. In these instances of spontaneous comparison, my mind exists in that state which constitutes the feeling of degree.

I consider a house, and its different apartments,—a tree, and its branches, and stems, and foliage,—a horse, and its limbs, and trunk, and head. My mind, which had existed in the states that constituted the simple perception of these objects, begins immediately to exist in that different state, which constitutes the feeling of the relation of parts to one comprehensive whole.

In these varieties of relative suggestion, some one of which, as you will find, is all that constitutes each individual judgment, even in the longest series of our ratiocination,—nothing more is necessary to the suggestion, or rise of the feeling of relation, than the simple previous perceptions, or conceptions, between the objects of which the relation is felt to subsist. When I look at two flowers, it is not necessary that I should have formed any intentional comparison. But the similitude strikes me, before any desire of discovering resemblance can have arisen. I may, indeed, resolve to trace, as far as I am able, the resemblances of particular objects, and may study them accordingly; but this very desire presupposes, in

the mind, a capacity of relative suggestion, of which it avails itself, in the same manner as the intention of climbing a hill, or traversing a meadow, implies the power of muscular motion as a part of our physical constitution.

The susceptibility of the feeling of relation, in considering objects together, is as easy to be conceived, in the mind, as its primary susceptibility of sensation, when these objects were originally perceived, whether separately or together; and, if nothing had before been written on the subject, I might very safely leave you to trace, for yourselves, the modifications of relative suggestion, in all the simple or consecutive judgments which we form;—but so much mystery has been supposed to hang about it; and the art of logic, which should consist only in the development of this simple tendency of suggestion, has rendered so obscure, what would have been very clear but for the labour which has been employed in striving to make it clear, that it will be necessary to dwell a little longer on these separate tribes of relations, at least on the most important tribes of them, not so much for the purpose of showing what they are, as to show what they are not.

The first species of relation, to which I am to direct your particular attention, is that of resemblance.

When, in considering the relation of resemblance, we think only of such obvious suggestions as those by which we feel the similarity of one mountain or lake to another mountain or lake, or of a picture to the living features that seem in it almost to have a second life, we regard it merely as a source of additional pleasure to the mind, which, in moments that might otherwise be listless and unoccupied, is delighted and busied with a new order of feelings. Even this advantage of the relation, slight as it is, when compared with other more important advantages of it, is not to be regarded as of little value. I need not say, of how much pleasure the imitative arts, that are founded on this relation, are the source. In the most closely imitative of them all, that which gives to us the very forms of those whose works of genius or of virtue have commanded or won our admiration, and transmits them from age to age, as if not life merely, but immortality, flowed in the colours of the artist's pencil; or, to speak of its still happier use, which preserves to us the lineaments of those whom we love, when separated from us either by distance or by the tomb,—how many of the feelings which we should regret most to lose, would be lost but for this delightful art,—feelings that ennoble us, by giving us the wish to imitate what was noble in the moral hero or sage, on whom we gaze, or that comfort us, by the imaginary presence of those whose affection is the only thing that is dearer to us than even our admiration of heroism and wisdom. The value of painting will, indeed, best be felt by those who have lost, by death, a parent or much-loved friend, and who feel that they would not have lost every thing if some pictured memorial had still remained.

Then, for a beam of joy, to light
In memory's sad and wakeful eye;
Or banish, from the noon of night,
Her dreams of deeper agony.

Shall song its witching cadence roll?
Yea, even the tenderest air repeat,
That breath'd, when soul was knit to soul,
And heart to heart responsive beat.

What visions wake—to charm—to melt?
The lost, the lov'd, the dead are near.
O hush that strain, too deeply felt!
And cease that solace, too severe!

But thou, serenely silent art!
By Heaven and Love was taught to lend
A milder solace to the heart—
The sacred image of a friend.

No spectre forms of pleasure fled
Thy softening, sweetening tints restore;
For thou canst give us back the dead,
Even in the loveliest looks they wore.

Campbell.

In the wide variety of nature, how readily do we catch the resemblance of object to object, and scene to scene. With what pleasure do those, who have been long separated from the land of their youth, trace the slightest similarity to that familiar landscape which they never can forget! In reading the narratives of voyages of discovery, there is something which appears to me almost pathetic, in the very names given by the discoverers, to the islands, or parts of islands or continents, which they have been the first to explore. We feel how strong is that omnipresent affection, which, in spaces that have never been traversed before, at the widest distance which the limits of the globe admit, still binds, to the land which gave them birth, even those to whom their country can scarcely be said to be their home, so much as the ocean which divides them from it. It is some rock, or river, or bay, or promontory of his native shore, that, before he has given a name to the rock, or river, or bay, or promontory which he sees, has become present to the sailor's eye, and made the most dreary waste of savage sterility seem, for the moment, a part of his own populous soil of cultivation and busy happiness.

Of the influence of this suggestion on our complex emotion of beauty, I shall have an opportunity of speaking afterwards. At present it is only as a mere physical fact, illustrative of the peculiar mental susceptibility which we are considering, that I remind you of the pleasure which we feel in every similarity perceived by us, in new scenes and forms, to those with which we have been intimately and happily familiar.

These immediate effects of the feeling of obvious resemblance, however, delightful as they may be, are, in their permanent effects, unimportant, when compared with the results of resemblances of a more abstract kind,—the resemblances to which we owe all classification, and, consequently, every thing which is valuable in language.

That classification is founded on the relation of similarity of some sort, in the objects classed together, and could not have been formed if the mind, in addition to its primary powers of external sense, had not possessed that secondary power, by which it invests with certain relations the objects which it perceives, is most evident. All which is strictly sensitive in the mind might have been the same as now; and the perception of a sheep might have succeeded one thousand times the perception of a horse, without suggesting the notion which leads us to form the general term quadruped or animal, inclusive of both; for the relation is truly no part of the object perceived by us, and classed as relative and correlative, each of which would be precisely the same in every quality which it possesses, and in every feeling which it directly excites, though the others, with which it may be classed, had no existence. It is from the laws of the mind which considers them that the relation is derived, not from the laws or direct qualities of the objects considered. But for our susceptibilities of those affections, or states of the mind, which constitute the feeling of similarity, all objects would have been to us, in the scholastic sense of the phrase, things singular, and all language, consequently, nothing more than the expression of individual existence. Such a language, it is very evident, would be of little service, in any respect, and of no aid to the memory, which it would oppress rather than relieve. It is the use of general terms,—that is to say, of terms founded on the feeling of resemblance, which alone gives to language its power,—enabling us to condense, in a single word, the innumerable objects which, if we attempted to grasp them all individually in our conception, we should be as little able to comprehend, as to gather all the masses of all the planets in the narrow concavity of that hand which a few particles are sufficient to fill, and which soon sinks oppressed with the weight of the few particles that fill it.

That man can reason without language of any kind, and consequently without general terms,—though the opposite opinion is maintained by many very eminent philosophers,—seems to me not to admit of any reasonable doubt, or, if it required any proof to be sufficiently shown, by the very invention of the language which involves these general terms, and still more sensibly by the conduct of the uninstructed deaf and dumb,—to which, also, the evident marks of reasoning in the other animals,—of reasoning which I cannot but think as unquestionable as the instincts that mingle with it,—may be said to furnish a very striking additional argument from analogy. But it is not less certain, that, without general terms, reasoning must be very imperfect and scarcely worthy of the name, when compared with that noble power which language has rendered it. The art of definition, which is merely the art of fixing, in a single word or phrase, the particular circumstance of agreement of various individual objects, which, in consequence of this feeling of relation, we have chosen to class together,—gives us certain fixed points of reference, both for ourselves and others, without which it would be impossible for us to know the progress which we have made,—impossible to remember accurately the results even of a single reasoning, and to apply them with profit to future analysis. Nor would knowledge be vague only; it would, but for general terms, be as incommunicable as vague; for it must be remembered, that such terms form almost the whole of the great medium by which we communicate with each other. "Grammarians," says Dr Reid, "have reduced all words to eight or nine classes, which are called parts of speech. Of these there is only one, to wit, that of nouns, wherein proper names are found. All pronouns, verbs, participles, adverbs, articles, prepositions, conjunctions, and interjections, are general words. Of nouns, all adjectives are general words, and the greater part of substantives. Every substantive that has a plural number is a general word; for no proper name can have a plural number, because it signifies only one individual. In all the fifteen books of Euclid's Elements," he continues, "there is not one word that is not general; and the same may be said of many large volumes."*

In the account which Swift gives of his Academy of Projectors in Lagado, he mentions one project for making things supply the place of language; and he speaks only of the difficulty of carrying about all the things necessary for discourse, which would be far the least evil of this species of eloquence; since all the things of the universe, even though they could be carried about as commodiously as a watch or a snuff-box, could not supply the place of language, which expresses chiefly the relations of things, and which, even when it expresses things themselves, is of no use but as expressing or implying those relations which they bear to us or to each other.

"There was a scheme," he says, "for entirely abolishing all words whatsoever, and

* Reid on the Intellectual Powers, Essay V. c. 1.

this was urged as a great advantage in point of health, as well as brevity. For it is plain, that every word we speak is, in some degree, a diminution of our lungs by corrosion, and, consequently, contributes to the shortening of our lives. An expedient was therefore offered, that, since words are only names for things, it would be more convenient for all men to carry about them such things as were necessary to express a particular business they are to discourse on. And this invention would certainly have taken place, to the great ease as well as health of the subject, if the women, in conjunction with the vulgar and illiterate, had not threatened to raise a rebellion unless they might be allowed the liberty to speak with their tongues, after the manner of their forefathers; such constant irreconcilable enemies to science are the common people. However, many of the most learned and wise adhere to the new scheme of expressing themselves by things, which has only this inconvenience attending it, that, if a man's business be very great, and of various kinds, he must be obliged, in proportion, to carry a greater bundle of things upon his back, unless he can afford one or two strong servants to attend him. I have often beheld two of these sages almost sinking under the weight of their packs like pedlars among us; who, when they met in the street, would lay down their loads, open their sacks, and hold conversation for an hour together, then put up their implements, help each other to resume their burdens, and take their leave."*

I cannot but think that, to a genius like that of Swift, a finer subject of philosophical ridicule than the mere difficulty which his sages felt in carrying a sufficient stock of things about with them, might have been found in their awkward attempts to make these things supply the place of abstract language. In his own great field of political irony, for example, how many subjects of happy satire might he have found in the emblems, to which his patriots and courtiers, in their most zealous professions of public devotions, might have been obliged to have recourse; the painful awkwardness of the political expectant of places and dignities, who was outwardly to have no wish but for the welfare of his country, yet could find nothing but mitres, and maces, and seals, and pieces of stamped metal, with which to express the purity of his disinterested patriotism; and the hurrying eagerness of the statesman to change instantly the whole upholstery of language in his house for new political furniture, in consequence of the mere accident of his removal from office.

Without the use of any such satirical demonstration of the doctrine, however, it is sufficiently evident, that if man had no general terms, verbal language could be but of very feeble additional aid to the language of natural signs; and, if the situation of man would be thus deplorable without the mere signs of general notions, how infinitely more so must it have been if he had been incapable of the very notions themselves. The whole conduct of life is a perpetual practical application of the intuitive maxim, that similar antecedents will be followed by similar consequents,—which implies the necessity, in every case, of some rude classification of objects as similar. The fire which the child sees to-day is not the fire which burnt him yesterday; and if he were insensible of the resemblance, to the exclusion, perhaps, of many circumstances that differ, the remembrance of the effect of the fire of yesterday would be of no advantage in guarding him against similar exposure. It is in consequence of notions of little genera and species of good and evil, which he has formed mentally long before he distinguishes them by their appropriate general terms, that the infant is enabled to avoid what would be hurtful, and thus to prolong his existence to the period at which, in applying the multitude of words in his language, in all their varieties of inflection, he shows that he has long been philosophizing, in circumstances that seemed to indicate little more than the capacity of animal pleasure or pain, and innocent affection. What, indeed, can be more truly astonishing than the progress which a being so very helpless, and apparently so incapable of any systematic effort, or even of the very wish which such an effort implies, makes in so short a time, in connecting ideas and sounds that have no relation but what is purely arbitrary, and in adapting them, with all those nice modifications of expression, according to circumstances, of which he can scarcely be thought to have any conception so distinct and accurate as the very language which he uses. "We cannot instruct them," it has been truly remarked, "without speaking to them in a language which they do not understand; and yet they learn it. Even when we speak to them, it is usually without any design of instructing them; and they learn, in like manner, of themselves, without any design of learning. We never speak to them of the rules of syntax; and they practise all these rules without knowing what they are. In a single year or two, they have formed in their heads a grammar, a dictionary, and almost a little art of rhetoric, with which they know well how to persuade and to charm us."†—"Is it not a hard thing," says Berkeley, "that a couple of children cannot prate

* Gulliver's Travels, Part III. c. v.

† André, p. 221.

together of their sugar-plums and rattles, and the rest of their little trinkets, till they have first tacked together numberless inconsistencies, and so formed in their minds abstract general ideas, and annexed them to every common name they make use of?" All this early generalization, admirable as it is, is certainly not, as he says, a hard thing; for it is the result of laws of mind, as simple as the laws on which the very perception of the sugar-plums and rattles depended; but it is a beautiful illustration of that very principle of general nomenclature which Berkeley adduced it to disprove. If children can discover two rattles or two sugar-plums to be like each other, —and the possibility of this surely no one will deny, who may not, in like manner, deny the possibility of those sensations by which they perceive a single rattle or a single sugar-plum; they must already have formed those abstract general notions which are said to be so hard a thing,—for this very feeling of similarity is all which constitutes the general notion, and when the general notion of the resemblance of the two objects has arisen, it is as little wonderful that the general term rattle or sugar-plum should be used to express it, as that any particular name should be used to express each separate inhabitant or familiar visitor of the nursery, or any other word of any other kind to express any other existing feeling.

The perception of objects,—the feeling of their resemblance in certain respects,—the invention of a name for these circumstances of felt resemblance,—What can be more truly and readily conceivable than this process! And yet on this process, apparently so very simple, has been founded all that controversy as to universals, which so long distracted the schools; and which far more wonderfully,—for the distraction of the schools by a few unintelligible words scarcely can be counted wonderful,—continues still to perplex philosophers with difficulties which themselves have made,—with difficulties which they could not even have made to themselves, if they had thought for a single moment of the nature of that feeling of the relation of similarity which we are now considering.

My further remarks on the theory of general notions, I must defer till my next lecture.

LECTURE XLVI.

ON THE RELATIVE FEELINGS BELONGING TO THE ORDER OF COEXISTENCE, CONTINUED—METAPHYSICAL ERRORS CONCERNING THEM INVOLVED IN THE HYPOTHESES OF REALISM AND NOMINALISM.

HAVING brought to a conclusion my remarks on the phenomena of Simple Suggestion, I entered, in my last lecture, on the consideration of those states of mind which constitute our feelings of relation,—the results of that peculiar mental tendency to which, as distinguished from the simple suggestion that furnishes the other class of our intellectual states of mind, I have given the name of Relative Suggestion. The relations which we are thus capable of feeling, as they rise by internal suggestion, on the mere perception or conception of two or more objects, I divided, in conformity with our primary division of the objects of physical inquiry,—into the relations of coexistence, and the relations of succession, according as the notion of time or change is not or is involved in them; and the former of these,—the relations that are considered by us without any regard to time,—I arranged in subdivisions, according to the notions which they involve, 1*st*, Of Position; 2*d*, Resemblance, or difference; 3*d*, Of Degree; 4*th*, Of Proportion; 5*th*, Of Comprehensiveness, or the relation which a whole bears to the separate parts that are included in it.

These various relations I briefly illustrated in the order in which I have now mentioned them, and showed, how very simple that mental process is by which they arise; as simple, indeed, and as easily conceivable, as that by which the primary perceptions themselves arise. On some of them, however, I felt it necessary to dwell with fuller elucidation; not on account of any greater mystery in the suggestions on which they depend, but on account of that greater mystery which has been supposed to hang about them.

A great part of my lecture, accordingly, was employed in considering the relation of resemblance, which, by the general notions and corresponding general terms that flow from it, we found to be the source of classification and definition, and of all that is valuable in language.

A horse, an ox, a sheep, have, in themselves, as individual beings, precisely the same qualities, whether the others be or be not considered by us at the same time. When, in looking at them, we are struck with their resemblance in certain respects, they are themselves exactly the same individuals as before,—the only change which has taken place being a feeling of our own mind. And, in like manner, in the next stage of the process of verbal generalization, when, in consequence of this feeling of relation in our own minds, we proceed to term them quadrupeds or animals, no quality has been taken from the objects which we have ranged together under this new term, and as little has any new quality been given to them. Every thing in the objects is precisely the same as before, and acts in precisely the same manner on our senses, as when the word quadruped or an-

mal was uninvented. The general terms are expressive of our own internal feelings of resemblance, and of nothing more,—expressive of what is in us, and dependent wholly on laws of mind, not of what is in them, and directly dependent in any degree on laws of matter.

That, in looking at a horse, an ox, a sheep, we should be struck with a feeling of their resemblance in certain respects,—that to those respects, in which they are felt to resemble each other, we should give a name, as we give a name to each of them individually, comprehending under the general name such objects only as excite, when considered together with others, the feeling of this particular relation,—all this has surely nothing very mysterious in it. It would, indeed, be more mysterious, if, perceiving the resemblances of objects that are constantly around us, we did not avail ourselves of language, as a mode of communicating to others our feeling of the resemblance, as we avail ourselves of it in the particular denomination of the individual, to inform others of that particular object of which we speak; and to express the common resemblance which we feel by any word, is to have invented already a general term, significant of the felt relation. The process is in itself sufficiently simple; and, if we had never heard of any controversies with respect to it, we probably could not have suspected, that the mere giving of a name to resemblances which all perceive, and the subsequent application of the name only where the resemblance is felt, should have been thought to have any thing in it more mysterious, than the mere giving of a name to the separate objects which all perceive, and the repetition of that name when the separate objects are again perceived. It assumes, however, immediately an air of mystery when we are told, that it relates to the predicables of the schools, and to all that long controversy with respect to the essence of universals, which divided not merely schoolman against schoolman, but nation against nation,—when kings and emperors, who had so many other frivolous causes of warfare, without the addition of this, were eager to take up arms, and besiege towns, and cover fields with wounded and dead, for the honour of the universal *a parte rei*. It is difficult for us to think, that that could be simple which could produce so much fierce contention; and we strive to explain in our own mind, and, therefore, begin to see many wonderful, and perhaps unintelligible, or at least doubtful things, in phenomena, which we never should have conceived to require explanation, if others had not laboured to explain them, by clouding them with words. It is with many intellectual controversies as with the gymnastic exercises of the arena; the dust, which the conflict itself raises, soon darkens that air which was clear before,—and the longer the conflict lasts the greater the dimness which arises from it. When the combatants are very many, and the combat very long and active, we may still, indeed, be able to see the mimicry of fight, and distinguish the victors from the vanquished; but even then we scarcely see distinctly; and all which remains, when the victory at last is won, or when both parties are sufficiently choaked with dust and weary, is the cloud of sand which they have raised, and perhaps some traces of the spots where each has fallen.

It surely cannot be denied, that the mind, with its other susceptibilities of feeling, has a susceptibility also of the feeling of the relation of similarity; or, in other words, that certain objects, when we perceive or think of them together, appear to us to resemble each other in certain respects,—that, for example, in looking at a horse, a crow, a sparrow, a sheep, we perceive that the horse and sheep agree in having four legs, which the crow and sparrow have not; and that, perceiving the horse and sheep to agree in this respect, and not the birds, we should distinguish them accordingly, and call the one set quadrupeds, the other bipeds, is as little wonderful as that we should have given to each of these animals its individual designation. If there be that relative suggestion which constitutes the feeling of resemblance,—and what sceptic, if he analyze the process fairly, will deny this as a mere feeling, or state of mind?—the general term may almost be said to follow of course. Yet for how many ages did this simple process perplex and agitate the schools,—which, agreeing in almost every thing that was complicated and absurd, could not agree in what was simple and just; and could not agree in it precisely because it was too simple and just to accord with the other parts of that strange system, which, by a most absurd misnomer, was honoured with the name of philosophy. That during the prevalence of the scholastic opinions as to perception,—which were certainly far better fitted to harmonize with errors and mysteries than with simple truths,—the subject of generalization should have appeared mysterious, is not, indeed, very surprising. But I must confess, that there is nothing in the history of our science which appears to me so wonderful, as that any difficulty,—at least, any difficulty greater than every phenomenon of every kind involves,—should now be conceived to be attached to this very simple process; and, especially, that philosophers should be so nearly unanimous in an opinion on the subject, which, though directly opposed to the prevalent error in the ancient schools, is not the less itself an error.

The process, as I have already described it to you, is the following:—In the first

place, the perception of two or more objects; in the second place, the feeling or notion of their resemblance, immediately subsequent to the perception; and, lastly, the expression of this common relative feeling by a name, which is used afterwards, as a general denomination, for all those objects, the perception of which is followed by the same common feeling of resemblance. The general term, you will remark, as expressing uniformly some felt relation of objects, is, in this case, significant of a state of mind essentially distinct from those previous states of mind which constituted the perception of the separate objects, as truly distinct from these primary perceptions as any one state of mind can be said to differ from any other state of mind. We might have perceived a sheep, a horse, an ox, successively, in endless series, and yet never have invented the term quadruped, as inclusive of all these animals, if we had not felt that particular relation of similarity, which the term quadruped, as applied to various objects, denotes. The feeling of this resemblance, in certain respects, is the true general notion, or general idea, as it has been less properly called, which the corresponding general term expresses; and, but for this previous general notion of some circumstance of resemblance, the general term, expressive of this general notion, could as little have been invented, as the terms green, yellow, scarlet, could have been invented, in their present sense, by a nation of the blind.

In the view which is taken of this process of generalization, as of every other process, there may be error in two ways,—either by adding to the process what forms no part of it, or by omitting what does truly form a part of it. Thus, if we were to say, that, between the perception of a horse and sheep, and the feeling of their resemblance in a certain respect, there intervenes the presence of some external independent substance,—some universal form or species of a quadruped, distinct from our conceiving mind, which, acting on the mind, or being present with it, produces the notion of a quadruped, in the same way as the presence of the external horse or sheep produced the perception of these individually,—we should err, in the former of these ways, by introducing into the process, something of which we have no reason to suppose the existence, and which is not merely unnecessary, but would involve the process in innumerable perplexities and apparent inconsistencies, if it did exist. This redundance would be one species of error; but it would not less be an error, though an error of an opposite kind, were we to suppose that any part of the process does not take place,—that, for example, there is no relative suggestion, no rise in the mind of an intervening general notion of resemblance, before the invention and employment of the general term, but the mere perception of a multitude of objects, in the first place; and, then, as if in instant succession without any other intervening mental state whatever, the general names under which whole multitudes are classed.

I have instanced these errors of supposed excess and deficiency, in the statement of the process, without alluding to any sects which have maintained them. I may now, however, remark, that the two opposite errors, which I have merely supposed, are the very errors involved in the opinions of the Realists and Nominalists, the great combatants in that most disputatious of controversies, to which I have before alluded,—a controversy, which, in the strong language of John of Salisbury, even at that early period, of which alone he could speak, had already employed fruitlessly more time and thought than the whole race of the Cæsars had found necessary for acquiring and exercising the sovereignty of the world: "Quæstionem," he calls it, "in qua laborans mundus jam senuit, in qua plus temporis consumptum est, quam in acquirendo et regendo orbis imperio consumpserit Cæsarea domus; plus effusum pecuniæ, quam in omnibus divitiis suis possederit Crœsus. Hæc enim tamdiu multos tenuit, ut cum hoc unum totâ vitâ quærerent, tandem nec istud, nec aliud, invenirent."

However absurd, and almost inconceivable the belief of the substantial reality of genera and species, as separate and independent essences, may appear, on first consideration, we must not forget that it is to be viewed as a part of a great system, with which it readily harmonizes, and with which a juster view of the generalizing process would have been absolutely discordant.

While the doctrine of perception, by species, prevailed, it is not wonderful, as I have already said, that those who conceived ideas, in perception, to be things distinct from the mind,—the idea of a particular horse, for example, to be something different, both from the horse itself, and from the mind which perceived it,—should have conceived also, that, in forming the notion of the comparative nature of horses, in general, or quadrupeds, or animals, there must have been present, in like manner, some species distinct from the mind, which, of course, could not be particular, like the sensible species, but universal, so as to correspond with the universality of the notion, and the generic term. Such, accordingly, in its great outline, was the ancient doctrine as to universals. I need not attempt to detail to you, if indeed it be possible now to detail them with any approach to accuracy, the various refinements and modifications of this general doctrine, in its transmission from the Pythagorean school, to Plato and Aristotle, and, in the later ages,

to the schoolmen, his followers; all of whom, for many centuries, and by far the greater number, during the whole long reign of entities and quiddities, professed this belief of the existence of universal forms, as real, and independent of the conceptions, or other feelings of the mind itself.—the doctrine of universality, *a parte rei*, as it was termed.

The sect of the Nominalists, the great opponents of the Realists, in this too memorable controversy, though some hints of a similar opinion may be traced in some of the ancient philosophers, particularly of the Stoical school, owes its origin, as a sect, to Roscelinus a native of Britanny, who, in the eleventh century, had the boldness to attack the doctrine of the universal *a parte rei*. Roscelinus was himself eminently distinguished for his acuteness in the theology and dialectics of that age, in which theology itself was little more than a species of dialectics; and, most fortunately for the furtherance of his opinions, he had the honour of ranking among his disciples the celebrated Abelard; who, though probably known to you chiefly from the circumstances which attended his ill-fated passion for Eloise, was not less distinguished for his wonderful talents and acquirements of every sort. "To him alone," it was said, in the epitaph inscribed on his tomb, "to him alone, of all mankind, lay revealed, whatever can be known to man. Cui soli patuit scibile quicquid erat." These two eminent logicians, Roscelinus and Abelard, though differing in some slight respects in their own Nominalism, coincided in rejecting wholly the Realism, which, till then, had been the unquestioned doctrine of the schools. According to them, there was no universality *a parte rei*, nor any thing that could be called universal, but the mere general terms, under which particular objects were ranked. The denial of the reality of universals, however, which was an attack on the general faith, was of course regarded as a heresy, and was probably regarded the more as an unwarrantable innovation, on account of the heresies, in opinions more strictly theological, of which both Roscelinus and his illustrious pupil had been convicted. Though their talents, therefore, were able to excite a powerful division in the schools, their doctrine gradually sunk beneath the orthodoxy of their opponents; till, in the fourteenth century, the authority of the sect was revived by the genius of William Occam, an Englishman, one of the most acute polemics of his age, and the controversy, under his powerful championship, was agitated again, with double fervour. It was no longer, indeed, a mere war of words, or of censures and ecclesiastical penalties, but, in some measure also, a war of nations; the Emperor Lewis of Bavaria siding with Occam, and Lewis the Eleventh of France giving the weight of his power to the Realists. The violence on both sides was like that which usually rages only in the rancour of political faction, or the intolerance of religious persecution. Indeed, as might well be supposed, in a period in which an accusation of heresy was one of the most powerful and triumphant arguments of logic, which nothing could meet and repel but an argument of the same kind, religion was soon introduced into the controversy; and both sects, though agreeing in little more, concurred, with equal devotion, in charging their opponents with no less a sin than the sin against the Holy Ghost.

At the Reformation, the fury of the controversy was suspended by more important interests—interests which affected equally both those who separated from the Romish church and those who adhered to it; and perhaps too, in some degree, by the wider views which at that time were beginning to open in literature and general science. The question has since been a question of pure philosophy, in which there has been no attempt to interest sovereigns in wars of metaphysics, or to find new subjects for accusations of religious heresy. It has continued, however, to engage, in a very considerable degree, the attention of philosophers, whose general opinion has leant to that of the sect of the Nominalists. In our own country, particularly, I may refer to the very eminent names of Hobbes, Berkeley, Hume, Dr. Campbell, and Mr. Stewart, who are Nominalists, in the strictest sense of that term. Indeed the only names of authority which I can oppose to them, are those of Locke and Dr. Reid.

Locke and Reid, however, though holding opinions on this subject very different from those of the Nominalists, are not Realists—for, after the view which I have given you of the peculiar opinions of that sect, it is surely unnecessary for me to add, that there are no longer any defenders of the universal *a parte rei*. There is no one now—certainly no one worthy of the name of a philosopher—who believes that there is any external entity corresponding with the general notion man, and distinct from all the individual men perceived by us, and from our mind itself, which has perceived them. The only opinion which can now be considered as opposed to that of the rigid Nominalists, is the opinion which I have endeavoured to exhibit to you, in a form more simple than that in which it is usually exhibited, stripped, as much as it was possible for me to strip it, of all that obscurity with which a long controversy of words had clouded it; and precluding, therefore, I trust, those mistakes as to the nature of our general notions or feelings of resemblance, on which alone the

denial of the notions as states of mind seems to have been founded. The view which I have given however, though, I flatter myself, more clear in its analysis and reference to a particular class of feelings, is, in the main, inasmuch as it contends for a general feeling, of which every general term is significant, the same with the doctrine of Locke and Reid; and may, indeed, be traced far back in the controversy of universals; a considerable number of philosophers, who agreed with the stricter Nominalists in rejecting the notion of universal essences, having adopted this middle doctrine, or at least a doctrine nearly approaching to it; and been distinguished accordingly, from the other parties, by the name of *Conceptualists*—"*conceptuales.*" Their joint opposition to the absurdities of Realism, however, occasioned them to be confounded with the Nominalists, from whom they differed certainly as much as from the Realists themselves; and I cannot but think, that it is merely in consequence of being thus confounded with Conceptualism, and presenting, therefore, some vague notions of more than mere general terms and particular perceptions, that the doctrine of the Nominalists has been able to obtain the assent and sanction of its illustrious modern defenders, whom I am thus almost inclined to consider as unconsciously, in thought, Conceptualists, even while they are Nominalists in argument and language. Or rather, for the word conception, I confess, does not seem to me a very proper one for expressing that feeling of general resemblance which I consider as a mere feeling of relation—I almost think that some obscure glimpse of that more precise doctrine which I have now delivered to you, must have had a sort of truly unconscious influence on the belief of the Nominalists themselves, in that imperfect view which they present to others of the process of generalization.

Of that rigid Nominalism which involves truly no mixture of Conceptualism, or of the belief of those feelings of relation for which I have contended, but denies altogether the existence of that peculiar class of feelings, or states of mind which have been denominated general notions, or general ideas, asserting the existence only of individual objects perceived, and of general terms that comprehend these, without any peculiar mental state denoted by the general term, distinct from those separate sensations or perceptions which the particular objects, comprehended under the term, might individually excite,—it seems to me that the very statement of the opinion itself is almost a sufficient confutation, since the very invention of the general term, and the extension of it to certain objects only, not to all objects, implies some reason for this limitation,—some feeling of general agreement of the objects included in the class, to distinguish them from the objects not included in it, which is itself that very general notion professedly denied. As long as some general notion of circumstances of resemblance is admitted, I see very clearly how a general term may be most accurately limited; but if this general notion be denied, I confess that I cannot discover any principle of limitation whatever. Why have certain objects been classed together, and not certain other objects, when all have been alike perceived by us; and all, therefore, if there be nothing more than mere perception in the process, are capable of receiving any denomination which we may please to bestow on them? Is it arbitrarily, and without any reason whatever, that we do not class a rose-bush with birds, or an elephant with fish? and if there be any reason for these exclusions, why will not the Nominalist tell us what that reason is—in what feeling it is found—and how it can be made accordant with his system? Must it not be that the rose-bush and a sparrow, though equally perceived by us, do not excite that general notion of resemblance which the term bird is invented to express—do not seem to us to have those relations of a common nature, in certain respects, which lead us to class the sparrow and the ostrich, however different in other respects, as birds; or the petty natives of our brooks and rivulets with the mighty monsters of the deep, under one general and equal denomination? If this be the reason, there is more, in every case, than perception, and the giving of a general name; for there is a peculiar state of mind—a general relative feeling—intervening between the perception and the invention of the term, which is the only reason that can be assigned for that very invention. Can the Nominalist then assert, that there is no feeling of the resemblance of objects, in certain respects, which thus intervenes between the perception of them as separate objects, which is one stage of the process, and the comprehension of them under a single name, which is another stage of the process,—or must he not rather confess, that it is merely in consequence of this intervening feeling we give to the number of objects their general name, to the exclusion of the multitudes of objects to which we do not apply it, as it is in consequence of certain other feelings, excited by them individually, we give to each separate object its proper name, to the exclusion of every other object? To repeat the process, as already described to you, we perceive two or more objects,—we are struck with their resemblance in certain respects;—We invent a general name to denote this feeling of resemblance,—and we class, under this general name, every particular object, the perception of which is followed by the same feeling of resemblance, and no objects

but these alone. If this be a faithful statement of the process,—and for its fidelity I may safely appeal to your consciousness,—the doctrine of the Nominalists is not less false than that of the Realists. It is false, because it excludes that general feeling of resemblance,—the relative suggestion,—which is all that the general name itself truly designates, and without which, therefore, it never would have been invented; while the doctrine of the Realists is false, by inserting in the process those supposed separate entities which form no part of it. The one errs, as I have already said, by excess, the other by deficiency.

Even in professing to exclude the general notion of resemblance, however, the Nominalist unconsciously proceeds on it; and no stronger proof can be imagined of the imperfectness of the view which his system gives of our generalizations, than the constant necessity under which we perceive him to labour, of assuming, at every stage of his argument, the existence of those very notions, or feelings of relative suggestion, against which his argument is directed. The general term, we are told, is significant of all objects of a certain kind, or a particular idea is made to represent various other ideas of the same sort; as if the very doctrine did not necessarily exclude all notion of a kind or sort, independent of the application of the term itself. "An idea," says Berkeley, "which, considered in itself, is particular, becomes general, by being made to represent or stand for all other particular ideas of the same sort;" and he instances this in the case of a line of any particular length,—an inch, for example,—which, to a geometer, he says, becomes general, as "it represents all particular lines whatsoever; so that what is demonstrated of it, is demonstrated of all lines, or, in other words, of a line in general." It is truly inconceivable that he should not have discovered, in this very statement, that he had taken for granted the existence of general notions, the very states of mind which he denied; since, without these, there can be no meaning in the restriction of any sign, to "ideas of the same sort." If we have previously a notion of what he himself, rather inconsistently, calls a line in general, we can easily understand how the word line may be limited to ideas of one sort; but if we have no such previous general notion, we cannot have any knowledge of the sort to which we are, notwithstanding, said to limit our term. An inch, which is certainly not the same figure as a foot or a yard, is, on the principles of Nominalism, which exclude all knowledge of the nature of lines in general, essentially different from these; and might as well, but for that general notion of the resemblance of lines which all have, independently of the term, and previously to the term, but which Nominalism does not allow to exist, be significant of a square, or a circle, as of any other simple length. To say that it represents all particular lines whatsoever, is either to say nothing, or it is to say that certain general notions of resemblance exist truly, as a part of our consciousness, and that we are hence able to attach a meaning to the phrase, "all particular lines whatsoever;" which we could not if a foot, a yard, or a mile, did not appear to us to resemble each other in some respect. It is in vain that Berkeley, who is aware of the objection which may be brought from the universal truths of geometry, against a system which denies every thing but particular ideas, and the signs of particular ideas, endeavours to reconcile this denial of the conception of universality, with that very universality which it denies. It is quite evident, that, if we have no general notions of squares and triangles, our demonstration of the properties of these figures never can go beyond those particular squares or triangles conceived by us in our demonstration. Thus, says Berkeley, who states the objection, and endeavours to answer it, —"having demonstrated that the three angles of an isosceles rectangular triangle are equal to two right ones, I cannot therefore conclude this affection agrees to all other triangles, which have neither a right angle, nor two equal sides. It seems, therefore, that, to be certain this proposition is universally true, we must either make a particular demonstration for every particular triangle, which is impossible, or, once for all, demonstrate it of the abstract idea of a triangle, in which all the particulars do indifferently partake, and by which they are all equally represented. To which I answer, that though the idea I have in view, whilst I make the demonstration, be, for instance, that of an isosceles rectangular triangle, whose sides are of a determinate length, I may, nevertheless, be certain it extends to all other rectilinear triangles, of what sort or bigness soever; and that because neither the right angle, nor the equality, nor determinate length of the sides, are at all concerned in the demonstration. It is true, the diagram I have in view includes all these particulars; but then there is not the least mention made of them in the proof of the proposition. It is not said the three angles are equal to two right ones, because one of them is a right angle, or because the sides comprehending it are of the same length; which sufficiently shows that the right angle might have been oblique, and the sides unequal, and, for all that, the demonstration have held good; and for this reason it is that I conclude that to be true, of any oblique angular or scalenon, which I had demonstrated, of a particular right-angled equicrural triangle, and not because I demonstrated the pro-

position of the abstract idea of a triangle."*

"This answer," I have said in my observations on Dr. Darwin's Zoonomia, "This answer evidently takes for granted the truth of the opinion which it was intended to confute, by supposing us, during the demonstration, to have a general idea of triangles, without particular reference to the diagram before us. It will be admitted, that the right angle, and the equality of two of the sides, and the determinate length of the whole, are not expressed in the words of the demonstration; but words are of consequence only as they suggest ideas, and the ideas, suggested by the demonstration, are the same as if these particular relations of the triangle had been mentioned at every step. It is not said that the three angles are equal to two right angles, because one of them is a right angle, or because the sides which comprehend that angle are of the same length; but it is proved that the three angles of the triangle, which has one of its angles a right angle, and the sides, which comprehend that angle, of equal length, are together equal to two right angles. This particular demonstration is applicable only to triangles, of one particular form. I cannot infer from it the existence of the same property, in figures essentially different: for, unless we admit the existence of general ideas, an equilateral triangle differs as much from a scalene rectangular triangle, as from a square. In both cases, there is no medium of comparison. To say that the two triangles agree, in having three sides, and three angles, is to say, that there are general ideas of sides and angles; for, if they be particularized, and if, by the words *sides* and *angles*, be meant equal sides, and equal angles, it is evident that the two triangles do not agree in the slightest circumstance. Admitting, therefore, that I can enunciate a general proposition, the conception of which is impossible, I can be certain that the three angles of every triangle are together equal to two right angles, only when it has been demonstrated of triangles of every variety of figure; and, before this can be done, I must have it in my power to limit space, and chain down imagination."†

In Dr. Campbell's illustrations of the power of signs, in his very ingenious work on the Philosophy of Rhetoric, he adopts and defends this doctrine, of the general representative power of particular ideas,—making, of course, the same inconsistent assumption which Berkeley makes, and which every Nominalist must make, of those general notions of orders, sorts, or kinds, which his argument would lead us to deny. "When a geometrician," says he, "makes a diagram with chalk upon a board, and from it demonstrates some property of a straight-lined figure, no spectator ever imagines that he is demonstrating a property of nothing else but that individual white figure of five inches long, which is before him. Every one is satisfied that he is demonstrating a property of all that order, whether more or less extensive, of which it is both an example and a sign; all the order being understood to agree with it in certain characters, however different in other respects."‡ There can be no question that every one is, as Dr. Campbell says, satisfied, that the demonstration extends to a whole order of figures; and the reason of this is, that the mind is capable of forming a general notion of an order of figures; for it really is not easy to be understood, how the mind should extend any demonstration to a whole order of figures, and to that order only, of which order itself it is said to be incapable of any notion. "The mind," continues Dr. Campbell, "with the utmost facility, extends or contracts the representative power of the sign as the particular occasion requires. Thus, the same equilateral triangle will, with equal propriety, serve for the demonstration, not only of a property of all equilateral triangles, but of a property of all isosceles triangles, or even of a property of all triangles whatever."§ The same diagram does, indeed, serve this purpose, but not from any extension or contraction of the representative power of the sign according to occasion. It is because we had a general notion of the nature of triangles,—or of the common circumstances in which the figures, to which alone we give the name of *triangles*, agree,—before we looked at the diagram, and had this general notion, common to the whole order, in view, during the whole demonstration. "Nay, so perfectly is this matter understood," Dr. Campbell adds, "that, if the demonstrator, in any part, should recur to some property, as to the length of a side, belonging to the particular figure he hath constructed, but not essential to the kind mentioned in the proposition, and which the particular figure is solely intended to represent, every intelligent observer would instantly detect the fallacy. So entirely, for all the purposes of science, doth a particular serve for a whole species or genus."‖ But, on Dr. Campbell's principles, what is the species or genus, and how does it differ from other species or genera? Instead of the explanation, therefore, which he gives, I would rather say, so certain is it, that, during the whole demonstration, or, at

* Berkeley's Works, Lond. 1784, v. i. p. 13.
† Brown's Observations on Darwin's Zoonomia, p. 142—144.
‡ Philosophy of Rhetoric, B. II. c. 7.
§ Ibid.
‖ Philosophy of Rhetoric, B. II. c. 7.

least, as often as any mention of the figures occurs, the general notion of the species or genus of figures, that is to say, of the circumstance of resemblance of these figures, has been present to the mind; since, if it had no such general notion, it could not instantly detect the slightest circumstance which the species or genus does not include. The particular idea is said to be representative of other ideas "that agree with it in certain characters." But what are these characters? If we do not understand what they are, we cannot, by our knowledge of them, make one idea representative of others; and, if we do know what the general characters are, we have already that general notion which renders the supposed representation unnecessary.

In this case, as in many other cases, I have no doubt, notwithstanding the apparent extravagance of the paradox, that it is because the doctrine of the Nominalists is very contrary to our feelings, we do not immediately discover it to be so. If it were nearer the truth, we should probably discover the error which it involves much more readily. The error escapes us, because our general terms convey so immediately to our mind that common relation which they denote, that we supply, of ourselves, what is wanting in the process as described by the Nominalist—the feeling of the circumstances of resemblance, specific or generic, that are to guide us in the application, as they led us to the invention of our terms. We know what it is which he means, when he speaks of particular terms, or particular ideas, that become more generally significant, by standing for ideas of the same sort, or the same order, or species, or genus, or kind; and we therefore make, for him, by the natural spontaneous suggestions of our own minds, the extension and limitation, which would be impossible on his own system. But for such an illusion, it seems to me scarcely possible to understand, how so many of the first names, of which our science can boast, should be found among the defenders of an opinion which makes reasoning nothing more than a mere play upon words, or, at best, reduces very nearly to the same level the profoundest ratiocinations of intellectual, or physical, or mathematical philosophy, and the technical labours of the grammarian, or the lexicographer.

The system of the Nominalists, then, I must contend, though more simple than the system of the Realists, is not, any more than that system, a faithful statement of the process of generalization. It is true, as it rejects the existence of any universal form or species, distinct from our mere feeling of general resemblance. But it is false, as it rejects the general relative feeling itself, which every general term denotes, and without which, to direct us in the extension and limitation of our terms, we should be in danger of giving the name of *triangle*, as much to a square or a circle, as to any three-sided figure. We perceive objects,—we have a feeling or general notion of their resemblance,—we express this general notion by a general term. Such is the process of which we are conscious; and no system which omits any part of the process can be a faithful picture of our consciousness.

LECTURE XLVII.

TRUE THEORY OF GENERALIZATION REPEATED.—INCONGRUITY IN THE LANGUAGE OF THE CONCEPTUALISTS.—SMITH'S THEORY OF THE INVENTION OF GENERAL TERMS IN RUDE PERIODS OF SOCIETY.—ABSURDITY OF NOMINALISM.—USE OF GENERAL TERMS NOT TO ENABLE MAN TO REASON, BUT TO REASON WELL.

My last Lecture, Gentlemen, was employed on a subject which has engaged, in an eminent degree, the attention of philosophers, both from the difficulty which was supposed to attend it, and from the extensive applications which were to be made of it, as the ground-work of every proposition, and, consequently, of all our knowledge. It was necessary, therefore, to give you a sketch of the great controversy as to Universals, that so long divided the schools,—of which one party, that of the Realists,—formerly so powerful when the general theory of the primary mental functions of perception accorded with the Realism,—may now, when our theory of perception is too simple to accord with it, be considered as altogether extinct. It was scarcely possible that universal forms or species should continue to hold a place in the philosophy of mind, or in our systems of dialectics, when even sensible species had been universally abandoned.

In stating the opinion on the subject of this controversy, which I consider as the only one worthy of your assent, and indeed so obviously just that it seems to me as if it could scarcely have failed to occur to every mind, but for the darkness of insignificant terms and phrases, with which the controversy itself had enveloped it,—I endeavoured to free it, as much as possible, from this mere verbal darkness, and to exhibit the process to you in that simple order of succession in which it appears to me to take place.

The process I stated to be the following:

We perceive two or more objects—this is one state of the mind. We are struck with the feeling of their resemblance in certain respects. This is a second state of the mind. We then, in the third stage, give a name to these circumstances of felt resem-

semblance, a name which is, of course, applied afterwards only where this relation of similarity is felt. It is unquestionably not the name which produces the feeling of resemblance, but the feeling of resemblance which leads to the invention or application of the name; for it would be equally just and philosophic to say that it is the name of the individual, John or William, which gives existence to the individual John or William, and that he was nobody, or nothing, till the name, which made him something, was given, as to say, that the name man, which includes both John and William, is that which constitutes our relative notion of the resemblance of John and William, expressed by their common appellation; and that, but for the name, we could not have conceived them to have any common or similar properties,—that is to say, could not have had any general relative notion, or general idea, as it has been wrongly called, of human nature, of the respects in which John, William, and all other individual men agree. So far is the general term from being essential to the rise of that state of mind which constitutes the feeling of resemblance, or, in other words, to the general notion, whatever it may be, which the term expresses, that it is only for a very small number of such general relative feelings that we have invented general terms. There are scarcely any two objects at which we can look without perceiving a resemblance of some sort; but we never think of giving a name to each pair of relatives, on account of some slight circumstance in which they may have been felt by us to agree, more than we think of giving a name to every separate individual object which we perceive —to every blade of grass in our fields—to every rose on a bush, or even to every rose-bush in our garden. It is necessary, for the convenience of social life, that we should have general terms to express the most important general resemblances,—a general word, *man*, for example, to express briefly those very general circumstances of resemblance which we discover in all the individuals to whom that name is given, and thus to save us from the repetition of innumerable proper names, when we speak of circumstances common to the whole multitude;—it is not necessary that we should have a general term to express, in like manner, every less extensive resemblance which we may discover in any two or more individual men; and, accordingly, for such minute resemblances we do not invent any general term, yet the feelings of resemblance, or notions of general circumstances of agreement, though they may be more or less important, so as to prompt in some cases, and not in other cases, to the use of a common appellation, are still in kind, as mere feelings of relation, the same, whether the general term for expressing them be invented or not; and feelings which arise as much when no name is given as when a name is given, cannot surely be dependent on names that do not exist in the greater number of cases at all, and that, when they are formed, exist only after these very feelings which they are invented to express.

If our mind be capable of feeling resemblance it must be capable of general notions, which are nothing more than varieties of this very feeling; for we surely cannot perceive objects to resemble each other, without perceiving them to resemble each other in certain respects rather than in others; and this very notion of the respects in which they are similar, is all that is meant by the general relative feeling.

The circumstances in which all individual men agree form my general notion of man, or human nature. When I use the term man, I employ it to express every being in whom these circumstances are to be found,—that is to say, every being who excites, when considered together with the other beings whom I have before learned to rank as man, the same relative feeling of resemblance. When I hear the term man, these general circumstances of agreement occur to me vaguely, perhaps, and indistinctly, but probably as distinctly as the conception of the individual John or William, which recurs when I hear one of those names.

Indeed, there can be no doubt that the exact meaning of our general terms is much more distinctly conceived by us than that of our particular terms,—that we have a far clearer notion of a line, for example, than of an inch or three-fourths of an inch,—of rectilinear angles in general, as formed by the meeting of any two straight lines in any direction, than of an angle of sixty-five degrees, for which one particular inclination of the meeting lines is absolutely necessary, and an inclination, which only the nicest measurement can discriminate, from that which forms an angle of sixty-four or of sixty-six. The general term, it is evident, in proportion as it is more and more general, involves the consideration of fewer particulars, and is, therefore, less confused; while the particular term must involve all the particulars included in the general one, with many more that distinguish the species or the individual, and that are difficult themselves to be distinguished, in consequence of the faintness of the limits in which they shadow into each other. To this it is owing that the sciences, which are most strictly demonstrative; that is to say, the sciences in which our notions are the clearest, are not those which relate to particular objects, and which, consequently, involve particular conceptions and particular terms, but the sciences of number and quantity, in which every term is a general one,

and every notion, therefore, which it expresses, general.

With each advance in generalizing, the general notion, or the feeling of resemblance in certain circumstances, becomes different, because the circumstances in which it is necessary that the general resemblance should be felt, are fewer, and common, therefore, to a greater number of objects; the general term being, in every stage, applicable to the whole number of objects, as exciting, when considered together, that relative feeling of similarity, the suggesting of which is all that constitutes the variety, species, genus, order, or class.

The words *John*, *man*, *animal*, *substance*, in the progressive scale of generalization, are words which I understand, and none of which I feel to be exactly synonymous with the others, but to express either less or more, so as to admit progressively of wider applications than could be allowed at a lower point of the scale. Since they are felt, then, not to be exactly synonymous, each term, if it be understood at all, must excite in the mind a different feeling of some sort or other, and this different state of mind is nothing more than a notion of agreement in certain circumstances, more or fewer, according to the extent of the generalization.

If, then, the generalizing process be, first, the perception or conception of two or more objects,—2dly, The relative feeling of their resemblance in certain respects,—3dly, The designation of these circumstances of resemblance, by an appropriate name,—the doctrine of the Nominalists, which includes only two of these stages,—the perception of particular objects, and the invention of general terms, must be false, as excluding that relative suggestion of resemblance in certain respects, which is the second and most important step of the process; since it is this intermediate feeling alone that leads to the use of the term, which otherwise it would be impossible to limit to any set of objects. Accordingly, we found that, in their impossibility of accounting, on their own principles, for this limitation,—which it is yet absolutely necessary to explain in some manner or other,—the Nominalists, to explain it, uniformly take for granted the existence of those very general notions, which they at the same time profess to deny,—that, while they affirm, that we have no notion of a kind, species, or sort, independently of the general terms which denote them, they speak of our application of such terms only to objects of the same kind, species, or sort; as if we truly had some notions of these general circumstances of agreement, to direct us,—and that they are thus very far from being Nominalists in the spirit of their argument, at the very moment, when they are Nominalists in assertion,—strenuous opposers of those very general feelings, of the truth of which they avail themselves, in their very endeavour to disprove them.

If, indeed, it were the name which formed the class, and not that previous relative feeling, or general notion of resemblance of some sort, which the name denotes, then might any thing be classed with any thing, and classed with equal propriety. All which would be necessary, would be merely to apply the same name uniformly to the same objects; and, if we were careful to do this, John and a triangle might as well be classed together, under the name man as John and William. Why does the one of those arrangements appear to us more philosophic than the other? It is because something more is felt by us to be necessary in classification, than the mere giving of a name at random. There is, in the relative suggestion that arises on our very perception or conception of objects, when we consider them together, a reason for giving the generic name to one set of objects rather than to another,—the name of man, for instance, to John and William, rather than to John and a triangle. This reason is the feeling of the resemblance of the objects which we class,—that general notion of the relation of similarity in certain respects, which is signified by the general term,—and without which relative suggestion, as a previous state of the mind, the general term would as little have been invented, as the names of John and William would have been invented, if there had been no perception of any individual being whatever to be denoted by them.

That we have general relative feelings of the resemblances of objects, and that our general terms are significant of these, and limited, therefore, to the particular objects which excite some common feeling of resemblance, is then, I conceive, sufficiently evident; and yet, the existence of such general notions is not merely rejected by the greater number of philosophers, but the assertion of it has been considered as a subject rather of ridicule than of any serious confutation, as if confutation itself would have been too great an honour.

I must confess, however, that some incautious expressions of the Conceptualists, and their erroneous analysis and classification of the general feeling, did justify in part this ridicule, as they involved an appearance of inconsistency and contradiction, which a more accurate analysis of the general feeling asserted, and a very slight change of phraseology and arrangement would have removed. These improprieties, it may be of importance to point out to you, as furnishing, perhaps, some explanation of the error of New Nominalism.

The use of the word idea for expressing

the notion or feeling of resemblance, was, in the first place, unfortunate. Idea, from its etymological sense, and its common application to the conceptions of external objects, seems almost, in itself, to imply something which can be individualized, and offered to the senses. The general idea, therefore, which we are said to form, from the consideration of the various ways in which two lines can meet one another, seems to us, as an idea, to be something which we must be capable of representing in a diagram, like any of the particular angles considered by us; and what we can thus image in a diagram, must evidently be particular; so that, if we ascribe to it properties of more than one particular angle, our reference must, on this very account, seem to involve an inconsistency or multitude of inconsistencies. The general idea of an angle, therefore, which is not a right angle, nor acute nor obstuse, but at once all of these, and none of them, is to our conception, in every respect, as truly absurd as a whole which is less than a part of itself, or a square of which the angles are together equal to four right angles, and at the same time equal to five such angles, and only to three or two.

Such are the inconsistencies that must always seem to flow from the use of the word idea in this case, as if presenting to us a particular image of what cannot be particular.

The same remark may, in a great measure, be applied to the use of the word conception, which also seems to individualize its object; and which, as commonly employed to signify some fainter revival of a past feeling, may lead, and has led, to very mistaken views of the nature of our general notions. In these, according to the process described by me, there is nothing which can be said to be in any respect a conception, or fainter transcript of the past; and, therefore, if I were to invent a name for the opinion with respect to universals which I hold, it would not be as a Conceptualist, but as a Notionist, or Relationist, that I should wish to be classed. The feeling of the relation of similarity is no part of the perception or conception of the separate objects which suggest it. It is a feeling of a different species, absolutely new —a relation, and nothing more; and the general term, which is not expressive of what can strictly be termed a conception, is invented only to express all that multitude of objects, which, however different in other respects, agree in exciting one common feeling of relation—the relation of a certain similarity.

The phrase, *general notion*, which is that which I have preferred, would in this case have been far more appropriate, and would have obviated that tendency to individual representation, which the word *conception*, and still more, the word *idea*, produce; and consequently, all those apparent inconsistencies, which do not attend the notion of the mere feeling of agreement of various objects, but arise only from the attempt to form an individual representation of what is in itself general, and therefore, by its very nature, incapable of being individually represented.

Still more unfortunate, however, than the classing of our general notions with conceptions or ideas, was a verbal impropriety that may at first seem to you of little consequence,—the mere use of the indefinite article, in a case in which certainly it ought not to have been employed. It was not the mere general notion of the nature and properties of triangles, but the general idea of a triangle, of which writers on this branch of intellectual philosophy have been accustomed to speak. The influence of this improper use of the article has not before been remarked; yet I have no doubt that it is the very circumstance which has chiefly tended to produce a denial of the general notion itself. It is a striking lesson, how much the progress of philosophy may be retarded, even by the slightest inaccuracy of language, which leads those who consider the doctrine without due attention and analysis, to ascribe to it the inconsistencies which are not in the doctrine itself, and thus to reject, as absurd, what, in another form of expression, would perhaps have appeared to them almost self-evident.

According to the view which I have given you of the generalizing process, all that is truly general is, a relation that is felt by us. We have a feeling, or general notion, of the circumstances of agreement of many individual objects, but not a notion of an object, uniting at once all the qualities of the individual objects, and yet excluding every quality which distinguishes each from each. This would truly be a species of Realism still more absurd than the old scholastic universal *à parte rei*. The general idea of a man, who is neither dark nor fair, tall nor short, fat nor thin, nor of any degree intermediate between these extremes, and yet is, at the same time, dark and fair, tall and short, fat and thin, is that of which we may very safely deny the existence: for a man must be particular, and must therefore have particular qualities, and certainly cannot have qualities that are inconsistent. But a dark and a fair man, a tall and a short man, a fat and a thin man, all agree in certain respects, or, in other words, excite in us a certain relative feeling or notion of general resemblance; since, without a feeling of this kind, we never should have thought of classing them together under one general term. We have not a general idea of a man, but we are impressed with a certain common relation of similarity of all the individuals, whom, on

that account, and on that account alone, we rank together under the common appellation of men.

A general idea of a man is, then, it will be allowed, an unfortunate, or, to speak more accurately, an absurd expression. But the absurdity of such an expression does not render it less absurd to deny, that we have any general notion or relative feeling whatever of the circumstances in which men agree—that general notion which preceded the invention of the general term *man*, and without which the general term would be absolutely incapable of being limited or applied to one set of objects more than to another. Yet all the valuable remarks of Mr. Locke, on this subject, have been neglected or forgotten; while one passage has been well remembered, and often quoted, because nothing is so well remembered as the ridiculous. The passage, indeed, it must be confessed, is abundantly ridiculous; but what is ridiculous in it arises, very evidently, from the source which I have pointed out, and not from the doctrine, that there is a general feeling, of some sort, corresponding with every general term that is not absolutely insignificant.

"Does it not require some pains and skill," says Mr. Locke, in this often-quoted passage —"Does it not require some pains and skill to form the general idea of a triangle, (which is yet none of the most abstract, comprehensive, and difficult;) for it must be neither oblique, nor rectangle, neither equilateral, equicrural, nor scalenon; but all and none of these at once. In effect, it is something imperfect that cannot exist; an idea, wherein some parts of several different and inconsistent ideas are put together."*

Of this strange description, so unworthy of its great author, and I may add, so unworthy also of the doctrine which he supported, the authors of the Memoirs of Scriblerus have not failed to avail themselves, converting Mr. Locke's universal triangle into an universal lord mayor.

"Martin supposed an universal man to be like a knight of a shire, or a burgess of a corporation, that represented a great many individuals. His father asked him, if he could not frame the idea of an universal lord mayor? Martin told him, that, never having seen but one lord mayor, the idea of that lord mayor always returned to his mind; that he had great difficulty to abstract a lord mayor from his fur-gown and gold chain; nay, that the horse he saw the lord mayor ride upon not a little disturbed his imagination. On the other hand, Crambe, to show himself of a more penetrating genius, swore that he could frame a conception of a lord mayor, not only without his horse, gown, and gold chain, but even without stature, feature, colour, hands, head, feet, or any body, which he supposed was the abstract of a lord mayor."†

This abstract of a lord mayor, though it may be more ludicrous, is not more absurd, than Locke's abstract of a triangle; for a triangle must be particular, and must, therefore, be equilateral, equicrural, or scalene. It would have been very different, if he had stated merely, that all triangles, whether equilateral, equicrural, or scalene, are felt by us to agree in certain respects,—that they are not felt by us to have this general resemblance, because we have previously classed them together; but that we have classed them together, because we have previously felt this general resemblance,—that the general notion, therefore, cannot have depended for its origin on the name which follows it,—and that it is this general notion or feeling of resemblance, of which the general term is truly significant, the term being considered by us as fairly applicable to every object which excites the same relative feeling. This, it is evident, from his whole reasoning, was fundamentally, or nearly the opinion of Locke himself, who was led into the error of his very strange description, merely by conceiving, that a general notion of the common circumstances and properties of triangles was a conception, or a general idea of a triangle.

But, whether this was or was not the opinion of Mr. Locke, the process which I have described is not the less just. We perceive two or more objects—we have a feeling or general notion, of their resemblance in certain respects—and, in consequence of this general notion, we invent the general term, and limit it to such objects as correspond with the notion previously existing,—that is to say, we limit it to objects which agree in exciting this relative suggestion. It is hence the very nature of our general notion not to be particular; for who can paint or particularize a mere relation? It is the feeling of resemblance which constitutes it—not the objects themselves which are felt to be similar; and to require, therefore, that our mental notion of the common properties of triangles, scalene, equilateral, and isosceles, should itself be a triangle, equilateral, isosceles, or scalene, is not more philosophic, or, I may say, not even less absurd, than it would be to require of us a visual delineation of a sound or a smell, and to deny that we have any sensations of melody and odour because we cannot represent these in pictures to the eye.

I have already remarked, that it is only for a small number of the resemblances which

* Essay Concerning Human Understanding, B. IV. c. 7. sect. 9.

† Pope's Works.—Memoirs of Martinus Scriblerus, chap. vii.

we perceive in objects, that we have invented general terms. The general term, therefore, far from being essential to the generalization, is only a record of a generalization previously made. It marks what we have felt, and enables us to refer, with exactness, to this past feeling.

When I speak of our invention of a general term, however, I speak of what we do, in the present mature state of our language, not of what was likely to take place in the early generalizations of savage life; for there seems to me very little reason to doubt the justness of that theory of appellatives, which is hinted, indeed, in some earlier writers, but has been particularly maintained by Condillac and Dr. Smith,—a theory which supposes the words, now used as appellatives to have been originally the proper names of individual objects, extended to the objects that were perceived to be similar to those to which the name had primarily been given. The theory is stated with great force by Dr. Smith, in the ingenious dissertation appended to his *Theory of Moral Sentiments*. It would be injustice to his opinion, to attempt to express it in any words but his own.

"The assignation of particular names, to denote particular objects, that is, the institution of nouns substantive, would probably be one of the first steps towards the formation of language. Two savages, who had never been taught to speak, but had been bred up remote from the societies of men, would naturally begin to form that language by which they would endeavour to make their mutual wants intelligible to each other, by uttering certain sounds, whenever they meant to denote certain objects. Those objects only which were most familiar to them, and which they had most frequent occasion to mention, would have particular names assigned to them. The particular cave whose covering sheltered them from the weather, the particular tree whose fruit relieved their hunger, the particular fountain whose water allayed their thirst, would first be denominated by the words cave, tree, fountain, or by whatever other appellations they might think proper, in that primitive jargon, to mark them. Afterwards, when the more enlarged experience of these savages had led them to observe, and their necessary occasions obliged them to make mention of other caves, and other trees, and other fountains, they would naturally bestow upon each of those new objects the same name by which they had been accustomed to express the similar object they were first acquainted with. The new objects had none of them any name of its own, but each of them exactly resembled another object which had such an appellation. It was impossible that those savages could behold the new objects without recollecting the old ones; and the name of the old ones, to which the new bore so close a resemblance. When they had occasion, therefore, to mention, or to point out to each other, any of the new objects, they would naturally utter the name of the correspondent old one, of which the idea could not fail, at that instant, to present itself to their memory in the strongest and liveliest manner. And thus, those words, which were originally the proper names of individuals, would each of them insensibly become the common name of a multitude. A child that is just learning to speak, calls every person who comes to the house its papa, or its mamma; and thus bestows upon the whole species those names which it had been taught to apply to two individuals. I have known a clown who did not know the proper name of the river which ran by his own door. It was the river, he said, and he never heard any other name for it. His experience, it seems, had not led him to observe any other river. The general word river, therefore, was, it is evident, in his acceptance of it, a proper name, signifying an individual object. If this person had been carried to another river, would he not readily have called it a river? Could we suppose any person living on the banks of the Thames so ignorant, as not to know the general word river, but to be acquainted only with the particular word Thames, if he was brought to any other river, would he not readily call it a Thames? This, in reality, is no more than what they, who are well acquainted with the general word, are very apt to do. An Englishman, describing any great river which he may have seen in some foreign country, naturally says, that it is another Thames. The Spaniards, when they first arrived upon the coast of Mexico, and observed the wealth, populousness, and habitations of that fine country, so much superior to the savage nations which they had been visiting for some time before, cried out, that it was another Spain. Hence it was called New Spain, and this name has stuck to that unfortunate country ever since. We say, in the same manner, of a hero, that he is an Alexander; of an orator, that he is a Cicero; of a philosopher, that he is a Newton. This way of speaking, which the grammarians called an Antonomasia, and which is still extremely common, though now not at all necessary, demonstrates how much mankind are naturally disposed to give to one object the name of any other which nearly resembles it, and thus to denominate a multitude by what originally was intended to express an individual.

"It is this application of the name of an individual to a great multitude of objects, whose resemblance naturally recals the idea of that individual, and of the name which expresses it, that seems originally to have giv-

en occasion to the formation of those classes and assortments, which, in the schools, are called genera and species."*

That the first designation of species and genera, by appellatives, was nothing more than this ingenious speculation supposes it to have been,—the extension of mere proper names from similar objects to similar objects, I have very little doubt. But still, it must be remembered, that the extension was from similar objects to objects felt to be similar,—that, before the extension, therefore, there must have been a general notion of the circumstances of resemblance,—and that, without this intermediate feeling of his mind, the savage would as little have thought of calling one tree by the name which he had previously given to another tree, as he would have thought of extending this name to the cave which sheltered him, or the fountain at which he quenched his thirst. In short, whatever our theory of the origin of general terms may be, it either must take for granted the previous existence of general relative notions, corresponding with them, or it must suppose that the terms were invented at random, without any reason whatever, to guide us in our application or limitation of them. To state any reason of this kind, is to state some general resemblance that is felt by us, and consequently some notion of general circumstances of resemblance, which must be independent of the general term, because it is prior to it. This, which the Nominalist on reflection, I should conceive, must admit, is all for which the Conceptualist contends, or, at least, is all for which I contend, in that view of the generalizing process which I have given you.

The decision of the controversy might, indeed, as I have now said, be very safely trusted to the Nominalist himself, if he would only put a single question to his own mind, and reflect for a few moments before giving an answer. Why do I class together certain objects, and exclude certain others from the class which I have formed? He must say, either that he classes them together because he has classed them together, and that he excludes the others because he excludes them, which is surely not a very philosophic answer, though it is all which can be understood in the assertion, that it is the name which constitutes as well as defines the genus; or he must say, that there is some reason which has led him to give the general name to certain objects and not to certain others. The reason for which the name is given, must, of course, be something which is felt prior to the giving of the name, and independent of it; and the only reason which can be conceived is, that certain objects have a resemblance which certain other objects do not partake, and that the general name is therefore invented to express the objects which agree in exciting this common notion of relation. Before the name was invented, therefore, there must have been a feeling of circumstances of resemblance, common to certain individuals,—a feeling, which is neither the perception that precedes it, nor the name which follows it, but a state of mind intervening between the perception of the separate objects, and the verbal designation of them, as a species or genus. In short, it is that general relative suggestion, or general notion of resemblance, on which we must admit our classifications to be founded, or contend that they are founded upon nothing.

Since all reasoning implies some generalization, the Nominalist, who allows nothing general but terms, is, of course, led, or forced, by his theory, to deny the possibility of reasoning of any kind without the aid of general terms; a denial which seems to me one of the boldest, because the least consistent with the observed facts, which it is possible either for dogmatism or scepticism to make; as if the infant, long before he can be supposed to have acquired any knowledge of terms, did not form his little reasonings on the subjects, on which it is important for him to reason, as accurately probably as afterwards; but, at least, with all the accuracy which is necessary for preserving his existence, and gratifying his few feeble desires. He has, indeed, even then, gone through processes which are admitted to involve the finest reasoning, by those very philosophers who deny him to be capable of reasoning at all. He has already calculated distances, long before he knew the use of a single word expressive of distance, and accommodated his induction to those general laws of matter, of which he knows nothing but the simple facts, and his expectation that what has afforded him either pain or pleasure will continue to afford him pain or pleasure. What language does the infant require, to prevent him from putting his finger twice in the flame of that candle which has burned him once? or to persuade him to stretch his hand, in exact conformity with the laws of optics, to that very point at which some bright trinket is glittering on his delighted eyes? To suppose that we cannot reason without language, seems to me, indeed, almost to involve the same inconsistency, as to say, that man is incapable of moving his limbs till he have previously walked a mile.

The use of general terms is not to enable man to reason, but to enable him to reason well. They fix the steps of our progress;

* Smith's Considerations concerning the First Formation of Languages, from the beginning.

they give us the power of availing ourselves, with confidence, of our own past reasonings, and of the reasonings of others; they do not absolutely prevent us from wandering, but they prevent us from wandering very far, and are marks of direction to which we can return: without them we should be like travellers journeying on an immense plain, without a track, and without any points on the sky to determine whether we were continuing to move east or west, or north or south. We should still be moving, indeed, and each step would be a progress, if it were compared merely with the step that went before. But there could be no long journey onwards; and, after years of wandering, we might, perhaps, return to the very spot from which we set out, without even so much knowledge as to have the slightest guess that we were again where we had been before.

To drop this allegory, however, it is very evident that, though we should be capable of reasoning even without language of any sort, and of reasoning sufficient to protect ourselves from obvious and familiar causes of injury, our reasonings, in such circumstances, must be very limited, and as little comparable to the reasoning of him who enjoys the advantage of all the new distinctions of a refined language, as the creeping of the diminutive insect to the soaring of the eagle. Both animals, indeed, are capable of advancing; but the one passes from cloud to cloud almost with the rapidity of the lightning, which is afterwards to flash from them, and the other takes half a day to move over the few shrunk fibres of a withered leaf.

What must be the arithmetic of that people in South America of whom Condamine tells us, whose whole numeration did not extend beyond three, and who had no resource afterwards but to point first to their fingers and then to their hair! What the reasonings of arithmetic would be to such a people every other species of reasoning would be to us, if our general vocabulary bore no greater proportion to the feelings that were to be expressed by it, than this very limited numeral vocabulary, to all the possible combinations of numbers!

The extent of error into which we should be likely to fall, in our classifications and reasonings in general, if our language were of this very imperfect kind, it is, of course, impossible for us, in our present circumstances, to guess; though we may derive some assistance, in our estimation of these possible absurdities, from facts of which voyagers occasionally tell us. I may take, for an example, a fact mentioned by Captain Cook, in describing the people of Wateeoo, a small island on which he lighted in his voyage from New Zealand to the Friendly Islands. "The inhabitants," he says, "were afraid to come near our cows and horses, nor did they form the least conception of their nature. But the sheep and goats did not surpass the limits of their ideas; for they gave us to understand that they knew them to be birds." "It will appear rather incredible," he adds, "that human ignorance could ever make so strange a mistake, there not being the most distant similitude between a sheep or goat and any winged animal. But these people seemed to know nothing of the existence of any other land animals besides hogs, dogs, and birds. Our sheep and goats, they could see, were very different creatures from the two first; and, therefore, they inferred that they must belong to the latter class, in which they knew that there is a considerable variety of species." "I would add," says Mr. Stewart, who quotes this very striking fact, together with the judicious remark of Cook,—"I would add, that the mistake of these islanders perhaps did not arise from their considering a sheep or goat as bearing a more striking resemblance to a bird than to the two classes of quadrupeds with which they were acquainted, but from the want of a generic word, such as quadruped, comprehending these two species; which men in their situation would no more be led to form, than a person who had seen only one individual of each species would think of an appellative to express both, instead of applying a proper name to each. In consequence of the variety of birds, it appears that they had a generic name comprehending all of them, to which it was not unnatural for them to refer any new animal they met with."*

The observation of Mr. Stewart with respect to the influence of a generic name on this seemingly very strange arrangement of these very rude zoologists, is ingenious and just. It must be remembered, however, in opposition to his general doctrine on the subject, that the application of the generic term, even in this very strange manner, is a proof, not that we are without general notions, but that we truly have general notions that are independent of the mere terms which express them. It was not merely because they had a generic term that they extended this term to the unknown sheep and goats, but because the sheep and goats coincided, in some measure, with the general notion expressed by the general term. Of this the most striking evidence is contained in the very statement of Captain Cook. The cows and horses, sheep and goats, were all equally unknown to the islanders. Why, then, did they not class the cows and horses with birds as much as the goats and sheep? As far as the mere possession of a generic word

* Stewart's Elements, Part II. c. iv. sect. 1.

could have led to this application—if a word alone were necessary—it was common to all the new cases alike. When all these were equally unknown, there must have been some previous general notion of certain circumstances of resemblance in birds, with which the goats and sheep coincided more exactly than the cows and horses. Nor is it very difficult to guess what this previous notion was: The bulk of the different animals must have led to the distinction. The winged tribes with which they were acquainted, though they might perhaps approach, in some slight degree, to the stature of the smaller quadrupeds, could have no resemblance in this respect to the horses and cows. A bird, in their mental definition of it, was certainly a living thing, of certain various sizes familiar to them, and not a dog or a hog. A sheep or a goat was seen by them to be a living thing, not a dog nor a hog, and of a size that implied no remarkable opposition to that involved in their silent mental definition of a bird. In such circumstances, it was classed by them as a bird, with as much accuracy as is to be found in many of our systematic references, even in the present improved state of science and natural history,—in that, for example, which classes and ranks, under one word, the whale that swims with the man that walks; or, to use a case still more analogous, even the ant that creeps with the gnat that flies,—and, with equal accuracy, they excluded the cows and horses that did not coincide with the general notion, of which a certain resemblance of size formed an essential part. The extension of the term to the one set of quadrupeds, and the exclusion of the other set, must have had some reason; and this reason, whatever it may have been, must have been some general feeling of resemblance of some sort,—a relative suggestion, intervening between the perception of the animals and the application of the term.

LECTURE XLVIII.

ANALYSIS OF THE PROCESS OF REASONING.

Gentlemen, my last Lecture brought to a conclusion the remarks which I had to offer on that very interesting tribe of our suggestions of relation which constitute the feelings of resemblance,—a tribe, on the existence of which, as we have seen, all classification depends, and in a great measure the whole power of language, as an instrument or medium either of distinct thought in the mind of the individual, or of reciprocal communication of thought from mind to mind.

The examination of this species of relation led us into one of the most memorable controversies in the whole science of Intellectual Philosophy; and though I knew well that there could be no reason to fear your adoption of the absurdities of Realism, and, therefore, did not think it necessary to occupy your time with any serious confutation of that obsolete hypothesis, I knew also too well the prevailing influence of the opposite error of Nominalism, and the high authorities which sanction it, not to think it necessary to put you fully on your guard against the fallacy of this system, by showing you how incomplete it is, and, therefore, how unfit to be adopted as a narrative of the actual Process of Generalization.

This process I described, as involving, not two stages only, as the Nominalists contend, but three. In the first place, the perception or conception of the two or more external objects, or the conception of the two or more internal feelings that are afterwards classed together; in the second place, the feeling or general relative notion of the resemblance, which these separate objects bear to each other, in certain respects, the relative suggestion, in consequence of which alone we are led to class them together; in the third place, the expression of this felt general resemblance, by a general term, as significant of that silent mental generalization which has already classed them together. The mental generalizing may, indeed, be considered as complete, before the invention of the general term; the term being of use, only as fixing and recording, or conveying to others the knowledge of that general notion or feeling of resemblance which preceded the first use of the general word.

At the same time, however, that I exhibited to you,—as simply and forcibly as the complex nature of the process would allow me,—the doctrine of general notions, as distinct mental affections of a peculiar species, arising from that susceptibility of the mind by which we perceive, together with various other relations, the relations that constitute the resemblances of objects,—I took occasion to point out to you some errors of thought, and consequent improprieties of arrangement and expression, on the part of the Conceptualists, which I regarded as having had the chief effect in preventing the universal and ready adoption of this doctrine of the threefold nature of the process, as consisting in perceptions, relations, and verbal signs,—a doctrine, which, but for the almost universal prevalence of the opposite system of Nominalism, would have appeared to me to stand little in need of any argument in its support; since the fact of the extension of general terms only to certain objects, to the exclusion of others, seems, of itself, sufficiently to show, that there is a certain general notion of resemblance,—a pe-

culiar state of mind,—intervening between the primary perceptions, and the use of the general term, which forms, as it were, the measure of adjustment of the particular objects,—that are arranged in the same class, if they agree with this general notion, and excluded, if they do not agree with it. An arrangement, without some principle of resemblance to direct the order in which objects are placed, seems to me absolutely unworthy of the name of an arrangement, and certainly could be but of very little aid to the memory,—even if it could be of any advantage to remember divisions, and subdivisions, that were founded upon nothing. The classifications, which our dictionaries form, according to the mere initial sounds of words, —which Dr. Reid, in reference to works of this kind, calls a sort of modern categories, —would be far more philosophic, than a classification which implied no previous notion of resemblance whatever. " Of all methods of arrangement," he says, " the most antiphilosophical seems to be the invention of this age ;—I mean the arranging the arts and sciences by the letters of the alphabet, in Dictionaries and Encyclopædias. With these authors the categories are A, B, C," &c. Yet these literal categories, antiphilosophical as they certainly would be, if their authors professed to give them as a scientific arrangement, still involve a resemblance of some sort, however insignificant and irrelative to the great purposes of science. Every other arrangement in science would be still more unphilosophical, because involving no relation whatever, if, according to the principles of the Nominalist, there were no general notions,—no relative feelings of resemblance,—independent of the terms of classification ; but objects were first classed together, without any reason for being so classed together, more than any other objects, till the mere general term of the classification became a reason for itself; as if birds, beasts, and fishes, were not called animals, because they were previously felt to agree in certain respects, but were felt to have this relation of agreement in certain respects, because they had previously been comprehended in the one generic term *animal.*

With respect to the origin of the general terms themselves,—as distinct from the general relative feelings which they express,— I stated to you a speculation of Condillac and Dr. Smith, which appears to me to be one of the most simple and beautiful speculations in the theoretical history of language. In ascribing it to these distinguished philosophers, however, I speak of it only as it is clearly developed by them ; for there are many hints of the same opinion to be found in works of an earlier date. The speculation to which I allude, is that which supposes the proper names of individual objects to have become appellatives of a whole class, by extension from similar objects to similar—the principle, which could not fail to operate in this way, being a principle which still continues to operate even in the common phraseology of the most common minds,—though, by rhetoricians, whose art is, in a great measure, the art of making common things mysterious, it has been advanced to the dignity of a figure of speech.

The brief expression or result of the feeling of resemblance is a general term,—but when all which we feel, in our relative suggestions of resemblance, or in any other of our relative suggestions, is enunciated in language, it is termed a proposition, which, notwithstanding the air of mystery that invests it in our books of logic, is the expression of this common feeling of relation, and nothing more. The word *animal,* for example, is a general term, expressive of a particular relation of resemblance that is felt by us. A horse is an animal, is a proposition, which is merely a brief expression of this felt resemblance of a horse to various other creatures included by us in the general term. It is the same in all the other species of relations which we are capable of feeling. In the relation of position, for example, when we say that the planet Mercury is that which is next to the sun, our mere feeling of the local relation,—that particular relative suggestion which arises on the consideration of the sun, together with its planetary attendants,— by this expression of it in words, becomes, what is termed in logic, a proposition. In the relative suggestion of degree, to say that gold is heavier than copper ;—in the relative suggestion of proportion, to say, that four are to twenty, as twenty to a hundred ;—in the relative suggestion of comprehension, to say, that there is a portion of heat even in the coldest snow, is to state, as a proposition, what, in the mind itself, is the mere feeling of a certain relation. In all such cases, it is very evident that the verbal statement of the proposition does not alter the nature of the relative suggestion, or feeling of relation, which it expresses, but simply expresses to others a relation that must have been felt, before the proposition could be framed,— that it is not the word *animal,* for example, which produces the feeling of the general resemblance of those various beings which we have classed together under that term,—nor the word *heavier,* which makes us feel the greater pressure of a piece of gold, than of an equal bulk of copper,—but those feelings, previously existing, which have led to the verbal proposition that expresses to others those previous feelings. To insist on a distinction so obvious, seems to me, indeed, almost as if I were labouring to prove what it would be impossible for any one to deny.

But if you reflect on the influence of the doctrine of the Nominalists, with respect to general terms, as constituting all that can be said to be general in reasoning, you will perceive how necessary it is, that you should be fully impressed with the priority of the relative feeling involved in each proposition, to the proposition which expresses it,—and its consequent independence of those forms of language which render it capable of being communicated to other minds, but do not alter its nature, as a feeling of that particular mind in which it has previously arisen.

The proposition being only an expression of a relation of some kind or other, which has been previously felt, may, of course, be as various as the species of relative suggestions of which our minds are susceptible. There may be, as we have seen, propositions of resemblance, of order, of degree, of proportion, of comprehension; to which last class, indeed—that class which includes all the relations of a whole to its parts—the others, as I have already remarked, may, by a little effort of subtilty, be reduced; since every affirmative proposition enunciates or predicates—to use the technical word—some quality or attribute of a subject, which may be said to form a part of the very essence of the subject itself, or, at least, of our complex notion of the subject. The one quality, of which we speak, is comprehended with other qualities in that general aggregate to which we state it to belong.

On this class of our relative suggestions, therefore,—that which involves the feeling of the relation of the parts comprehended to the comprehending whole,—it will be necessary to bestow a little fuller illustration, that you may understand clearly the nature of the process of reasoning—that most important of all our mental processes—which logicians and metaphysicians have contrived to render so obscure, but which is in itself nothing more than a series of felt relations of this particular class in the instances which I selected before, of a house and its apartments; a tree and its stems and foliage; a horse, and its head, and limbs, and trunk. The relation which I have termed the relation of comprehension, or comprehensiveness, is so very obvious, that a mere allusion to it is sufficient, without any commentary. In these cases, the parts, which together form the whole, are truly substances that admit of being separated, and can as easily be conceived to exist separately as together.

But substances are not conceived by us, only as composed of certain elementary substances, which constitute them, by their mere juxta-position, in apparent contiguity, and which may exist apart, after division. They are also conceived by us, as subjects of qualities, which coexist in them, and which cannot exist apart, or, in other words—for the qualities of substances, as perceived by us, are nothing more—they are capable of affecting us as sentient beings, directly or indirectly, in various ways. A flake of snow, for example, is composed of particles of snow, which may exist separately; and this composition of separate particles in seeming coherence is one species of totality; but the same snow, without any integral division, may be considered by us as possessing various qualities, that is to say, is capable of affecting us variously. It is cold, that is to say, it excites in us a sensation of chilliness; —it is white, that is to say, it produces in our mind a peculiar sensation of vision, by the light which it reflects to us;—it has weight—is of a certain crystalline regularity of figure—is soft or hard, according as it is more or less compressed—liquefiable at a very low temperature—and my conception of snow is of that permanent subject which affects my senses in these various ways. The conglomerated flakes in a snow-ball are not more distinctly parts of the mass itself, which we consider, than the coldness, whiteness, gravity, regular form, softness or hardness, and ready fusibility, are felt to be parts of our complex notion of snow, as a substance.

When I think of cases, in which the relation is of a substance to parts that are themselves substances—as when I say, that a room is a part of a house, or that a tree has branches—it is quite evident that in these very simple propositions I merely state the relation of parts to a comprehending whole. But is the statement at all different in kind, when I speak, in the common forms of a proposition, of the qualities of objects, when I say, for example, that snow is white, man capable of reasoning, the wisest of mankind still fallible? Do I not merely state one of the many qualities, comprehended in that totality of qualities, which constitutes the subject as known to me? I do not indeed divide a mass into integral parts, but I divide a complex notion into its parts, or at least separate from that complexity a quality which I feel to belong, and state to belong, to that whole complex notion from which I have detached it. It is as it were a little analysis and synthesis. I decompose, and, in expressing verbally to others the mental decomposition which I have made, I combine again the separated elements of my thought—not, indeed, in the same manner, for the analytic process is as different as matter is from mind—but with the same feeling of agreement or identity which rises in the mind of a chemist when he has reduced to one mass the very elements into which he had previously transmuted the mass, by some one of the analyses of his wonderful art.

What, then, is reasoning—which is no-

thing more than a number of propositions, though of propositions consecutive in a certain order—but a continued series of analytic operations of this kind, developing the elements of our thought? In every proposition, that which is affirmed is a part of that of which it is affirmed, and the proposition, however technical its language may be, expresses only the single feeling of this relation. When I say snow is white, I state one of the many feelings which constitute my complex notion of snow. When I say man is fallible, I state one of the many imperfections which, as conceived by me, together with many better qualities, constitute my complex notion of man. These statements of one particular relation are simple propositions, in each of which a certain analysis is involved. But, when I reason, or add proposition to proposition in a certain series, I merely prosecute my analysis, and prosecute it more or less minutely, according to the length of the ratiocination. When I say man is fallible, I state a quality involved in the nature of man, as any other part of an aggregate is involved in any other comprehending whole. When I add, he may therefore err, even when he thinks himself least exposed to error, I state what is involved in the notion of his fallibility. When I say, he therefore must not expect that all men will think as he does, even on points which appear to him to have no obscurity, I state that which is involved in the possibility of his and their erring even on such points. When I say, that he therefore should not dare to punish those who merely differ from him, and who may be right even in differing from him, I state what is involved in the absurdity of the expectation that all men should think as he does. And when I say, that any particular legislative act of intolerance is as unjust as it is absurd, I state only what is involved in the impropriety of attempting to punish those who have no other guilt than that of differing in opinion from others, who are confessedly of a nature as fallible as their own.

In all this reasoning, though composed of many propositions, there is obviously only a progressive analysis, with a feeling, at each step, of the relation of parts to the whole, the predicate of each proposition being the subject of a new analysis in the proposition which follows it. Man is fallible. He who is fallible may err, even when he thinks himself least exposed to error. He who may be in error, even when he thinks himself safest from it, ought not to be astonished that others should think differently from him, even on points which may seem to him perfectly clear; and thus, successively, through the whole ratiocination, the predicate becomes in its turn a subject of new analysis, till we arrive at the last proposition, which is immediately extended backwards to the primary subject of analysis, man,—as involved in that which is itself involved in that primary complex conception, or aggregate of many qualities. There are minds, perhaps, which, merely by considering man, and opinion, and punishment, would discover, without an intervening proposition, that fallible man ought not to set himself up in judgment as a punisher of the speculative errors of fallible man; there are others, perhaps, who might not perceive the conclusion, without the whole series of propositions enumerated, though the conclusion is involved, as an element, in the first proposition,—man is fallible; and according as the particular intellect is more or less acute, more or fewer of the intervening propositions will be necessary.

In every such case of continued intellectual analysis, it is impossible for us not to feel when we have arrived at the conclusion, that the last proposition is as truly contained in the first as any of the intervening propositions, though it is not seen by us, till exhibited, as it were, in its elementary state, by the repetition of analysis after analysis. It is, in this respect, precisely like the decompositions of chemical analysis, which are constantly showing us something new, in the very substances which we carry about with us, or in those which are every moment before our eyes. The air, for example, after being long considered as simple, in the sense in which chemists use that term, is afterwards shown to be composed of different gaseous fluids; nor are even these regarded as simple, but each is believed to be composed of a certain base and the matter of heat; and it is impossible to predict, or even to guess, what future analyses may be made even of these elements. Yet the atmosphere, now considered as compound, is, in kind, the same air which was continually flowing around the earth before this analysis; and, in the mere animal function of respiration, all mankind had, from the first moment of their infant breath, been incessantly employed in separating, into its constituent parts, the very substance which they considered as incapable of division. The last chemist, whose labours, when this scene of earthly things is to perish, are to close the long toils of his predecessors, will perhaps regard scarcely a single substance in nature in the same light in which we now regard it; and yet it is evident that the same terrestrial objects, which now meet our eyes, must continually have been present to his sight;—the same seasons presenting the same herbage and flowers and fruits to the same races of animals,—to which, indeed, he may have given different names, or may have detected in them new elements, or proportions of elements, but of which all his

arrangements and analyses are incapable of altering the nature.

In the truths of reasoning, which a profound and penetrating genius is able in like manner to exhibit to us, we perceive a similar analysis, which presents to us, as it were, the elements of our own former conceptions; since the very reasoning, if it be at all intelligible, must begin with some conception already familiar to us in which it asserts something to be contained, and proceeds only by tracing similar relations. A new truth, of this kind, is not so much added to us, therefore, as evolved from the primary truth already familiar; it is not as if new objects were presented to us, to be seen, but as if our intellectual senses—if I may venture to use that expression—were quickened and rendered more acute, so as to perceive clearly what we saw dimly, or not even dimly before, though we might have seen it as now, if we had not been too dull of vision to perceive what was in our very hands. The truths, at which we arrive, by repeated intellectual analysis, may be said to resemble the premature plant, which is to be found inclosed in that which is itself inclosed in the bulb or seed which we dissect. We must carry on our dissection, more and more minutely, to arrive at each new germ; but we do arrive at one after the other, and when our dissection is obliged to stop, we have reason to suppose, that still finer instruments, and still finer eyes, might prosecute the discovery almost to infinity. It is the same in the discovery of the truths of reasoning. The stage at which one inquirer stops, is not the limit of analysis, in reference to the object, but the limit of the analytic power of the individual. Inquirer after inquirer discovers truths which were involved in truths formerly admitted by us, without our being able to perceive what was comprehended in our admission. It is not absolutely absurd to suppose, that whole sciences may be contained in propositions that now seem to us so simple as scarcely to be susceptible of further analysis, but which hereafter, when developed by some more penetrating genius, may, without any change in external nature, present to man a new field of wonder and of power. Of the possibility of this, the mathematical sciences furnish a most striking example. The rudest peasant may be said to have in his mind all, or nearly all, those primary notions, of which the sublimest demonstrations of the relations of number and quantity are the mere development. He would be astonished, indeed, if he could be made to understand, that on notions, which appear to him of so very trifling import, have been founded some of the proudest monuments of the intellectual achievements of man, and that, among the names to which his country and the world look with the highest veneration, are the names of those whose life has been occupied in little more than in tracing all the forms of which those few conceptions, which exist in his mind as much as in theirs, are susceptible. What geometry and arithmetic are to his rude notions of numbers, and magnitudes, and proportions, some other sciences unknown to us, indeed, at present, but not more unknown to us than geometry and arithmetic are now to him, may be, in relation to conceptions which exist, and perhaps have long existed in our mind, but which we have not yet evolved into any of their important elements. As man is quicker or slower in this internal analysis, the progress of all that philosophy which depends on mere reasoning is more or less rapid. There may be races of beings, or at least we can conceive races of beings whose senses would enable them to perceive the ultimate embryo plant, inclosed in its innumerable series of preceding germs; and there may, perhaps, be created powers of some high order, as we know that there is one Eternal Power, able to feel, in a single comprehensive thought, all those truths, of which the generations of mankind are able, by successive analyses, to discover only a few, that are, perhaps, to the great truths which they contain, only as the flower which is blossoming before us is to that infinity of future blossoms enveloped in it, with which, in ever renovated beauty, it is to adorn the summers of other ages.

> "Lo! on each seed, within its slender rhind,
> Life's golden threads in endless circles wind;
> Maze within maze the lucid webs are roll'd,
> And, as they burst, the living flame unfold.
> The pulpy acorn, ere it swells, contains
> The oak's vast branches in its milky veins,
> Each ravel'd bud, fine film, and fibre-line,
> Traced with nice pencil on the small design,
> The young Narcissus, in its bulb compress'd,
> Cradles a second nestling on its breast,
> In whose fine arms a younger embryon lies,
> Folds its thin leaves, and shuts its floret-eyes;
> Grain within grain successive harvests dwell,
> And boundless forests slumber in a shell."*

Such, too, perhaps, are the boundless truths that may be slumbering in a single comprehensive relation at present felt by us. The evolutions of thought, however, in our processes of reasoning, though in one respect they may be said to resemble the evolution of organic germs, have this noble distinction, that, if their progress be unobstructed, the progress itself is constant improvement. We have no reason to believe that the earth, after the longest succession of the ages during which it is to exist, will, at least without some new exertion of the power of its Creator, exhibit any races of organized beings different from those which it now pours out on its surface, or supports and feeds. But, when thought rises from thought,

* Darwin's Botanic Garden, Canto IV. v. 381—394.

in intellectual evolution, the thought which rises is not a mere copy of the thought from which it rose, but a truth which was before unknown and unsuspected, that may be added to the increasing stores of human wisdom, and which, in addition to its own importance, is the presage, and almost the promise, of other truths which it is to evolve in like manner.

Every truth, indeed, at which we arrive in our reasoning, becomes thus far more than doubly valuable, for the field of fresh discoveries to which it may be opening a track, —the facility of new analyses, after each preceding analysis, increasing, as this great field opens more and more on our view, with a wider range of objects,—stimulating at once, and justifying the hopes, which, in the language of Akenside,

> "urge us on,
> With unremitted labour, to pursue
> Those sacred stores, that wait the ripening soul,
> In Truth's exhaustless bosom."*

If the profoundest reasonings, then, as we have seen, be nothing more than a continued analysis of our thought, stating at every step what is contained in conceptions that previously existed as complex feelings of our mind, it may, on first reflection, seem extraordinary, when we consider the important truths which have been thus afforded to us, that we should have been able previously to form opinions, which involve these important truths afterwards detected in them, without having at the time the slightest knowledge, or even the slightest suspicion, that any such truths were contained in the general notions and general phraseology which we formed. But the reason of this is sufficiently obvious, when we attend to the nature and order of the process of generalization, the results of which are the subjects of this consecutive analysis. If, indeed, we had advanced, in regular progress, from the less to the more general, from individuals to species, from species to genera, and thus gradually upward, since we should then have known previously the minute specific circumstances involved in the higher orders and classes to which we had gradually ascended, it might have been absurd to suppose that these specific circumstances, previously known, could be discovered to us by analysis. The mode in which we generalize, is, however, very different. In our systematic tables, indeed, if we were to judge from these only, we might seem to have a regular advance from individuals to classes, through species, genera, orders. But, in the actual process of generalizing, we form classes and orders before we distinguish the minuter varieties. We are struck first with some resemblance of a multitude of objects, perhaps a very remote one, in consequence of which we class them together, and we attend afterwards to the differences which distinguish them, separating them into genera and species according to these differences. Every general term which we use, must express, indeed, an agreement of some sort, that has led us to invent and apply the term; but we may feel one resemblance, without feeling, or even suspecting other resemblances as real,—and the very circumstance of agreement which we perceive, at the time when we class objects together as related, may involve, or comprehend, certain circumstances to which we then paid no attention, and which occur to us only in that intellectual analysis of ratiocination of which I spoke. It is as if we knew the situation and bearings of all the great cities in Europe, and could lay down, with most accurate precision, their longitude and latitude. To know this much, is to know that a certain space must intervene between them, but it is not to know what that space contains. The process of reasoning, in the discoveries which it gives, is like that topographic inquiry which slowly fills up the intervals of our map, placing here a forest, there a long extent of plains, and beyond them a still longer range of mountains, till we see, at last, innumerable objects connected with each other, in that space which before presented to us only a few points of mutual bearing. The extent of space, indeed, is still precisely the same, and Paris, Vienna, and London, are to each other what they were before. The only difference is, that we know what is contained, or a part, at least, of what is contained, in the long lines that connect them.

The reasoning which proceeds from the complex to the less complex, detecting, at each stage, some unsuspected element of our thought, may be termed strictly *analytical reasoning*,—the relation involved in each separate proposition of the series, being simply, as we have seen, the relation of parts to the whole. It is exactly the same relation, however, which is felt in reasonings that seem to proceed in an opposite way, exhibiting to us, not the whole first, and then some element of that whole, but first the elements, and then the whole which they compose. When we say, five and eight added together make thirteen, and when we say thirteen may be divided into eight and five, we express equally the comprehension of eight and five in thirteen, which is all that is felt by us in that particular proposition. Every synthesis, therefore, as much as its corresponding analysis, since one relation alone is developed at every step, implies the same elementary consideration of a whole and its parts,—the difference being merely in the order of the propositions, not in the nature of the feeling of relation involved in any one of the separate propositions.

* Pleasures of Imagination, B. I. v. 241—244.

To this relation of comprehension, or the relation of a whole and its parts, I have said, the other relations of coexistence, in all the propositions which express them, might, in strictness of analysis, be reduced,—even that relation of proportion which is of such importance in the reasonings of geometry and arithmetic;—so that every species of reasoning would be, in the strictest sense of the word, analytical, evolving only qualities essential to the very nature of the subjects of the different proportions. When, therefore, in developing one of the relations of proportion, I say, four are to five as sixteen to twenty, I state a relation of the number four, which may be regarded as comprehended in my notion of that number, as any other quality is comprehended in any other subject.

It is one of the many properties of the number four, that when considered together with those other numbers, five, sixteen, twenty, it impresses us with a feeling of the relation of proportion, a feeling that its proportion to five is the same as the proportion of sixteen to twenty; and it is a property, which, as soon as the relation is felt by us, it is impossible for us not to regard as essential to the number four,—as when we discover any new quality of a material substance, it is impossible for us not to add this quality, as another part, to our previous complex notion of the substance. We cannot, indeed, perceive this property of the number four till we have considered it at the same time with the other numbers. But, as little can we know the physical qualities which form parts of our complex notion of any substance, till we have considered the substance together with other substances. For example, who could have predicted, on the mere sight of an alkaline solution, that, if mixed with oil, it would convert the oil into a soap, or, if added to a vegetable infusion, would change the colour of the infusion to green? We must have observed these mixtures, or at least have read or heard of the effects, before we could regard the changes as effects of the presence of the alkali,—that is to say, before we could include, in our complex notion of the alkali, as a substance, the qualities of forming soap with oils and of giving a peculiar tinge to vegetable infusions. But, having seen, or read, or heard of these effects, we feel that now, in our complex notion of the alkali, is included, as a part in its comprehending whole, the conception of these particular qualities. In like manner, the affinity of one metal to another with which it admits of amalgamation, may be said to form a part of our complex notion of the metal; and it is the same with every other substance, the various properties of which, as soon as these properties are discovered by us, so as to admit of being stated to others, seem to us to be truly included in the notion of the substance itself, though before they could be so included various other substances must have been considered at the same time. When, therefore, I say four are to five as sixteen to twenty, I state truly a property included in the number four,—the property, by which it affects us with a certain feeling of relation when considered together with certain other numbers,—though, for discovering the property originally, and for feeling it afterwards, it was necessary that the other numbers should be considered together with it; as, when I state that mercury admits of being amalgamated with other metals, I state a property included in my complex notion of mercury, though, for originally discovering the property, and for feeling it afterwards, I must have considered the mercury together with the other metals with which I state its readiness of entering into chemical union. When I consider the same number four together with other numbers, I discover various other relations, as when I endeavour to form new combinations of mercury, or of other chemical substances, I discover new relations, which I add to my complex notions of the substances themselves. As my original conception of mercury becomes more complex by all the new relations which I trace, so my original conception of the number four, which seemed at first a very simple one, becomes gradually more complex by the detection of the various relations of proportion, which are truly comprehended in it as a subject of our thought,—as every new relation which I discover in a chemical substance is comprehended in my widening conception of the substance itself,—and the arithmetical or geometrical proportion, like the chemical quality, may thus strictly be reduced to the general class of the relations of comprehension.

In this way, every new proportion which is traced out, in a long series of such arithmetical or geometrical propositions, may be considered as the result of a mere analysis, by which elements existing before, but unsuspected, are evolved, as in the other species of reasoning more obviously analytic. It is evident, indeed, that the statement of any property inherent in any subject, must, in rigid accuracy of arrangement, be analytical. But, without insisting on so subtile a process, it may be easier at least, though it should not be more accurate, to regard our reasonings of this kind in the same manner as we formerly regarded our feelings of the simple relation of proportion, involved in each proposition of the reasoning, as forming a class apart; the reasonings we may call, in distinction from our more obvious analytic reasonings, *proportional reasonings*, as we termed the simple relative suggestions which they involve, relations of proportion.

Whatever be the species of reasoning, however, it is necessary that the propositions which form the reasoning should follow each other in a certain order; for, without this order, though each proposition might involve some little analysis, and consequently some little accession of knowledge, the knowledge thus acquired must be very limited. There could be no deduction of remote conclusions, by which the primary subject of a distant proposition might be shown, through a long succession of analyses, to have properties which required all these various evolutions before they could themselves be evolved to view. In the proportional reasonings of geometry, we know well that the omission of a single proposition, or even a change of its place, might render apparently false, and almost inconceivable by us, a conclusion which, but for such omission or change of place of a few words of the demonstration, we should have adopted instantly, with a feeling of the absolute impossibility of resisting its evidence.

How is it then, that, when order is so essential to discovery, the propositions which we form in our own silent reasoning, arrange themselves, as they rise in succession, in this necessary order; and what are we to think of that art, which, for so many ages, was held out, not so much as an auxiliary to reason, as with the still higher praise of being an instrument that might almost supply its place, by the possession of which the acute and accurate might argue still more acutely and accurately, and imbecility itself become a champion worthy of encountering them; and though not perhaps the victor, at least not always the vanquished?

But to these subjects I must not proceed till my next Lecture.

LECTURE XLIX.

THE ORDER OF THE PROPOSITIONS IN A RATIOCINATION IS NOT OWING TO ANY SAGACITY—IS WHOLLY INDEPENDENT OF OUR WILL—AND TRULY DEPENDS ON THE NATURAL ORDER OF SUGGESTION.—DIVERSITY IN OPINION AMONG MANKIND UNAVOIDABLE FROM THE VARIETY IN THEIR TRAINS OF SUGGESTION.—WHAT LOCKE TERMS SAGACITY, MAY BE, IN PART, PRODUCED INDIRECTLY.—DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE TRAINS OF THOUGHT THAT ARISE IN MEDITATION AND THOSE SUBMITTED TO THE PUBLIC EYE IN A TREATISE.—THERE IS A RATIONAL LOGIC.—ANALYSIS OF THE SCHOLASTIC LOGIC.

Gentlemen, after considering and classing our feelings of relation,—as they arise, in any particular case, from the simple perception or conception of two or more objects,—I proceeded, in my last Lecture, to consider them as they arise in those series which are denominated reasoning—series that correspond, of course, with the division which we have made of the species of relations involved in the separate propositions that compose them; but of which the most important are those which I termed analytical, as involving in every stage the consideration of a whole and its parts, or those which I termed proportional, as involving some common relation of intellectual measurement. To the former of these orders, indeed, the analytical—the others might, as I stated to you, and endeavoured to prove, admit of being reduced; but as the process which reduces them all to this one great order might seem too subtile, and could afford no additional advantage in our inquiry, I conceived it more advisable, upon the whole, to retain our original division.

Every reasoning is a series of propositions; but every series of propositions is not reasoning, however just the separate propositions may be. The half of eighteen is equal to the cube of three—man is liable to error—marble is a carbonate of lime—these propositions following each other, lead to no conclusion different from those which each separately implies and expresses. To constitute reasoning, it is necessary that there should be some mutual relation of the subjects and predicates of the different propositions. The order in which the different propositions arrange themselves, so as to present to us this mutual relation of the successive subjects and predicates, is therefore of the utmost importance to our consecutive analyses, in the reasonings that are strictly analytic, and to our consecutive measurements in the reasonings which I have termed proportional.

On what does this order depend?

Let us suppose, for example, that A is equal to D,—that we are ignorant of this exact relation,—that we wish to estimate it precisely,—that we have no mode of considering them together, but that, without knowing the relation of equality of A to D, we know the relation which these bear to some other objects which may be termed intermediate—that, for example, we know A to be equal to B, which we know to be equal to the half of C, and that C is known by us to be the double of D. If the proportional relative A is equal to B, which is the half of C, which is the double of D, follow each other in our mind in this order, it will be absolutely impossible for us to doubt that A is exactly equal to D, since it is equal to that which is the half of the double of D. But, if any one of these relations of the intermediate objects do not arise in our mind, whether it be the

relation of A to B, of B to C, of C to D, the relation of equality of A to D, which is instantly and irresistibly felt by us, after the former series, will not be felt, though the series should be exactly the same in every respect, with the exception of this single proposition omitted in it. It is not enough that we may have formerly observed and measured B and C, and known their relation to D, unless B occur to us while A is in our thought; and we might thus have all the knowledge which is necessary for discovering the proportional relation of A and D, without the slightest knowledge of the proportion, or even the slightest possibility of knowing it, unless our thoughts should arrange themselves in a certain order. It is quite essential to our demonstration that B and C should arise at certain times; and they do arise at certain times. How is it that this happens?

The common opinion on the subject makes this order a very easy matter. We have a certain sagacity, it is said, by which we find out the intervening propositions that are so, and they are arranged in this order because we have discovered them to be suitable for our measurement, and put them in their proper place. "Those intervening ideas, which serve to show the agreement of any two others," says Locke, "are called proofs. A quickness in the mind to find out these intermediate ideas (that shall discover the agreement or disagreement of any other,) and to apply them rightly, is, I suppose, that which is called sagacity."* And reason itself, in another part of his work, he defines to be "the faculty which finds out these means, and rightly applies them."† I need not quote to you the common expressions to the same purport which are to be found in other writers.

That, in some minds, these intervening conceptions, on which demonstration depends, do arise more readily than in others, there can be no question; and it is by a very natural and obvious metaphor, that minds, able to detect those secret relations, which are not perceived by others, to whom the same intervening conceptions have not arisen, —or have arisen without suggesting the same feeling of common relation, are said to have peculiar sagacity. But it is a metaphor only, and is far from solving the difficulty. The question still remains, what that process truly is which the word sagacity is borrowed to denote,—whether the intermediate conceptions, that arise more readily in certain minds than in others, arise in consequence of any skill in discovering them, or any voluntary effort in producing them, or whether they do not arise in consequence of laws of suggestion that are independent alike of our skill and of any efforts which that skill might direct? A and D are before us, and have a relation which is at present unknown, but a relation which would be evolved to us, if B and C were to arise to our mind. Do they then arise at our bidding? Or do they arise without being subject to our command, and without obeying it?

After the remarks which I made, in reference to intellectual phenomena, in some degree analogous, I trust that you are able, of yourselves, to decide this question, by the argument which I used on the occasions to which I refer. The mind, it can scarcely fail to occur to you, cannot will the conception of B or C, however essential they may be to our reasoning; since to will them,—at least if we know what we will, which is surely essential to volition,—implies the existence of the very conceptions which we are said to will, as states of the mind present and prior to the exercise of that sagacity which is said to produce them. If B and C, therefore, rise to our thought, in the case supposed by us, it cannot be because we have willed them; but they must rise in consequence of laws of mind that are independent of our volition. In short, we do not find them out, as Locke says, but they come to us; and when they have thus risen in our mind, we do not apply them, as he says, because we regard them as suitable; but the relation which is involved in them is felt without any intentional application, merely in consequence of their presence together in the mind. The skilful application, indeed, of which he speaks, involves an error of precisely the same kind as that which is involved in the assertion of the volition of the particular conceptions which are said to be thus applied. It necessarily assumes the existence of the very relative feeling for the rise of which it professes to account; since, without this previous feeling, the comparative suitableness of one medium of proof, rather than another, could not be known. The right application of fit conceptions to fit conceptions, in the choice of intermediate ideas, presupposes then, in the very sagacity which is said to apply them rightly, a knowledge of the relation which the intermediate idea bears to the object to which it is applied,—of the very relation, for discovering which alone it is of any consequence that the intermediate idea should be applied.

The subjects of our intervening propositions, in our trains of reasoning,—B and C, for example, by which we discover the relation of A to D, do not, then, and cannot arise in consequence of our willing them; since to will them, would be to have those very subjects of comparison, which we will to exist, already present to our mind, which

* Essay concerning Human Understanding, B. iv. c. ii. sect. 2.
† Ibid. B. iv. c. xvii. sect. 2.

wills them; and, to will them, with peculiar sagacity, on account of their fitness as subjects of comparison, would be to have already felt that relation, for the mere purpose of discovering which, they are said to be willed. Though arising in conformity with our general desire, then, they do not arise in consequence of any particular volitions; and yet they arise, and arise in the very order that is necessary for developing the remote relation. The whole seeming mystery of this order, in the propositions which form our longest processes of reasoning, depends on the regularity of the laws which guide our simple suggestions in the phenomena of mere association formerly considered by us. Our various conceptions, in our trains of thought, we found, do not follow each other loosely, but according to certain relations. It is not wonderful, therefore, that A should suggest B, which is related to it,—B C,—C D. All this might take place by simple suggestion, though no relation were felt, and consequently no proposition or verbal statement of relation framed. But it is not a train of simple suggestions only which the laws of mind evolve. We are susceptible of the feeling of relation of parts of the train, as much as of the conceptions themselves; and when A has excited the relative conceptions of B, it is not wonderful that we should feel the relation of A and B; or, when C is excited, the relation of B and C, more than that any other feeling of our mind should arise in its ordinary circumstances,—that we should hear the sound of a cannon, in consequence of the vibration of a few invisible particles of air, or see the flash which precedes it, in consequence of some slight affection of our visual nerves. It is impossible for us to will any one of the conceptions in the series A, B, C, D, though we may have the general wish of discovering the relation of A and D, and consequently their relation to any common objects of comparison. It is equally impossible for us to will our feeling of any one of the relations of these to each other, though we may be desirous of discovering their relations; since to will any particular feeling of relation, would be to have already felt that relation. But the conceptions rise after each other, in a certain order, in consequence of the natural order of the course of suggestion; and our feelings of relation, therefore, and consequently our propositions, which are only our feelings of relations expressed in language, correspond, as might be supposed, with the regularity of the conceptions which suggest them.

The sagacity of which Locke and other writers speak, may then, since it is nothing more than a form of our simple suggestion itself, be reduced to that peculiar tendency of the suggesting principle, varying in different minds, of which I before treated, when considering the Secondary Laws of Suggestion, in their relation to Original Genius. The same objects do not suggest to all the same objects, even where past observation and experience may have been the same; because the peculiar suggestions of the objects, the relations of which are afterwards felt, depend, in a great measure, on constitutional tendencies, varying in different individuals, and, in a great measure, also, on tendencies modified by long habit; and, therefore, varying in different individuals, as these habits may have been different. To some minds,—the common minds, which, in the great multitudes of our race, think what others have thought, as they do what others have done,—the conceptions which form their trains of memory, that scarcely can be called trains of reflection, rise, as we have seen, according to the relation of mere contiguity, or former proximity in time, of the related images. The conceptions of minds of a higher order rise in almost infinite variety, because they rise according to a relation which does not depend on former coexistence of the very images themselves, but is itself almost infinitely various.

It is this tendency of our suggestions, to rise according to the relation of analogy, which gives inventive vigour to our reasoning, as it gives richness and novelty to our products of mere imagination. By continually presenting to us new objects, in succession, it, of course, presents to us new relations, and leads the philosophic genius from the simplest perceptions of objects, which the dullest of mankind equally behold, but in which the objects themselves are all which they see, to those sublime relations of universal nature, which bind every thing to every thing, in the whole infinity of worlds, and of which the knowledge of the immensity is scarcely so wonderful as the apparent insignificance of the means by which the knowledge has been acquired.

The sagacity, then, of which Locke and other writers speak, is as little wonderful in itself, as any other modification of the suggesting principle. Since the tendencies to suggestion are various, in different minds, the conceptions, which rise according to those tendencies, are of course various; and with the order of our conceptions, that are felt to be related, the relations which we feel must vary. There may, indeed, be the same conclusion formed, when the intervening conceptions, in the trains of reflection of different individuals, have been different. But it is much more likely, that, when these intervening conceptions, of which the relations are felt, have been different, the conclusion, or ultimate relation which results from the whole, should itself be different; and that men should not agree in opinion, seems, therefore, to be almost a part of the very

laws of intellect, on which the simplest phenomena of thought depend. Even by the same individual, as I remarked before, when treating of the Laws of Simple Suggestion, what opposite conclusions are formed on the same subjects, in different circumstances of health and happiness, or of disease and misfortune,—and conclusions which are drawn, with the same logical justness from the premises, in one case, as in the other. The process of reasoning, which is only the continued feeling of the relations of the conceptions that have arisen by the common laws of suggestion, is equally accurate; but, though the reasoning itself may have been as accurate, the conceptions of which the successive relations have been felt, during the process of reasoning, were different, in consequence of the tendency of the mind, in these different states, to suggest different and almost opposite images. This tendency to form, under slight changes of circumstance, opposite conclusions, on the same subjects, is happily illustrated by Chaulieu, the French poet, in some verses, in which he considers himself as viewing nature during a fit of the gout, and of course seeing nothing in it but what is dreadful; when he is surprised to find different views breaking upon him, of beauty in the universe, and benevolence in its Author, and discovers that the change has arisen, not from any greater brightness of the sky, or from any happier objects that surround him, but from the mere cessation of that paroxysm which had shed, while it lasted, its own darkness on the scene. It is almost as little possible for him, whose train of conceptions is uniformly gloomy, to look upon nature, or, I may say, even upon the God of Nature, in the same light as that happier mind, which is more disposed to images of joy, as for one, to whose eyes the sunshine has never carried light, to think of the surface of that earth on which he treads, with the same feeling of beauty and admiration as the multitudes around him whose eyes are awake to all the colours that adorn it. What is true, in these extreme cases, is not less true in cases that are less remarkable. How few are the opinions of any sort, in which the greater number of mankind concur; and, even in the case of those opinions, in which they are unanimous, how few, if they were to attempt to support them by argument, would support them by argument precisely similar. All might set out with the same conception, in their primary design; and, if the discovery of the strongest proofs depended on the mere will to discover the strongest, all would instantly, by the exercise of this simple will, be omnipotent logicians. But all are not omnipotent logicians; for the intermediate conceptions which rise to one mind, do not rise to others; and the relations, therefore, which those intermediate conceptions suggest, are felt of course, and stated, only by those to whom the conceptions which suggest them have arisen.

The differences of opinion in mankind, then, far from being wonderful, are such as must have arisen, though there had been no other cause of difference than the variety of the conceptions, which, by the simple laws of suggestion, occur in the various trains of thought of individuals, diversifying, of course, the order of propositions in their reasonings, and consequently the relation which the conclusion involves. The objects compared, at every stage of the argument, have been different; and the results of the comparison of different objects, therefore, cannot well be expected to be the same. I formerly alluded to a whimsical speculation of Diderot, in which he personifies the senses, and makes them members of a society, capable of holding communication with each other, and of discoursing scientifically, on one subject at least,—that of numbers, in the calculations of which, he conceives that each of them might become as expert as the most expert arithmeticians. In all their other colloquies, however, it is quite evident that each must appear to the rest absolutely insane; because each must speak of objects and relations, of which the others would be incapable of forming even the slightest notion. "I shall remark only," says Diderot, "that, in such a case, the richer any sense was, in notions peculiar to itself, the more extravagant would it appear to the rest,—that the stupidest of the whole would, therefore, infallibly be the one that would count itself the wisest,—that a sense would seldom be contradicted, except on subjects which it knew the best, and that there always would be four wrong, against the one that was right; which may serve to give a very fair opinion of the judgments of the multitude."* In the reasonings of mankind, indeed, the sources of difference are not so striking and obvious, as in this allegorical society. But, in many instances, they are nearly as much so; and merely because the same order of propositions, that is to say, the same order of conceptions and relative feelings, has not arisen in the reasonings of the ignorant, they laugh inwardly at the follies and extravagance of the wise, with the same wonder and disdain with which, in Diderot's fabled society of the senses, the Ear would have listened to the Eye, when it spoke, with calm philosophy, of forms and colours, or which, in return, the Eye would have felt for the seeming madness of the Ear, when it raved, in its strange ecstasies, of airs and harmonies.

The different order of propositions in our trains of reasoning, and, consequently, in a

* Œuvres, tom. II. p. 133-4.

great measure, the different results of reasoning, may, then, it appears, depend on the mere differences of simple suggestion, in consequence of which different relations are felt, because the relative objects suggested to the mind are different. But, in like manner, as there are, in different minds, different tendencies of simple suggestion, there are also, in different minds, peculiar tendencies to different relative suggestions, from the contemplation of the same objects. Any two objects may have various relations, and may, therefore, suggest these variously. The same two columns, for example, when we look at the remains of ancient splendour, in some magnificent ruin, may, in the moment of the first suggestion, produce, in our mind, the feeling of their resemblance or difference, —of their relative position,—of their comparative degrees of beauty,—of their proportion in dimensions,—or various other relations that may be easily imagined, which connect them, as parts of one whole, with the melancholy traces of present decay, or the still more melancholy vestiges of the flourishing past. In different minds, there is a tendency to feel some of these relations, more than others,—a tendency which may be traced, in part, to original constitutional diversities; but which depends also, in part, on factitious habits, and on transient circumstances of the moment, intellectual or bodily. In short, there are secondary laws of relative suggestion, constitutional, habitual, and temporary, as there are secondary laws of simple suggestion, in like manner, constitutional, habitual, and temporary; and these secondary laws, as well as those of simple suggestion, since they vary the relations which are felt by individuals, and, therefore, the results of reflective thought, which different individuals present to the world, are unquestionably to be taken into account, in our estimation of diversities of genius,—diversities that consist both in the variety of the conceptions which arise and the variety of the relations which those conceptions suggest,—and which, as one splendid compound, you are now, I flatter myself, able to reduce to the simple elements that compose it.

From the influence, then, which education has on the tendencies, both of simple and relative suggestion, we can, in this way, indirectly produce, in part, that sagacity, or ready discovery of means of proof which I have shown to be absolutely beyond our direct volition. We can continually render ourselves acquainted with more objects, and can thus increase the store of possible suggestions, which may, on occasion, present to us new means of proof; and we can even, by the influence of certain habits, so modify the general tendency of suggestion, that certain relations, rather than others, shall rise to the mind, or shall rise, at least, more rapidly and readily. How many arguments occur to a well-cultivated understanding, in treating every subject which comes beneath its review, that never would have occurred to others;—and, though not one of the separate suggestions, which either strengthen or adorn the reasoning, has been the object of a particular volition,—the general cultivation, from which they all flow, has been willed, and would not have taken place but for that love of letters and science which continued to animate the studies which it produced,—making it delightful to know what it was happiness almost to wish to learn.

These remarks, on the order of propositions which constitute reasoning, have shown you, I trust, that they depend on tendencies of the mind more lasting than our momentary volitions,—that the relations which they involve could not be felt by us, unless we had previously the conceptions, which are the subjects of the relations,—and that it is impossible for us to will any one of these conceptions; since, in that case, the conception must have existed before it was willed into existence. The conceptions, then, and the feelings of relation, —that is to say, the propositions in the order in which they present themselves to our internal thought,—arise, by the simple laws of suggestion only, —conception suggesting conception, and that which is suggested being felt to have a relation of some sort to the conception which suggested it.

The laws of simple suggestion,—according to which conceptions do not follow each other loosely, but those only which have a certain relation of some sort to each other, —furnish, as I have already said, the true explanation of the regularity of our reasonings. While there is a continued desire of discovering the relations of any particular object, it is not wonderful that, with this continued desire, the reasoning should itself be continuous; since the remaining conception of the object, the relations of which we wish to explore, and which must be as permanent as the permanent desire that involves it, will, of course, suggest the conception of objects related to it; and, therefore, the relations themselves, as subsequent feelings of the mind. If we wish to discover the proportion of A to D, these conceptions, as long as the very wish which involves them remains, must, by the simple laws of suggestion, excite other conceptions related to them; and, in the multitude of relative objects, thus capable of being suggested, it is not wonderful that there should be some one B or C, which has a common relation to both A and D; and which, therefore, becomes a measure for comparing them, or suggests this very relation, without any such

intentional comparison. Indeed, since A and D, both conceived together, form one complex feeling of the mind, it might be expected, that the relative objects most likely to arise by suggestion, would be such as have a common relation to both parts—if I may so term them—of the complex feeling by which they are suggested,—the very proofs, or intermediate conceptions, which form the links of our demonstration.

You are aware that, in these remarks, I speak of the series of propositions that arise in our mind when we meditate on any subject, not of the series which we submit, in discourse or in written works, to the consideration of others. Though it is impossible for us, even in these cases, to will a single conception or a single feeling of relation,—since this would be to will into existence that which already exists,—it is, unquestionably, in our power not to clothe in words the conceptions or relations that have arisen in our thought; and, by this mere omission of the parts of our internal series, which we regret as feeble, or irrelative to our principal object, the whole series of propositions, as expressed, may seem very different, certainly far more forcible than that which really passed through our mind, and produced in us that conviction or persuasion which we wish to diffuse. But still it must be remembered, that it is the omission only which makes the difference, and that, in the whole series of propositions which we express in language, there is not a single conception or feeling of relation which we have directly willed.

Such is the process of ratiocination, considered as a natural process of the mind. But what are we to think of that art of reasoning, which, for so many ages, banished reason from the schools;—of that art which rendered it so laborious a drudgery to be a little more ignorant than before, which could produce so much disputation without any subject of dispute, and so many proud victories of nothing over less than nothing! I need not say that it is to the scholastic art of logic I allude.

That there may be, or rather that there is a rational logic, I am far from denying; and that many useful directions, in conformity with a certain system of rules, may be given to the unexperienced student that may facilitate to him acquisitions of knowledge, which, but for such directions, he would have made only more slowly, or perhaps not made at all. The art of reasoning, however, which a judicious logic affords, is not so much the art of acquiring knowledge as the art of communicating it to others, or recording it in the manner that may be most profitable for our own future advancement in the track which we have been pursuing. Its direct benefit to ourselves is rather negative than positive—teaching us the sources of error in our mental constitution, and in all the accidental circumstances of the language which we are obliged to use, and the society in which we must mingle,—and thus rather saving us from what is false, than bestowing on us what is true. Indeed, since we cannot, as I have shown, produce directly in our mind any one conception, or any one feeling of relation, it is very evident that the influence of any art of reasoning on our trains of thought must be indirect only.

But if an art of reasoning is to be given to us, it is surely to be an art which is to render the acquisition of knowledge more easy, not more difficult; an art which is to avail itself of the natural tendency of the mind to the discovery of truth, not to counteract this tendency, and to force the mind, if it be possible, to suspend the very progress which was leading it to truth. With which of these characters did the syllogistic logic more exactly correspond?

The natural progress of reasoning I have already explained to you, and illustrated by examples both of the analytic and proportional kind. One conception follows another conception, according to certain laws of suggestion, to which our Divine Author has adapted our mental constitution; and, by another set of laws, which the same Divine Author has established, certain feelings of relation arise from the consideration of the suggesting and suggested object. This is all in which reasoning, as felt by us, truly consists. We have the conception of A, it suggests B, and, these two conceptions coexisting, we feel some relation which they bear to each other. B, thus suggested, suggests C; and the relation of these is felt in like manner,—and thus, through the longest ratiocination, analytical or proportional, each subject of our thought suggests something which forms a part of it and is involved in it, or something which has to it a certain relation of proportion; and the relation of comprehension in the one case, or of proportion in the other case, is felt accordingly at every step. Nothing, surely, can be simpler than a process of this kind; and it is not easy to conceive how the process could be made shorter than nature herself has rendered it, unless every truth were known to us by intuition. Objects, and the relation of objects,—these are all which reasoning involves; and these must always be involved in every reasoning. While reasoning, then, or a series of propositions, is necessary for the development of truth, the intervening conceptions which form the subjects of those propositions that connect one remote conception with another must arise successively in the mind, and their relations be felt, in like manner, successive-

ly. What is it which the syllogistic art would confer on us in addition? To shorten the process of arriving at truth, it forces us to use, in every case, three propositions instead of the two which nature directs us to use. Instead of allowing us to say man is fallible—he may therefore err even when he thinks himself most secure from error—which is the spontaneous order of analysis in reasoning,—the syllogistic art compels us to take a longer journey to the same conclusion, by the use of what it calls a major proposition,—a proposition which never rises spontaneously, for the best of all reasons, that it cannot rise without our knowledge of the very truth which is by supposition unknown. To proceed, in the regular form of a syllogism, we must say, all beings that are fallible may err, even when they think themselves most secure from error. But man is a fallible being—he may therefore err, even when he thinks himself most secure from error. In our spontaneous reasonings, in which we arrive at precisely the same conclusions, and with a feeling of evidence precisely the same, there are, as I have said, no major propositions, but simply what, in this futile art, are termed technically the minor and the conclusion. The invention and formal statement of a major proposition, then, in every case, serve only to retard the progress of discovery, not to quicken it, or render it, in the slightest degree, more sure.

This retardation of the progress of reasoning is one circumstance which distinguishes the syllogism; but the absurdity, which is implied in the very theory of it, distinguishes it still more. It constantly assumes, as the first stage of that reasoning by which we are to arrive at a particular truth, our previous knowledge of that particular truth. The major is the very conclusion itself under another form, and its truth is not more felt than that which it professes to develope. Thus, to take one of the trifling examples which, in books of logic, are usually given, with a most appropriate selection, to illustrate this worse than trifling art—when, in order to prove that John is a sinner, I do not adduce any particular sin of which he has been guilty, but draw up my accusation more irresistibly, by the major of a syllogism. All men are sinners. John is a man, therefore John is a sinner. If I really attached any meaning to my major proposition, all men are sinners, I must, at that very moment, have felt as completely that John was a sinner, as after I had pursued him, technically, through the minor and conclusion.

The great error of the theory of the syllogism—an error which, if my time allowed, it would be interesting to trace in its relation to the ideal systems of forms and species, which prevailed when the syllogistic art was invented, and during the long ages of its sway—consisted in supposing that, because all our knowledge may be technically reduced, in some measure, to general maxims, these maxims have naturally a prior and paramount existence in our thought, and give rise to those very reasonings which, on the contrary, give rise to them.

It is not on account of our previous assent to the axiom,—A whole is greater than a part,—that we believe any particular whole to be greater than any part of it; but we feel this truth in every particular case, by its own intuitive evidence, and the axiom only expresses briefly our various feelings of this kind without giving occasion to them. The infant from whom half his cake has been taken, and who has seen it taken, and who yet does not believe that he has less cake afterwards than he had before, is very likely to prove a most obstinate denier of that general proposition by which we might attempt to convince him that he now must have less cake than he had at first, because a whole is greater than a part, and consequently a part less than a whole. "Is it impossible," says Locke, "to know that one and two are equal to three, but by virtue of this or some such axiom, the whole is equal to all its parts taken together? Many a one knows that one and two are equal to three, without having heard or thought on that or any other axiom by which it might be proved; and knows it as certainly as any other man knows that the whole is equal to all its parts, or any other maxim, and all from the same principle of self-evidence; the equality of those ideas being as visible and certain to him, without that or any other axiom, as with it,—it needing no proof to make it perceived. Nor, after the knowledge that the whole is equal to all its parts, does he know that one and two are equal to three better or more certainly than he did before; for, if there be any odds in those ideas, the whole and parts are more obscure, or at least more difficult to be settled in the mind, than those of one, two, and three."*

The general axiom, then, is in every case posterior to the separate feelings, of which it is only the brief expression, or at least, without which, as prior to our verbal statement of the axiom, the axiom itself never could have formed a part of our system of knowledge. The syllogism, therefore, which proceeds from the axiom to the demonstration of particulars, reverses completely the order of reasoning, and begins with the conclusion, in order to teach us how we may arrive at it. It is, in the great journey of truth, as if, in any of our common journeyings from place to place—from Edinburgh to Lon-

* Essay Concerning Human Understanding, B. iv. c. vii. sect. 10.

don, for example—we were to be directed first to go to London, and then to find out York or some other intermediate town, when we might be quite sure of knowing the way from York to London, because we must already have travelled it. Is this the sort of direction which we could venture to give to any traveller, or would not every traveller, if we were to venture to give him such a direction, smile at our folly? It would have been happy for science if the similar folly of the dialectic directions of the schools had been as easily perceived. But we all know what it is to journey from place to place; and few know, accurately, what it is to journey from truth to truth. In the one case, we are fond of the shortest road, and very soon find out what that shortest road is. In the other case, it is by no means certain that we are fond of the shortest road, or at least we have an unfortunate tendency to believe that a road is the shortest possible, merely because, being a great deal longer, it may have made us go through much very rapid exercise to very little purpose.

"God has not been so sparing to men," says Mr. Locke, "as to make them barely two-legged animals,* and left it to Aristotle to make them rational."† Indeed the most convincing proof of their own independent rationality is, that, with the incumbrance of the logical system of the schools, they were able to shake this off, and to become reasoners in the true and noble sense of that term, by abandoning the art which made them only disputants.

LECTURE L.

ANALYSIS OF THE SCHOLASTIC LOGIC CONTINUED.—ORDER II. RELATIONS OF SUCCESSION.

In my last lecture, Gentlemen, after analysing the process of ratiocination, and explaining the laws on which the order of its regular series of propositions depends,—I proceeded to consider the logic of the schools as an instrument of reasoning,—not on account of any merits which I supposed it to possess, as a useful instrument for this purpose, but merely from that interest which even error itself acquires, when it is regarded as the error of all the wise, or of all who were considered as wise for many ages. The ruins of a mighty intellectual system must surely be viewed by us with some portion at least of that emotion which is so readily excited by the decaying monuments, and the mere workmanship of mechanic art, in the ruins of an ancient city, or even of the solitary castle of some distinguished chieftain. It is impossible not to pause on the intellectual ruin, as we would pause on some half-worn sculpture, or fallen column,—when the same column or sculpture, if existing entire in any modern edifice, would scarcely attract our regard.

In considering this ancient system,—ancient, unfortunately, only if we date it from the period at which it began its destructive reign, and not, if we date it from the period of its decay,—I endeavoured to show you, by a comparison of the process of the syllogistic art with the process by which, without any such artificial system, we advance from truth to truth, in those progressive feelings of relation which arise when we are said to reflect or meditate on a subject, how much simpler and shorter the natural process of two propositions at every stage is, than the artificial process of three at every stage; and what inconsistency is implied, in the very theory of the syllogism, if considered as an art of acquiring truth, and not merely as an art of communicating it; since the very knowledge implied in the major proposition, which, in the syllogism, is the first proposition of the series, supposes the previous feeling of that relation, which is expressed in the conclusion, for the discovery of which ultimate relation alone the syllogism is supposed to be invented. If we have previously felt this relation, which the conclusion expresses, we have evidently no need of the syllogism, which is technically to unfold it to us: if we have not previously felt it, we cannot admit the major proposition of the syllogism, which is the first step of the reasoning; and that which teaches us, by a series of propositions, only what we have admitted already, before the first proposition, cannot surely be supposed to add much to our stock of truths.

The natural process of reasoning, by two propositions, instead of the three, which the syllogism would force us to use, has been allowed, indeed, by logicians to have a place in their system; because, with all their fondness for their own technical modes and figures, they had not quite sufficient hardihood to deny, that it is at least possible for us to reason sometimes, as in truth we always reason. Their only resource, therefore, was to reduce this natural process under their own artificial method, and to give it a name, which might imply the necessity of this reduction, before the reasoning itself could be worthy of that honourable title. They supposed, accordingly, the proposition, which was technically wanting, to be understood in the mind of the thinker or hearer, and termed the reasoning, therefore, an enthymeme. It was, they said, a truncated or imperfect syllogism. They

* Creatures.—Orig.

† Essay concerning Human Understanding, B. iv. c. xvii. sect. 4.

would have expressed themselves more accurately, if they had described their own syllogism, or, in its relation to the natural analytic process of our thought, a cumbrous and overloaded enthymeme.

The imperfection of syllogism, as an instrument of reasoning for the acquisition of knowledge, is strikingly shown by the very examples which every writer on the subject employs to illustrate its power. If all the instances that have been used, for this purpose, in the innumerable works of the schoolmen, were collected together,—though they might make a pretty large volume, they would not communicate to the most ignorant reader a single truth; and can we think, then, that the superior facility, which it gives for the discovery of truth, is an excellence to which it may fairly lay claim? If the art could have been made profitable, in any way, for discovery, there can be no doubt that some zealous admirer of it, in the enthusiasm of his admiration, would have illustrated its power by some applications of it that were more than verbal trifling. Yet, I may safely venture to say, that a mere perusal of the reasonings, brought forward as illustrative of the power of the syllogism, would be sufficient to convince the reader, if he had any doubt before, of the absolute inefficacy of the art, of which he was perusing the shadowy achievements.

It is very justly remarked, by Dr. Reid,—in his "Brief Account of Aristotle's Logic," published by Lord Kames, in the last volume of his Sketches,—"That the defects of this system were less apparent, in the original works of its inventor, than in the works of his commentators,—from this circumstance, that Aristotle, in discussing the legitimate syllogisms, never makes use of real syllogisms to illustrate his rules, but avails himself of the mere letters of the alphabet, as representative of the subjects and predicates of his propositions."* "The commentators, and systematical writers in logic," says Dr. Reid, "have supplied this defect, and given us real examples, of every legitimate mode, in all the figures. We acknowledge this to be charitably done, in order to assist the conception in matters so very abstract; but whether it was prudently done for the honour of the art, may be doubted. I am afraid this was to uncover the nakedness of the theory: it has undoubtedly contributed to bring it into contempt; for when one considers the silly and uninstructive reasonings that have been brought forth by this grand organ of science, he can hardly forbear crying out, 'Parturiunt montes, et nascitur ridiculus mus.' Many of the writers on logic," continues Dr. Reid, "are acute and ingenious, and much practised in the syllogistical art; and there must be some reason, why the examples they have given of syllogisms are so lean."†

The reason of this leanness, of which Dr. Reid speaks, is not very difficult of discovery. It is to be found in the nature of the syllogism itself, which, as I have shown, assumes, and must assume, in every case, as evident, and already felt, in the major proposition, the very truth which the technical reasoner is afterwards supposed to discover by the aid of the two following propositions. No choice, therefore, was left to the illustrator of the technical process, but of such puerile and profitless examples as have been uniformly employed for illustration; because any other examples would have shown the total inapplicability of his boasted art. It is very evident, that the art could not be regarded as of the slightest efficacy, unless the conclusion, which was the important proposition, were to be attended with belief; and since the truth of the conclusion, if felt at all, must, as I have shown, have been felt, before the major proposition itself could have been admitted, this primary feeling of the truth of the conclusion, before the opening of the argument, necessarily limited the argument itself to the demonstration of propositions, of which no proof was requisite. Since the major is only another form of expressing the conclusion, it is manifest, that, if the syllogism had attempted to add any thing to our knowledge, it must have enunciated something in the major proposition which was previously unknown,—which, therefore, as unknown, we should have required to be itself proved, and of which the remaining propositions of the syllogism were far from affording any proof. To obtain immediate assent, therefore, for the major, it was absolutely necessary not to enunciate in it any thing which was not either self-evident or previously demonstrated; and the unfortunate logician, if he expected his syllogism to be credited, was thus obliged to show the wonders of his art, by proving Peter to be a sinner, because all men are sinners; or demonstrating that a horse has four legs, because it is a quadruped. All quadrupeds have four legs—but a horse is a quadruped—therefore a horse has four legs.

These remarks, though relating chiefly to the influence of this technical process, as a supposed mode of facilitating the acquisition of knowledge in our own meditative reasonings, may have already shown you, that, if the syllogism was inefficacious, and, I may say, even worse than inefficacious, as a process for discovering truth, it was not less inadequate as an instrument for communicat-

* Ch. iv. sect. 3.—The language somewhat varied.

† Ch. iv. sect. 3.

ing truth to others; though it is for its supposed advantages in this respect that, of late at least, when we are beginning to recover from our transcendental admiration of it, it has been chiefly panegyrized or defended. A very little attention to the nature of the different propositions of the syllogism will be sufficient to show that the same fundamental error, which renders it useless for discovering truth, renders it equally useless for the development of it; and that, as our internal reasoning is only a series of enthymemes, it is only by such a series of enthymemes as that by which truth unfolds itself to our own minds, that it can be successfully unfolded to the minds of others.

In the attempt to communicate knowledge by the technical forms of reasoning, the major proposition, as first stated in the argument, must of course have been supposed to be understood and admitted when stated, since, if not admitted by the hearer or reader as soon as stated, it would itself stand in need of proof; and, if it was so understood and admitted, of what use could the remaining propositions of the syllogism be, since they could communicate no truth that was not communicated and felt before? There is no absurdity in supposing, that we may admit the conclusion of a syllogism, without admitting the major proposition; since the major, though it involves the conclusion, involves some more general relations. We may admit, for example, that Peter is six feet high, though, if his stature were attempted to be demonstrated to us by the syllogism—All men are six feet high, but Peter is a man, therefore Peter is six feet high,—we should certainly object to the major proposition, and form our belief only on particular observation of the individual. But though we may thus admit the proposition which forms the conclusion of a syllogism, without admitting the major proposition, from which it is said to flow, it is absolutely impossible that we should know the meaning of the major, and admit it, without admitting also, tacitly, indeed, but with equal feeling of its truth, the conclusion itself. The whole question, as we have seen, relates to the feeling of the truth of the major proposition; for, if it be true, and felt to be true, all the rest is already allowed; and yet this most important of all propositions, which, if the conclusion be of a kind that demands proof, must itself demand proof still more, is the very proposition which is most preposterously submitted to us in the first place for our assent, without any proof whatever,—the honour of a proof being reserved only for a proposition, which, if the major require no proof, must be itself too clear to stand in need of it. As a mode of communicating knowledge, therefore, the syllogism is, if possible, still more defective than as a mode of acquiring it. It does not give any additional knowledge, nor communicate the knowledge which it does communicate in any simpler, or shorter, or surer way. On the contrary, whatever knowledge it gives, it renders more confused by being more cumbrous; and it cannot fail to train the mind, which receives instruction in this way, to two of the most dangerous practical errors,—the errors of admitting, without proof, only what requires proof, and of doubting, that is to say, of requiring proof, only of what is evident. Such is the syllogism, considered as an instrument, either for facilitating our own attainments in knowledge or for communicating these attainments to others.

The triumph of the syllogistic art, it must be confessed, however, is not as an art of acquiring or communicating truth, but as an art of disputation—as the great art of proving anything by anything, quidlibet per quodlibet probandi. And, if it be a merit to be able to dispute long and equally well, on subjects known and unknown, to vanquish an opponent, by being in the wrong, and sometimes too by being in the right, but without the slightest regard either to the right or wrong, and merely as these accidental circumstances may have corresponded with certain skilful uses of terms without a meaning,—this merit the logicians of the schools unquestionably might claim. Indeed, in controversies of this sort, in those ages of endless controversy, "success," as it has been very truly remarked, "tended no more to decide the question, than a man's killing his antagonist in a duel serves now to satisfy any person of sense that the victor had right on his side, and that the vanquished was in the wrong."

Of this system of logic, the views given by philosophers, during the period in which it flourished, are almost innumerable; and, in no other works can we find so striking a mixture of intellectual strength and intellectual weakness, of acuteness, capable of making the nicest and most subtile distinctions, with an imbecility of judgment, incapable of estimating the insignificance of any one of those subjects on which so many nice and subtile distinctions were made. All these commentaries, and systematic views, however,—though all that is valuable in them were condensed into a few pages—would scarcely be equal in value to the few pages of a commentary of a different kind; in which the maxims of logic are adapted, with most singular happiness, to a ludicrous theory of syllogisms, the striking coincidences of which with the actual laws of the syllogism will be best felt by those to whom the rules of syllogizing are almost familiar.

"Though I'm afraid I have transgressed

upon my reader's patience already, I cannot help taking notice of one thing more extraordinary than any yet mentioned; which was Crambe's Treatise of Syllogisms. He supposed that a philosopher's brain was like a great forest, where ideas ranged like animals of several kiuds; that those ideas copulated, and engendered conclusions; that when those of different species copulate, they bring forth monsters or absurdities; that the major is the male, the minor the female, which copulate by the middle term, and engender the conclusion. Hence they are called the *præmissa*, or predecessors of the conclusion; and it is properly said by the logicians *quod pariant scientiam, opinionem*, they beget science, opinion, &c. Universal propositions are persons of quality; and therefore in logic they are said to be of the first figure. Singular propositions are private persons, and therefore placed in the third or last figure, or rank. From those principles all the rules of syllogisms naturally follow.

"I. That there are only three terms, neither more nor less; for to a child there can be only one father and one mother.

"II. From universal premises there follows an universal conclusion, as if one should say, that persons of quality always beget persons of quality.

"III. From singular premises follows only a singular conclusion, that is, if the parents be only private people, the issue must be so likewise.

"IV. From particular propositions nothing can be concluded, because the *individua vaga* are (like whoremasters and common strumpets) barren.

"V. There cannot be more in the conclusion than was in the premises, that is, children can only inherit from their parents.

"VI. The conclusion follows the weaker part, that is, children inherit the diseases of their parents.

"VII. From two negatives nothing can be concluded, for from divorce or separation there can come no issue.

"VIII. The medium cannot enter the conclusion, that being logical incest.

"IX. An hypothetical proposition is only a contract, or a promise of marriage; from such, therefore, there can spring no real issue.

"X. When the premises, or parents, are necessarily joined, (or in lawful wedlock,) they beget lawful issue; but contingently joined, they beget bastards.

"So much for the affirmative propositions; the negative must be deferred to another occasion.

"Crambe used to value himself upon this system, from whence he said one might see the propriety of the expression,—such a one has a barren imagination; and how common is it for such people to adopt conclusions that are not the issue of their premises; therefore as an absurdity is a monster, a falsity is a bastard; and a true conclusion that followeth not from the premises, may properly be said to be adopted. But then what is an enthymeme? (quoth Cornelius.) Why, an enthymeme (replied Crambe,) is when the major is indeed married to the minor, but the marriage kept secret."*

Of the direct influence of the school logic, in retarding, and almost wholly preventing the progress of every better science, I need not attempt any additional illustration, after the remarks already offered. But the indirect influences of this art were not less hurtful.

One of the most hurtful consequences of this method, was the ready disguise of venerable ratiocination which it afforded for any absurdity. However futile an explanation might be, it was still possible to advance it in all the customary solemnities of mood and figure; and it was very natural, therefore, for those who heard what they had been accustomed to regard as reasoning, to believe, that, in hearing a reasoning, they had heard a reason. Of this I may take an instance which Lord Kames has quoted from the great inventor of the system himself, and one which very few of his followers have been able to surpass. "Aristotle, who wrote a book about mechanics, was much puzzled about the equilibrium of a balance, when unequal weights are hung upon it, at different distances from the centre. Having observed that the arms of the balance describe portions of a circle, he accounted for the equilibrium by a notable argument. 'All the properties of the circle are wonderful. The equilibrium of the two weights that describe portions of a circle is wonderful; therefore the equilibrium must be one of the properties of the circle.' What are we to think of Aristotle's logic," continues Lord Kames, "when we find him capable of such childish reasoning? and yet that work has been the admiration of all the world, for centuries upon centuries—nay, that foolish argument has been espoused and commented upon, by his disciples, for the same length of time."†

As another very hurtful consequence of this technical system, I may remark, that the constant necessity of having recourse to some syllogistic form of argument, and of using these forms, in cases in which the opinions, involved in the syllogism, were at least as clear before the syllogism as after it, rendered argument and belief, by a sort of indissoluble association, almost synonymous terms. If we had still to prove John to be

* Memoirs of Martinus Scriblerus, B. i. c. 8.
† Sketches of the History of Man, B. iii. Sk. i. 2.

fallible, after having proved, or at least obtained assent to the proposition, that all men are fallible, it was not easy to discover any truth so self-evident as not to stand at least equally in need of demonstration. Hence the constant tendency in the scholastic ages to prove what did not stand in need of proof. Every thing was *to be* demonstrated and every thing *was* demonstrated; though it must be confessed, that the only effect of the demonstration frequently was to render obscure—at least as obscure as any thing self-evident could be rendered—what, but for the demonstration, could not have admitted of the slightest doubt.

Akin to this tendency of proving every thing—even self-evident propositions—by some syllogistic form, was the tendency which the mind acquired, to apply many varieties of technical phraseology to the same proposition, so as to make many propositions of one, as if every repetition of it, in another form of language, were the enunciation of another truth. It is impossible to take up a volume of any of the old logicians, and to read a single page of it, without discovering innumerable examples of the influence of which I speak. Indeed, as the forms of technical expression, or at least the possible combinations of these, are almost infinite, it is, in many cases, difficult to discover what principle of forbearance and mercy to the reader led the logician to stop at one of his identical propositions, rather than to extend the supposed ratiocination through many similar pages. There can be no doubt, at least, that the principle which produced many pages, might, with as much reason, have produced a whole volume.

It is not easy to imagine a proposition that would less stand in need of proof than that which affirms what is possible and what is impossible, not to be the same; or if, for the honour of logic, that nothing might be allowed to be credited without mood and figure, a syllogism should be thought necessary, a single syllogism seems all that could, with any decency, be claimed. But how many syllogisms does an expert logician employ to remove all doubt from this hardy proposition! The example which I take is not from those darker ages in which almost any absurdity may readily be supposed, but from the period which produced the *Essay on the Human Understanding*. It is from a work of a logician, David Dirodon, a professor in one of the French universities—an author, too, of no ordinary merit, who, in many cases, reasons with singular acuteness, and whose works were held in such high admiration, that he was requested, by a provincial synod of the church, to make as much haste as possible to publish his course of philosophy for the benefit of the churches, *tanquam ecclesiis nostris pernecessarium*. The argument which I quote from him, may be considered, therefore, not as an instance of logical pleonasm peculiar to him, but as a very fair example of the technical argumentation of the period.

His demonstration, that things possible and things impossible are not the same, is contained in six weighty paragraphs, of which I translate literally the first two, that are sufficiently absurd indeed, but not more absurd than the paragraphs which follow them.

"Whatever, of itself and in itself, includes things contradictory, differs in itself from that which, of itself and in itself, does not imply any thing contradictory. But what is impossible of itself and in itself, involves things contradictory,—for example, an irrational human being, a round square. But what is possible of itself and in itself, includes no contradiction. Therefore, what is impossible in itself, differs from what is possible.

Things contradictory are not the same; for example, a man, and not a man. But what is possible in itself and impossible in itself are contradictory, which I prove thus:—What is possible in itself and what is impossible in itself, are contradictory: But what is impossible in itself, is not possible in itself; therefore what is possible in itself, and what is impossible in itself, are contradictory; therefore they are not the same in themselves.

"Quod ex se et in se includit contradictoria, differt in se ab eo quod ex se, et in se non involvit contradictoria. Sed impossibile, ex se, et in se involvit contradictoria; puta homo irrationalis, quadratum rotundum, &c. Possibile vero ex se, et in se non includit contradictoria. Ergo, impossibile in se differt a possibili.

"Contradictoria non sunt idem; puta homo et non homo. Sed possibile in se et impossibile in se sunt contradictoria, quod sic probatur. Possibile in se, et non possibile in se, sunt contradictoria. Sed impossibile in se est non possibile. Ergo, possibile in se, et impossibile in se, sunt contradictoria. Ergo in se non sunt idem."*

I have already said, that the two paragraphs which I have quoted, are but a small part of the ratiocination; for, as the reasoner supposes his adversary to be very obstinate, he thinks it necessary to assail him with a multitude of arguments, even after these which he has so strenuously urged.

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* Dirodonis Philosophiæ Contractæ, Pars II. quæ est Metaphysica, Pars I. cap. i. sect. 10, 11.—The same subject is treated at much greater length, in his larger work on Metaphysics, from the 9th to the 28th page.

What but the constant habit of mere verbal disputation could have reconciled even the dullest reasoner to such reasoning as this? If we had not previously believed what is impossible, and what is possible, not to be in themselves the same, could we have believed it more, after all this labour? The only circumstance which could make us have any doubt on the subject, is the long labour of such a demonstration, in which the truth is almost hid from our view by the multitude of words.

"So spins the silkworm small, its slender store,
And harbours till it clouds itself all o'er."*

The reign of this philosophy may now, indeed be considered merely as a thing which has been, for it is scarcely necessary to speak of one or two devoted admirers of the Aristotelian method, who may, perhaps, not yet have vanished from among us,—thrown as they are, unfortunately, on too late an age, with opinions, which, in other ages, might have raised them to the most envied distinctions —who love what is very ancient, and who love what is written in Greek, and who have, therefore, two irresistible reasons for venerating that philosophy, which is unquestionably much older than Newton, or Des Cartes, or Bacon, and, as unquestionably, written in a language which saves it from vulgar eyes. Or rather, to speak with more candour of such misplaced sages of other times, there may, perhaps, be some few generous, but erring lovers of wisdom, who, impressed with the real merits of Aristotle, and with the majesty of that academic sway, which he exercised for so long a period of the history of our race, give him credit for merit still greater and more extensive than he really possessed,—but merit it must, at the same time, be acknowledged, which was long as indisputable as his real excellence, and which all the learned and honoured, of every nation, in which learning could confer honour, united in ascribing to him, and gloried in being his worshippers. The worship, however, is now past, but there are effects of the worship which still remain. We have laid aside the superstition; but, as often happens, in laying aside the superstition, we have retained many of the superstitious practices.

That we reason worse than we should have done, if our ancestors had reasoned better, there can be no doubt, because we should have profited by the results of their better reasoning; but I have almost as little doubt that we suffer from their errors, in another way, by having imbibed, as it was scarcely possible for us not to imbibe, some portion of the spirit of their Dialectic subtilties; some greater passion, for distinctions merely verbal, and for laborious demonstrations of things self-evident, than we should have felt, from the mere imperfection of our intellectual nature, if the logic of Aristotle had never been.

In the division which I made of the relations suggested, by objects either perceived or conceived by us, I arranged these relations in two classes,—those of *Coexistence* and *Succession*. I have now considered, as fully as my limits will permit, the former of these classes, both as the relations occur separately, and as they occur in those series which constitute reasoning, that at each step are only progressive feelings of relation, varying as the conceptions of the relative objects are different, and connected with each other, because the conceptions that arise in the course of the reasoning, are not loose, but regular. The inquiry has led us into some of the most interesting discussions, in the Philosophy of the Mind,—discussions, interesting from their own absolute importance, and, I may add, from the peculiar obscurity which has been supposed to hang over these processes of thought, though, as I flatter myself, you have seen, this obscurity does not arise so much from any peculiar difficulty in the subject as from the labour which has been generally, or, I may say, almost universally, employed to make it difficult. For many ages, indeed, all the powers of the human understanding seem to have had scarcely any other occupation than that of darkening the whole scene of nature, material and intellectual,—that scene, on which the light of nature and the light of Heaven were shining, as they shine upon it now, and in which it seemed to require all those efforts of voluntary ignorance, which the wise of those ages were so skilful and so successful in making, not to see what was before them, and on every side. You have all, perhaps, read or heard of that celebrated sage of antiquity, who is said to have put out his eyes, for no other purpose than that he might study nature better; and, if the anecdote, which there is no reason to credit, were true, it would certainly have been a sufficient proof of that insanity which his fellow-citizens, on another celebrated occasion, ascribed to him. What Democritus is thus said to have done, is the very folly in which all mankind concurred for a long succession of centuries. They put out their eyes that they might see nature better; and they saw, as might be supposed, only the dreams of their own imagination.

The order of relations which we have next to consider, are those which, as involving the notion of time, or priority and subsequence, I have denominated Relations of Succession. On these, however, it will not

* Pope's Works—Dunciad, B. iv. v. 253-4.

be necessary to dwell at any length. They require, indeed, very little more than to be simply mentioned,—the only questions of difficulty which they involve having been discussed fully in my Preliminary Lectures, in which it was necessary, before proceeding to examine the changes or affections of the mind in its varying phenomena, and the mental powers or susceptibilities which these changes or affections denote, that we should understand what is meant by the terms change and power, cause and effect. Any part of these discussions it would be quite superfluous now to repeat; since, after the full illustration of the Doctrine of Power or Efficiency, which I then submitted to you, and the frequent subsequent allusions to it, I may safely take for granted that the doctrine itself cannot have escaped from your memory.

The relations of succession, then, as the very name implies, are those which the subjects of these relations bear to each other, as prior or posterior in time. What we term a cause suggests its particular effect; what we term an effect suggests its particular cause, when we have previously become acquainted with their order of succession. If the cause, however, suggested nothing more than the simple conception of the effect, and the effect nothing more than the simple conception of the object which was its cause, the suggestions would, of course, be referable to the power or susceptibility formerly considered by us,—that of simple suggestion, or association, as it is commonly termed. But the cause does not suggest the effect, merely as a separate object of our thought, nor the effect the cause, as a separate object. It suggests also the new feeling of their mutual relation. When I look at a picture of Titian, for example, and the conception of the painter instantly arises, I do not think of Titian merely as an individual, unconnected with the object which I perceive, I do not think of him in the same manner as I may have thought of him repeatedly at other times when the reading of his name, or the mention of him in conversation on works of art, or any other accidental circumstance, may have recalled him to my mind. If I had only the conception of Titian as I may have conceived him in those other cases, the suggestion would be truly a simple suggestion; but this simple conception of the artist is instantly followed by another feeling of his connexion with that particular work of his art, which is before my eyes,—a relation which it requires no great analytic discrimination to separate from the simple conception itself, and which arises precisely in the same way as the other relations which have been considered by us,—the relation of resemblance, for example, when, in music, one air suggests to us a similar melody,—or the relation of proportion, when we think of the squares of the sides of a right angled triangle, in Pythagoras's celebrated theorem.

The relations of succession, then, are as distinct from the simple perceptions or conceptions which suggest them, and as truly indicative, therefore, of a peculiar power or susceptibility of the mind, as the relations of coexistence are distinct from the perceptions or conceptions which suggest them. They are relations either of casual or of invariable antecedence or consequence; and we distinguish these as clearly in our thought as we distinguish any other two relations. We speak of events which happened after other events as mere dates in chronology. We speak of other events as the effects of events or circumstances that preceded them. The relation of invariable antecedence and consequence, in distinction from merely casual antecedence and consequence, is, as I have already frequently stated, this relation of causes and effects. When I regard any object, and feel this relation of uniform proximity of succession, which it bears to some prior object, I term it an effect of that prior object. When I look forward instead of backward, and regard the present object in relation to some other object which is not yet existing, I feel a relation, which, in reference to the effect that is to be produced, may be termed fitness or aptitude, and it is on our knowledge of these fitnesses or aptitudes that all practical science is founded. By our acquaintance with this relation, we acquire a command, not merely of existing things, but almost of things that, as yet, have scarcely any more real existence than the creations of poetic fancy. We lead the future, almost at our will, as if it were already present. While mechanic hands are chipping the rough block, or adding slowly stone to stone, with little more foresight than of the place where the next stone is to be added, there is an eye which has already seen that imperial edifice in all its finished splendour, which other eyes are incapable of seeing, till year after year shall have unfolded, through a series of progressive changes, that finished form which is their ultimate result. What is true in architectural design is not less true in all the other arts which science has evolved. There are hands continually toiling to produce what exists already to the mind of that philosopher whom they almost blindly obey,—who, by his knowledge of the various aptitudes or things, knows not merely what is, but what must be,—beholding, through a long series of effects, that ultimate effect of convenience or beauty which is at once to add some new enjoyments to life, and to confer additional glory on the intellectual empire of that being whom God has formed to image, however faintly, the power by which he raised

him into existence. We cannot look around us without discovering, in every work of human art which meets our eye, the benefits which we have received from our knowledge of this one relation. Whatever industry has conferred upon us,—the security, the happiness, the splendour, and, in a great measure, the very virtues of social life,—are referable to it; since industry is nothing more than the practical application of those productive fitnesses which must have been felt and known before industry could begin.

"These are thy blessings, Industry, rough power,
Whom labour still attends, and sweat and pain;
Yet the kind source of every gentle art,
And all the soft civility of life:
Raiser of human kind! by Nature cast
Naked and helpless, out amid the woods
And wilds, to rude inclement elements!
And still the sad barbarian, roving, mix'd
With beasts of prey, or for his acorn meal
Fought the fierce tusky boar;—a shivering wretch
Aghast and comfortless, when the bleak North,
With winter, charged, let the mix'd tempest fly,
Hail, rain, and snow, and bitter-breathing frost:—
Then to the shelter of the hut he fled,
And the wild season, sordid, pined away.
For home he had not.—Home is the resort
Of love, of joy, of peace and plenty, where,
Supporting and supported, polish'd friends
And dear relations mingle into bliss.
But this the rugged savage never felt,
Ev'n desolate in crowds;—and thus his days
Roll'd heavy, dark, and unenjoy'd along.
A waste of time'—till Industry approach'd,
And roused him from his miserable sloth;
His faculties unfolded; pointed out
Where lavish Nature the directing hand
Of art demanded: show'd him how to raise
His feeble force by the mechanic powers,
To dig the mineral from the vaulted earth;
On what to turn the piercing rage of fire,
On what the torrent and the gather'd blast;
Gave the tall ancient forest to his axe;
Taught him to chip the wood and hew the stone,
Till, by degrees, the finish'd fabric rose;
Tore from his limbs the blood-polluted fur,
And wrapt him in the woolly vestment warm:—
Nor stopp'd at barren bare necessity,
But, still advancing bolder, led him on
To pomp, to pleasure, elegance and grace;
And, breathing high ambition through his soul,
Set science, wisdom, glory in his view,
And bade him be the lord of all below."*

Such is the value of that susceptibility of our mind, by which we feel the relations of objects to each other as successive, when considered in reference to what is commonly termed science. It has made us what we are; and when we think of what we now are, and of what the race of mankind once was,—to speculate on the future condition of man in those distant ages, which still await him on this scene of earth,—when new relations shall have been evolved in objects the most familiar to us, and new arts consequently developed, which, with our present knowledge, no genius can anticipate, is almost as if we were speculating on the possible functions and enjoyments of some higher being.

"How near he presses on the angel's wing!
Which is the seraph? which the child of clay?"
Young.

* Thomson's Seasons—Autumn, v. 43—49. 57—85, and 90—95.

LECTURE LI.

OF THE FEELINGS BELONGING TO THE ORDER OF SUCCESSION, CONCLUDED. REDUCTION OF CERTAIN SUPPOSED FACULTIES TO RELATIVE SUGGESTION; I. JUDGMENT; II. REASON; III. ABSTRACTION.

GENTLEMEN, in my last Lecture, I began the remarks which I had to offer on the relations of succession,—that order of relations which remained to be examined after our examination of the relations of coexistence.

Objects, or events, or feelings, when we consider them in the relation which they bear to each other as successive, may be regarded as casually prior or posterior, when they occur as parts of different trains, or as invariably antecedent and consequent, when they occur as parts of a single train in the order of causes and effects.

On the relation of objects, as casually successive, I felt it unnecessary to dwell at any length. It has already, indeed, been in some measure discussed, when I treated of the laws of those simple suggestions, or associate trains of images, which rise according to this relation of proximity in time. As there is nothing permanent in the relation, it scarcely can be counted an object of science. Its only advantage—but this a very great advantage—is that which it affords as an assistance to our memory, which is thus enabled to preserve much knowledge that might otherwise be lost; since we are able, by the accidental bearings of other events in time, to form a sort of chronology of many of those little events of life, that are great in relation to our wishes and affections, and that probably would have been forgotten, but for those fixed points, in the track of our life, which recall to us what lay between. By the aid of these, we are able to journey again over hours, and days, and months of happiness, in years the most remote, connecting together, in one delightful series, events which would have been of little moment if remembered singly, but which, when combined, are almost representative of the group of pleasures and friendships that existed once, but may perhaps exist to us no more; as in the similar order of contiguity in place, it would be productive but of slight gratification, if we were to think only of some separate tree, or rock, or stream, or meadow, of the landscape of our infancy. It is when the whole scene rises before us in combination, when the tree, under which we hollowed out our seat, waves over the rock, from which we have leapt with a sort of fearful delight to the opposite overhanging cliff, and the rivulet foams in the narrow channel

between, spreading out, afterwards, its waters in the sunny expanse in which we bathed, and separating the field of our sports from the churchyard, at which we have cast, in twilight, many a trembling glance; when all which nature blended before us, in the perceptions of our earliest years, thus coexists in our conception, it is then that we truly recognise the scene, not as an object of memory only, but as if present to our very eyes and heart. Such is the effect of the representation of objects in the order in which they coexisted in place; and it is not wonderful, that the feeling of the relation of their order in time should have a similar influence on our emotions, by giving unity of connexion, and thus, as it were, additional and more interesting reality to all which we remember. The priority and subsequence of the events remembered, according to this slight accidental relation, may have arisen, indeed, from circumstances the most unimportant in themselves; but it is enough to our feelings, that they arose thus successively, constituting a part of the very history of our life, and forming some of the many ties which connect us with those of whom the very remembrance is happiness. What was truly casual in its origin, almost ceases to appear to us casual, by the permanent connexions which it afterwards presents to our memory. Other successions of events may be imagined, which would have been more interesting to others, and in which it would have been easier to trace some principle of original connexion. But, though more regular, and more interesting to others, they would not have been the events of our youth; as a scene might perhaps readily be imagined, far more lovely to other eyes than the landscape of our early home, but in which our eyes, even in admiring its loveliness, would look in vain for a charm, which, if it be not beauty itself, is at least something still more tenderly delightful.

The relation even of casual succession, then, by the connexion and grouping of events to which it gives rise, and the consequent aid and interest which it yields to our remembrance, affords no slight accession of enjoyment and permanent utility. The relations of invariable antecedents and consequents, however, which are felt by us to be essentially different from mere casual proximity, and to be all that is truly involved in our notion of power or causation, are of much greater importance to that intellectual, and moral, and physical life, which may almost be said to depend on them. Even if they gave us nothing more than our knowledge of the uniform connexions of past events, as objects of mere speculative science, at once constituting and explaining the phenomena that excited our astonishment, and awoke that early curiosity which they have continued to busy ever since, they would furnish, by the view which they open of the powers of nature, and of all the gracious purposes to which those powers have been subservient, one of the sublimest delights of which our spiritual being is capable.

This gratification they would yield to us, even if we were to regard them only in the past, as objects of a science purely speculative. But, when we consider the relations of events, in their aptitudes to precede and follow, as equally diffused over the time that is to come, as presenting to us, everywhere, in the past or present sequences observed by us, the source of some future good or future evil; of good which we can obtain, and of evil which we can avoid, merely by knowing the order in which these past sequences have occurred; the knowledge of these invariable relations of succession becomes to us inestimable, not as a medium only of intellectual luxury, but as the medium of all the arts of life, and even of the continuance of our very physical existence, which is preserved only by an unceasing adaptation of our actions to the fitnesses or tendencies of external things.

All practical science is the knowledge of these aptitudes of things in their various circumstances of combination, as every art is the employment of them, in conformity with this knowledge, with a view to those future changes which they tend to produce in all the different circumstances in which objects can be placed. To know how to add any enjoyment to life, or how to lessen any of its evils, is nothing more, in any case, than to know some form of that particular relation which we are considering—the relation which objects bear to each other, as antecedent and consequent. In the conclusion of my last Lecture, I treated of it, in regard to the physical sciences and arts,—those intellectual energies, which have given to the savage man, and consequently to all mankind,—since, in every state of society, refined or rude, in the palace, as much as in the hut, or in the cave, man must be born a savage,—another life, a life almost as different from that with which he roams in the woods, as if he had been suddenly transported from the barren waste of earth to those Elysian groves of which poets speak, and that god-like company of bards, and heroes, and sages, with which they have peopled the delightful scene.

Of the importance of the feeling of this relation to the physical sciences, which is abundantly evident of itself, it would be vain to attempt to give any fuller illustration. But it must be remembered, that the mind is a subject of this relation, as much as the body; that there are aptitudes of producing certain feelings, as much as of producing certain material changes; and that the power which discerns or feels the mere aptitude,

in the one case, is not essentially distinct from the power which discerns or feels the mere aptitude, in the other case. The particular relations that are felt, are indeed different as the relative objects are different, but not that general susceptibility of the mind, by which it is capable of feeling the relation of fitness or unfitness. To foreknow, in mechanics, what combination of wheels and pullies will be able to elevate a certain weight, is to feel one sort of fitness, or relation of antecedence. To foreknow, in chemistry, what more powerful attraction will overcome an affinity that is weaker, and precipitate a substance, which we wish to obtain, from the liquid that holds it in solution, is to feel another sort of fitness. The particular feelings of relation, in these cases, imply acquirements that are very different; but no one, on account of this mere difference of the objects of which the relation of antecedence and consequence is felt, thinks of classing the chemical foresight as indicative of an intellectual power essentially different from that which, in the applications of mechanic foresight, feels the relation of the weights and pullies in a machine, and foresees, by a knowledge of this relation, the equilibrium or preponderance which is to result. The experience which gives the foresight, is indeed different, but the power which reasons from that different experience is the same. The susceptibility of the same feeling of the relation of productive aptitude, however, has, in certain mental cases, been supposed to be different, merely because its objects are different; and discriminations of mere fitness or unfitness, which are truly referable to the same simple capacity of relative suggestion, that foresees the future by knowing the present, have been formed into a class apart, as if not the discriminations only were different, but the power itself which has formed them.

When we feel any of the mechanical or chemical relations of succession, and predict, accordingly, events which are to take place, we are commonly said to do this by the power of reasoning. Even in many of the mental phenomena, when we venture, in like manner, to predict the future, from our knowledge of the relation of feelings to each other, as uniformly successive, we are said to make the prediction by the power of reasoning. When a statesman, for example, meditates on the probable effects of a particular law which is about to be enacted, and, from his knowledge of the interests, and passions, and prejudices, the wisdom and the very ignorance of man, calculates the relative amount of good and evil, which it may possibly produce to those frail, half-stubborn, half-yielding multitudes, whom he must often benefit against their will, and save from the long evil, of which they see only the momentary good, there is no one who hesitates in ascribing this political foresight to the sagacity of his power of reasoning, or of drawing accurate conclusions, as to future sequences of events, from his observations of the past. In the calculation of the motives which may operate in the general mind, however, nothing more is implied than a knowledge of the relation of certain feelings to other feelings, as reciprocally antecedent and consequent. But, if the states of mind, the relation of which, as successive to other states of mind, is felt by us, be of a different order; if, instead of a legislator, feeling accurately the relation of certain feelings to certain attendant emotions in the mind of the people, we imagine a critic feeling, with equal precision, the relation of certain perceptions of form, or colour, or sound, to certain emotions of admiration or disgust that are to arise in the mind of him who has those perceptions, though all which is felt, in both cases, is a certain relation of customary antecedence, we are instantly said to speak of a different power of the mind. The power which we consider, is said to be the power of Taste.

This distinction of the power of taste, in appreciating the excellence of the fine arts, and the beauties of nature, from that general capacity of feeling the aptitudes of certain feelings to be followed by certain other feelings, of which it is only a modification, has arisen, there can be very little doubt, from the complexity of the term taste, in our common phraseology, as involving two classes of feelings, that admit of being separated in our thought, by a very easy analysis, —emotions, and judgments of the objects that are fit or unfit to excite those emotions. Certain objects are not merely perceived by us, as forms, or colours, or sounds; the perception of these forms, and colours, and sounds, is followed by an emotion which is of various nature, according to the nature of the object. What we call beauty, is, in our mind, an emotion; as, in external things, it is the aptitude to produce this emotion. To feel this emotion is one state of mind; to know the relation which other previous feelings bear to it, what forms, or sounds, or colours, separately or together, have a fitness of producing the emotion, is another state of mind, as distinct from it, as the political sagacity of the statesman, in anticipating the violence of popular feeling, on any particular occasion, is distinct from those passions and prejudices of the vulgar, which he foresees, as the certain effects of certain necessary measures, and which he strives accordingly, by some of the expedients of his mighty art, to disarm or to dissipate. If the judgments of taste had been as clearly distinguished from the emotions which it measures in their relation to the objects that are likely or un-

likely to produce them, as the wisdom of the politician, from the passions which that wisdom contemplates, in their relation to the circumstance which may tend to inflame them, we should as little have thought of ranking it as a peculiar power, as we think, at present, of inventing new names of faculties corresponding with all the variety of events corporeal or mental, in which we are capable of inferring the future from the past, by our knowledge of the reciprocal tendencies of objects; of ranking, for example, as a peculiar intellectual power, distinct from the general power of reason, the skill with which the legislator adapts his regulations to the varying circumstances of society, or, as in the physics of matter, we think of ascribing to different intellectual powers, the reasonings of the chemist and of the mechanician. Chemistry, mechanics, politics, taste, that is to say, the critical part of taste, of course imply previous observation of the successions of those different phenomena, material and mental, which are the subject of these respective sciences; an experience of the past that is different in each particular case; but, when the successions of the different phenomena have been observed, it is the same faculty, which, in all these sciences alike, predicting the future from the past, feels the relation of antecedence of each phenomenon to its successive phenomena, distinguishing the particular antecedents that are more or less likely to be followed by particular consequents. To call taste a science, like chemistry, or mechanics, or even politics, may seem at first a bold, and perhaps even an unwarrantable use of the term; but I have no hesitation in calling it a science, because it is truly a science, as much as any other knowledge of the successions of phenomena to which we give that name,—the science of certain effects which may be anticipated as the consequents of certain antecedents. It is a science, indeed, which is not capable of the universality of some other sciences, because it is a science of emotions, that must, in some measure at least, have been felt by him who judges of the fitness of certain objects to produce these emotions; and all have not this sensibility. But the sensibility relates to the existence of the emotions only, which, as I have already stated, are mental phenomena of a different class from the subsequent judgments, which estimate the fitness of objects to excite the emotions. The feeling of these emotions is unquestionably not a science, more than the feelings of security and patriotism, or discontent and selfish ambition, which the statesman must have in view, are sciences. But the knowledge of those objects which will excite the most general emotions of beauty and admiration, is a science, as the political knowledge of the means that will have most general influence in producing the emotions of civil happiness and contentment, or the fury of popular indignation, is a science. Both are nothing more than the experience of the feelings which follow certain other feelings, and the consequent feeling of the relation of their future aptitudes. We may deny the name of a science to both, but, if we allow it to the one, I cannot see any reason which should lead us to deny it to the other.

Of the emotions,—of the aptitudes of producing which taste is the science,—it is not at present my intention to speak. As emotions, they come under our consideration afterwards; and even the few remarks which I may have to offer on taste itself, as the knowledge of the fitness of certain objects to excite the emotion of beauty, and other kindred emotions, I shall defer, till I have treated of the emotions which are its subjects. My only object at present is to point out to you the proper systematic place, in our arrangement, of those mere feelings of the aptitude of certain objects for exciting certain emotions,—which constitute the judgments distinguished by the name of taste. It is peculiarly important for me to point this out to you at present; since, but for the analysis which I have made of the emotion itself, as one state of mind, and the knowledge of what is fitted to excite it, as a very different state of mind, you might conceive, that my classification of our intellectual phenomena, as referable to the two mental susceptibilities under which I have arranged them, was defective, from the omission of one very important faculty. You now, I trust, see my reason for dividing what is commonly denominated taste, into its two distinct elements, one of which is as much an emotion, as any of our other emotions; the other, which is only the knowledge of the particular forms, colours, sounds, or conceptions, that are most likely to be followed by this emotion, is as much a feeling of the relation of fitness, as any of the other suggestions of fitness, on which every science, that has regard to the mere successions of phenomena, as reciprocally antecedent and consequent, is founded.

I am aware that many authors have concurred, in not regarding taste as a simple faculty of the mind; but the taste, of which they speak, is chiefly the very emotion of pleasure, to the production of which they conceive various circumstances to be essential. The two great elements, as it appears to me, which it is of most importance to distinguish, are the emotion itself, in whatever way it may arise, and however complex it may be, and the feeling of the relation of certain forms, sounds, colours, conceptions, or various combinations of these, to this emotion as their effect,—the feeling of the rela

tion of the one, as successive in time to the other, and of the corresponding aptitude of that other for producing it. Whatever additional analysis may be formed by philosophers of the emotion itself, this analysis, at least, seems to me obvious and indisputable. I proceed upon it, therefore, with confidence, and flatter myself, that you will have no difficulty in forming in your own mind the same analysis,—referring the one element to our susceptibility of the relative suggestions of fitness, that are necessarily as various, as the phenomena which precede and follow are various,—the other primary element to our susceptibility of emotion.

In concluding my view of the phenomena of Simple Suggestion, or, as it is more commonly termed, Association, I considered those various modifications of it, which philosophers, from a defective analysis of the phenomena, had converted into separate intellectual powers. In concluding my view of the phenomena of Relative Suggestion, it may be necessary, in like manner, to take such a view, though the field, over which we have to move, is, in this case, a more narrow one.

The tendency of the mind, which I have distinguished by the name of relative suggestion, is that by which, on perceiving or conceiving objects together, we are instantly impressed with certain feelings of their mutual relation. These suggested feelings are feelings of a peculiar kind, and require, therefore, to be classed separately from the perceptions or conceptions which suggest them, but do not involve them.

Our relative suggestions, then, as you have seen, are those feelings of relation which arise from the perception or conception of two or more objects, or two or more affections of our mind,—feelings which are of considerable variety, and which I classed under two heads, as the relations of coexistence, and the relations of succession. It is easy for us, in every case, to separate this feeling of relation from the perceptions or conceptions themselves. We perceive or conceive objects; we feel them to be variously related; and the feeling of the relation itself is not more mysterious than the perception or simple suggestion which may have given rise to it. The law of mind, by which, on considering four and eight, I feel a certain relation of proportion,—the same precise relation which I feel, on considering together five and ten, fifty and a hundred,—is as clear and intelligible a law of our mental constitution, as that by which I am able to form the separate notion either of four or eight, five or ten, fifty or a hundred.

With this susceptibility of relative suggestion, the faculty of judgment, as that term is commonly employed, may be considered as nearly synonymous; and I have accordingly often used it as synonymous, in treating of the different relations that have come under our review.

But those who ascribe judgment to man, ascribe to him also another faculty, which they distinguish by the name of reason; though reasoning itself is found, when analyzed, to be nothing more than a series of judgments. The whole is thus represented as something different from all the parts which compose it. Whether we reason syllogistically with the schoolmen, or according to those simpler processes of thought, which nature teaches, our reasoning is divisable into a number of consecutive judgments, or feelings of relation; and if we take away these consecutive judgments, we leave nothing behind which can be called a ratiocination. In a simple proposition, we take one step, or feel one relation; in an enthymeme, we take two steps, or feel two relations; in a syllogism, we take three steps, or feel three relations; but we never think, when we speak of the motion of our limbs, that the power of taking three steps differs essentially from the power of taking one; and that we must, therefore, invent new names of bodily faculties for every slight variety, or even every simple repetition of movement. If this amplification of faculties would be absurd in treating of the mere motion of our limbs, it is surely not more philosophic in the case of the intellectual exercise. Whatever is affirmed, in any stage of our reasoning, is a relation of some sort,—of which, as felt by us, the proposition that affirms the relation is only a verbal statement,—is a series of such judgments, or feelings of relation, and nothing distinct from them, though the mutual relations of the series, which together form the reasoning, have led us falsely to suppose, as I have said, that the whole is something more than all the parts which constitute the whole.

The circumstance, which led to the distinction of reason from judgment, was perhaps, however, not the mere length and mutual connexion of the series, so much as that mistake with respect to the power falsely ascribed to the mind, of finding out, by some voluntary process, those intervening propositions, which serve as the medium of proof. The error on which this opinion is founded, I have already sufficiently exposed; and therefore need not repeat, at any length, the confutation of it.

We cannot invent, as I showed you, a single medium of proof; but the proofs arise to us, independently of our will, in the same manner as the primary subject of the proposition, which we analyze in our reasoning, itself arose. The desire of tracing all the relations of an object, when we meditate, may coexist with the successive feelings of relations

as they arise; and it is this complex state of mind, in which intention or desire continues to coexist with these successive feelings, to which we commonly give the name of reasoning. But it surely is not difficult to analyze this complex state, and to discover in it, as its only elements, the desire itself, with the conceptions which it involves, or which it suggests, and the separate relations of these conceptions, which rise precisely as they arose, and are felt precisely as they were felt before, on other occasions, when no such desire existed, and when the relative objects chanced to present themselves together to our perception, or in our loosest and most irregular trains of thought. The permanence of the desire, indeed, keeps the object to which it relates more permanently before us, and allows, therefore, a greater variety of relative suggestions belonging to it to arise; but it does not affect the principle itself, which develops these relations. Each arises, as before, unwilled. We cannot will the feeling of a relation, for this would be to have already felt the relation which we willed; as to will a particular conception in a train of thought, would be to have already that particular conception. Yet, while this power of willing conceptions and relations was falsely ascribed to the mind, it was a very natural consequence of this mistake, that the reasoning, which involved the supposed invention, should be regarded as essentially different from the judgments, or simple feelings of relation, that involved no such exercise of voluntary power.

Reasoning then, in its juster sense, as felt by us internally, is nothing more than a series of relative suggestions, of which the separate subjects are felt by us to be mutually related; as expressed in language, it is merely a series of propositions, each of which is only a verbal statement of some relation internally felt by us. There is nothing, therefore, involved in the ratiocination independently of the accompanying desire, but a series of feelings of relation, to the susceptibility of which feelings, accordingly, the faculty called reason, and the faculty called judgment, may equally be reduced. If we take away at each step the mere feeling of relation, the judgment is nothing; and if we take away the separate feelings termed judgments, nothing remains to be denominated reasoning.

Another faculty, with which the mind has been enriched, by those systematic writers who have examined its phenomena, and ranked them under different powers, is the faculty of abstraction,—a faculty by which we are supposed to be capable of separating in our thought certain parts of our complex notions, and of considering them thus abstracted from the rest.

This supposed faculty, however, is not merely unreal, as ascribed to the mind, but I may add even that such a faculty is impossible, since every exertion of it would imply a contradiction.

In abstraction, the mind is supposed to single out a particular part of some one of its complex notions for particular consideration. But what is the state of the mind immediately preceding this intentional separation—its state at the moment in which the supposed faculty is conceived to be called into exercise? Does it not involve necessarily the very abstraction which it is supposed to produce? and must we not, therefore, in admitting such a power of voluntary separation, admit an infinite series of preceding abstractions, to account for a single act of abstraction? If we know what we single out, we have already performed all the separation which is necessary; if we do not know what we are singling out, and do not even know that we are singling out any thing, the separate part of the complex whole may, indeed, rise to our conception; but it cannot arise by the operation of any voluntary faculty. That such conceptions do indeed arise, as states of the mind, there can be no question. In every sentence which we read, in every affirmation which we make, in almost every portion of our silent train of thought, some decomposition of more complex perceptions or notions has taken place. The exact recurrence of any complex whole, at any two moments, is perhaps what never takes place. After we look at a scene before us, so long as to have made every part of it familiar, if we close our eyes to think of it, in the very moment of bringing our eyelids together, some change of this kind has taken place. The complex whole, which we saw the very instant before, when conceived by us in this instant succession, is no longer, in every circumstance, the same complex whole. Some part, or rather many parts are lost altogether. A still greater number of parts are variously diversified; and though we should still call the scene the same, it would appear to us a very different scene, if our conception could be embodied and presented to our eye, together with the real landscape of which it seems to us the copy. If this change takes place in a single instant, at longer intervals it cannot fail to be much more considerable, though the very interval, which gives occasion to the greater diversity, prevents the diversity itself from being equally felt by us.

Abstraction, then, as far as abstraction consists in the rise of conceptions in the mind, which are parts of former mental affections, more complex than these, does unquestionably occur; and, since it occurs, it must occur according to laws which are truly laws of the mind, and must indicate some mental power, or powers, in consequence of which the conceptions termed abstract arise. Is it necessary, however, to have recourse to any

peculiar faculty, or are they not rather modifications of those susceptibilities of the mind, which have been already considered by us?

In treating of those states of the mind which constitute our general notions, I have already, in a great measure, anticipated the remarks which it might otherwise be necessary to offer, in explanation of abstraction. The relative suggestions of resemblance are, in truth, or at least involve as parts of the suggestion, those very feelings, for the production of which this peculiar faculty is assigned. We perceive two objects,—a rock, for example, and a tree: We press against them; they both produce in us that sensation, which constitutes our feeling of resistance. We give the name of hardness to this common property of the external objects; and our mere feeling of resemblance, when referred to the resembling objects, is thus converted into an abstraction. If we are capable of feeling the resemblance, the abstraction is surely already formed, and needs, therefore, no other power to produce it.

To that principle of relative suggestion, by which we feel the resemblance of objects in certain respects, to the exclusion, consequently, of all the other circumstances in which they have no resemblance, by far the greater number of our abstractions, and those which most commonly go under that name, may in this manner be traced; since, in consequence of this principle of our mind, we are almost incessantly feeling some relation of similarity in objects, and omitting, in consequence, in this feeling of resemblance, the parts or circumstances of the complex whole, in which no similarity is felt. What is thus termed abstraction, is the very notion of partial similarity. It would be as impossible to regard objects as similar in certain respects, without having the conceptions termed abstract, as to see without vision, or to hope without desire. The capacity of the feeling of resemblance, then, is the great source of the conceptions termed abstract. Many of them, however, may be referred, not to that susceptibility of the mind, by which our relative suggestions arise, but to that other susceptibility of suggestions of another kind, which we previously considered. In those common instances of simple suggestion, which philosophers have ascribed to a principle of association, they never have thought it necessary to prove, nor have they even contended, that the feelings which arise in consequence of this mere association, must be exact transcripts of the former feelings in every respect, however complex those former feelings may have been; that, when we have seen a group of objects together, no part of this group can be recalled, without the rest; no rock, or streamlet, of a particular valley, for example, without every tree, and every branch of every tree, that were seen by us waving over the little current, and every minute angle of the rock, as if measured with geometrical precision. Suggestions of images so exact as this, perhaps never occur; and if every conception, therefore, which meets some circumstance of the complex perception which has given rise to it, be the result of a faculty, which is to be termed the faculty of abstraction, the whole imagery of our thought, which has been ascribed to an associating or suggesting principle, should have been considered rather as the result of this power, in its never-ceasing operation. But, if we allow, that in ordinary association, the principle of simple suggestion can account for the rise of conceptions, that omit some circumstances of the past, it would surely be absurd to attempt any limitation of the number of circumstances which may be omitted, by the operation of this principle alone, and to refer every circumstance that is omitted, beyond this definite number, to another faculty, absolutely distinct. The truth is, that it is only of certain parts of any complex perception, that our simple suggestions, in any case, are transcripts; that the same power which thus, without any effort of our volition, and even without our consciousness that such a suggestion is on the point of taking place, brings before us only three out of four circumstances that coexisted in some former perception, might as readily be supposed to bring before us two of the four, or only one; and that the abstraction, in such a case, would be thus as independent of our will, as the simple suggestion; since it would be, in truth, only the simple suggestion, under another name, being termed an abstraction, merely because, in certain cases, we might be able to remember the complex whole, with the circumstances omitted in the former partial suggestion, and thus to discover, by comparison of the two coexisting conceptions, that the one is to the other, as a whole to some part of the whole. If this comparison could be made by us in every case, there is not a single conception in our whole train of memory or fancy, which would not equally deserve to be denominated an abstraction.

Many of the states of mind, which we term abstractions, might thus arise by mere simple suggestion, though we had not, in addition to this capacity, that susceptibility of relative suggestion, by which we discover resemblance, and to which, certainly, we are indebted for the far greater number of feelings, which are termed abstract ideas. The partial simple suggestion of the qualities of objects, in our trains of thought, is less wonderful, when we consider how our complex notions of objects are formed. In conceiving the hardness separately from the

whiteness of an object, we have no feeling that is absolutely new; we only repeat the process by which our conceptions of these qualities were originally formed. We received them separately, through the medium of different senses; and each, when it recurs separately, is but the transcript of the primary sensation.

But even though objects, as originally perceived, had been precisely, in every respect, what they now appear to us,—concretes of many qualities,—the capacity of relative suggestion, by which we feel the resemblances of objects, would be of itself, as I have said, sufficient to account for the abstractions, of which philosophers have written so much. It is superfluous, therefore, to ascribe to another peculiar faculty what must take place, if we admit only the common mental susceptibilities, which all admit. If we are capable of perceiving a resemblance of some sort, when we look at a swan and on snow, why should we be astonished that we have invented the word whiteness, to signify the common circumstance of resemblance? Or why should we have recourse for this feeling of whiteness itself to any capacity of the mind, but that which evolves to us the similarity which we are acknowledged to be capable of feeling?

Whatever our view of the origin of these partial conceptions may be, however, the truth of the general negative argument, at least, must be admitted, that we have no power of singling out, for particular consideration, any one part of a complex group; since in the very intention of separating it from the rest, we must already have singled it out in our will, and consequently in our thought; and that we do not need any new operation, therefore, to conceive, what we must have conceived before the supposed operation itself could take place.

I have now, then, brought to a conclusion my analysis of the intellectual phenomena; and have shown, I flatter myself, or at least have endeavoured to show, that all these phenomena, which are commonly ascribed to many distinct faculties, are truly referable only to two—the capacity of simple suggestion, which gives to us conceptions of external objects formerly perceived, and of all the variety of our past internal feelings, as mere conceptions, or fainter images of the past; and the capacity of relative suggestion, by which the objects of our perception or conception, that are themselves separate, no longer appear to us separate, but are instantly invested by us with various relations that seem to bind them to each other, as if our mind could give its own unity to the innumerable objects which it comprehends, and, like that mighty Spirit which once hovered over the confusion of unformed nature, convert into a universe what was only chaos before.

We have a capacity of conceiving objects, a capacity of feeling the relations of objects; and to those capacities all that is intellectual in our nature is reducible. In treating of the phenomena of these two powers, I have not merely examined them, as I would have done if no previous arrangements of the same phenomena had been made by philosophers, but I have examined, afterwards, those arrangements also; not omitting, as far as I know, any one of the faculties of which those writers speak. If it has appeared, therefore, in this review, that the distinctions which they have made have been founded on errors, which we have been able to trace; and that the faculties of which they speak are all, not merely reducible, but easily reducible, to the two classes of the intellectual phenomena which I have ventured to form; this coincidence, or facility of corresponding reduction, must be allowed to furnish a very powerful argument in support of my arrangement, since the authors who have formed systems essentially different, cannot be supposed to have accommodated the phenomena of which they treated to a system which was not their own; though a theorist himself may, in some cases, perhaps with reason, be suspected of an intentional accommodation of this sort, for the honour of his system, and, in many more cases, without any intention of distorting a single fact, or omitting a single circumstance unfavourable to his own opinions, may, by the influence of those opinions, as a more habitual form of his thought, perceive every thing, in a stronger light, which coincides with them, and scarcely perceives those objects with which they do not harmonize.

That two simple capacities of the mind should be sufficient to explain all the variety of intellectual phenomena, which distinguish man from man, in every tribe of savage and civilized life, may indeed seem wonderful. But of such wonders, all science is nothing more than the development, reducing, and bringing as it were, under a single glance, the innumerable objects that seemed to mock, by their infinity, the very attempt of minute arrangement. The splendid profusion of apparent diversities, in that earth which we inhabit, are reduced by us chemically to a few elements that, in their separate classes, are all similar to each other. The motions, which it would be vain for us to think of numbering, of every mass, and of every particle of every mass, have been reduced to a few laws of motion still more simple; and if we regard the universe itself in the noblest light in which it can be viewed,—that which connects it with its omnipotent Creator,—its whole infinity of wonders are to be considered as the effect but of one simple voli-

tion. At the will of God, the world arose, and when it arose, what innumerable relations were present, as it were, and involved in that creative will; the feeling of a single instant, comprehending at once what was afterwards to occupy and to fill the whole immensity of space, and the whole eternity of time.

LECTURE LII.

RETROSPECT OF THE ORDERS OF THE PHENOMENA OF MIND, ALREADY CONSIDERED.—OF EMOTIONS,—CLASSIFICATION OF THEM, AS IMMEDIATE, RETROSPECTIVE, OR PROSPECTIVE,—AND EACH OF THESE SUBDIVIDED, AS IT INVOLVES, OR DOES NOT INVOLVE SOME MORAL AFFECTION.—I. IMMEDIATE EMOTIONS, INVOLVING NO MORAL AFFECTION.—1. CHEERFULNESS—MELANCHOLY.

Gentlemen, after the attention which we have paid to the class of external affections of the mind, and to that great order of its internal affections, which I have denominated intellectual, the only remaining phenomena which, according to our original division, remain to be considered by us, are our emotions.

This order of our internal feelings is distinguished from the external class, by the circumstances which I have already pointed out, as the basis of the arrangement,—that they are not the immediate consequence of the presence of external objects, but, when excited by objects without, are excited only indirectly, through the medium of those direct feelings, which are commonly termed sensations or perceptions. They differ from the other order of the same internal class,—from the intellectual states of mind, which constitute our simple or relative suggestions of memory or judgment,—by that peculiar vividness of feeling which every one understands, but which it is impossible to express by any verbal definition; as truly impossible, as to define sweetness, or bitterness, a sound, or a smell, in any other way, than by a statement of the circumstances in which they arise. There is no reason to fear, however, from this impossibility of verbal definition, that any one, who has tasted what is sweet or bitter, or enjoyed the pleasures of melody and fragrance, will be at all in danger of confounding these terms; and, as little reason is there to fear, that our emotions will be confounded with our intellectual states of mind, by those who have simply remembered and compared, and have also loved or hated, desired or feared.

Before we proceed to consider the order of emotions, it may be interesting to cast a short glance over the other orders of the phenomena of the mind, before considered by us.

In the view which we have taken of the external or sensitive affections of the mind, we have traced those laws, so simple and so efficacious, which give to the humblest individual, by the medium of his corporeal organs, the possession of that almost celestial scene, in which he is placed, till he arrive at that nobler abode which awaits him,—connecting him not merely with the earth which he treads, but indirectly also with those other minds which are journeying with him in the same career, and that enjoy at once, by the same medium of the senses, the same beauties and glories that are shed around them, with a profusion so divine, as almost to indicate, of themselves, that a path so magnificent is the path to heaven. A few rays of light thus reveal to us, not forms and colours only, which are obviously visible, but latent thoughts, which no eye can see; a few particles of vibrating air enable mind to communicate to mind, its most spiritual feelings,—to awake and be awakened mutually to science and benevolent exertion, as if truths, and generous wishes, and happiness itself, could be diffused in the very voice that scarcely floats upon the ear.

Such are our mere sensitive feelings, resulting from the influence of external things, on our corresponding organs, which are themselves external. The view of the intellectual states of the mind, to which we next proceeded, laid open to us phenomena still more astonishing—those capacities, by which we are enabled to discover in nature more than the causes of those brief separate sensations which follow the affections of our nerves,—to perceive in it proportion and design, and all those relations of parts to parts, by which it becomes to us a demonstration of the wisdom that formed it,—capacities, by which, in a single moment, we pass again over all the busiest adventures of all the years of our life, or, with a still more unlimited range of thought, are present, as it were, in that remote infinity of space, where no earthly form has ever been, or, in the still more mysterious infinity of time,—in ages, when the universe was not, nor any being, but that Eternal One, whose immutable existence is all which we conceive of eternity.

Such are the wonders, of which we acquire the knowledge, in those phenomena of the mind which have been already reviewed by us. The order of feelings, which we are next to consider, are not less important, nor important only in themselves, but also in their relation to those other phenomena which have been the subjects of our inquiry; since they comprehend all the higher delights

which attend the exercise of our sensitive and intellectual functions. The mere pleasures of sense, indeed, as direct and simple pleasures, we do not owe to them; but we owe to them every thing which confers on those pleasures a more ennobling value, by the enjoyments of social affection which are mingled with them, or the gratitude which, in the enjoyment of them, looks to their divine author. We might perhaps, in like manner, have been so constituted with respect to our intellectual states of mind, as to have had all the varieties of these, our remembrances, judgments, and creations of fancy, without one emotion. But without the emotions which accompany them, of how little value would the mere intellectual functions have been! It is to our vivid feelings of this class we must look for those tender regards which make our remembrances sacred; for that love of truth and glory, and mankind, without which, to animate and reward us, in our discovery and diffusion of knowledge, the continued exercise of judgment would be a fatigue rather than a satisfaction; and for all that delightful wonder which we feel, when we contemplate the admirable creations of fancy, or the still more admirable beauties of their unfading model; that model which is ever before us, and the imitation of which, as it has been truly said, is the only imitation that is itself originality. By our other mental functions, we are mere spectators of the machinery of the universe, living and inanimate; by our emotions, we are admirers of nature, lovers of man, adorers of God. The earth, without them, would be only a field of colours, inhabited by beings who may contribute, indeed, more permanently, to our means of physical comfort, than any one of the inanimate forms which we behold, but who, beyond the moment in which they are capable of affecting us with pain or pleasure, would be only like the other forms and colours, which would meet us wherever we turned our weary and listless eye; and God himself, the source of all good, and the object of all worship, would be only the Being by whom the world was made.

In the picture which I have now given of our emotions, however, I have presented them to you in their fairest aspects: there are aspects, which they assume, as terrible as these are attractive; but even, terrible as they are, they are not the less interesting objects of our contemplation. They are the enemies with which our moral combat, in the warfare of life, is to be carried on; and, if there be enemies that are to assail us, it is good for us to know all the arms and all the arts with which we are to be assailed; as it is good for us to know all the misery which would await our defeat, as much as all the happiness which would crown our success, that our conflict may be the stronger, and our victory, therefore, the more sure.

In the list of our emotions of this formidable class, is to be found every passion which can render life guilty and miserable,—a single hour of which, if that hour be an hour of uncontrolled dominion, may destroy happiness for ever, and leave little more of virtue than is necessary for giving all its horror to remorse. There are feelings, as blasting to every desire of good, that may still linger in the heart of the frail victim who is not yet wholly corrupted, as those poisonous gales of the desert, which not merely lift in whirlwinds the sands that have often been tossed before, but wither even the few fresh leaves which, on some spot of scanty verdure, have still been flourishing amid the general sterility.

When we consider the pure and generous, as well as the selfish and malignant desires of man, in the effects to which they have led,—that is to say, when we consider the varieties of some of our mental affections of this class,—we may be said to consider every thing which man has done and suffered, because we consider every thing from which his actions and his very sufferings have flowed. All civil history is nothing more than the record of the passions of a few leaders of mankind. "Happy, therefore," it has been said, "the people whose history is the most wearisome to read." Whatever the Cæsars, and Alexanders, and the other disturbers of the peace of nations, have perpetrated, may have been planned with relation to the particular circumstances of the time; but this very plan, even when accommodated to temporary circumstances, was the work of some human emotion which is not of a month, or year, or age, but of every time. In perusing the narratives of what they did, we feel that we are reading not so much the history of the individuals, as the history of our common nature; of those passions by which we are agitated, and which, while the race of mankind continue to subsist, will always, but for the securer restraints which political wisdom and the general state of society may have imposed, be sufficiently ready to repeat the same project of personal advancement, at the same expense of individual virtue and public happiness. The study of the mental phenomena, in their general aspect, as it is the study of the sources of human action, is thus, in one sense, a sort of compendious history of the civil affairs of the world, a history not merely of the past and the present, but of the future also. It resembles, in this respect, what we are told of the hero of a metaphysical romance,—that in physiognomy his penetration was such, that "from the picture of any person he could write his life, and from the features of the parents, draw the features of any child that was to be born."

Such, in some measure, though certainly far less exact, is that future history of the world, which a speculator on the state and prospects of civil society draws from a knowledge of the nature of man. He may err, indeed, in his picture of unexisting things; but every political regulation, must, in part at least, proceed on views of events that do not yet exist, as thus prophetically imaged in the very nature of the mind, or it scarcely can deserve the name of an act of legislative wisdom; and he is truly the wisest politician, who is, in this sense, the most accurate historian of the future.

In now entering on the consideration of that order of our feelings, which I have comprehended under the name of Emotions, it may seem doubtful whether it would be more expedient to treat of them simply as elementary feelings, or in those complex forms in which they usually exist, and have received certain definite characteristic names that are familiar to you. This latter mode appears to me, on the whole, more advisable, as affording many advantages, direct and indirect, and allowing equally the necessary analysis in each particular case. If I were to treat of them only as elementary feelings, they might be classed under a very few heads; the whole, as I conceive, or certainly, at least, the greater number of them, under the following: Joy, grief, desire, astonishment, respect, contempt, and the two opposite species of vivid feelings, which distinguish to us the actions that are denominated vicious or virtuous. But, though the vivid feelings, to which we give these names, may, from their general analogy, admit of being comprehended in this brief arrangement, it must be remembered, that, brief as the vocabulary is, it comprehends feelings, which, though analogous, are still not precisely the same; that the single word joy, for example, expresses many varieties of delightful feelings, the single word desire, many feelings, which, in combination with their particular objects, are so modified by these, as to appear to us, in their complex forms, almost as different as any other feelings of our mind which we class under different names. It is in their complex state that they impress themselves most strongly on our observation in others, and form, in ourselves, all that renders most interesting to us the present and the future, and all that is most vivid in our remembrances of the past. Considered, therefore, in this aspect, they admit of much illustration from the whole field of human life, and afford opportunities for many practical references to conduct, and many analyses of the motives that secretly influence it, —for which there would scarcely be a place, if they were to be considered simply as elementary feelings. I repeat, therefore, that the order in which I intend to treat of them, will regard them in their ordinary state of complication with particular conceptions or other emotions, though I shall be careful, at the same time, to state to you, in every case, as minutely as may be in my power, the elements of which the complex whole is composed.

In treating of them in this view, the most obvious principle of general arrangement seems to me to be one of which I have already more than once availed myself,—their relation to time; as immediate, or involving no notion of time whatever; as retrospective, in relation to the past; or as prospective, in relation to the future. Admiration, remorse, hope, may serve as particular instances, to illustrate my meaning in this distinction which I would make. We admire what is before us, we feel remorse for some past crime, we hope some future good.

In conformity with this arrangement of our emotions, as immediate, retrospective, prospective, the first set which we have to consider are those which arise without involving necessarily any notion of time.

These immediate emotions, as I have termed them, may be subdivided, according to the most interesting of their relations,—as they do not involve any feeling that can be termed moral, or as they do involve some moral affection.

Of the former kind, which do not involve necessarily any moral affection, are cheerfulness, melancholy, our wonder at what is new and unexpected, our mental weariness of what is long continued without interest, our feeling of beauty, and that opposite emotion, which has no corresponding and equal name, since ugliness can scarcely be regarded as coextensive with it,—our feelings of sublimity and ludicrousness.

To the latter subdivision may be referred the vivid feelings, that constitute to our heart what we distinguish by the names of vice and virtue,—if these vivid feelings be considered simply as emotions, distinct from the judgments, which may at the same time measure actions, in reference to some particular standard of morality, or to the amount of particular or general good, which they may have tended to produce, and which might so measure them, without any moral emotion, as a mathematician measures the proportion of one figure to another,—our emotions of love and hate,—of sympathy with the happy and with the miserable,—of pride and humility, in the various forms which these assume.

These, if not all, are at least the most important of our immediate emotions.

The first emotions, then, which we have to consider, of that order which has no reference to time, are Cheerfulness and Melancholy.

Cheerfulness, which, at every moment, may be considered only as a modification of joy, is a sort of perpetual gladness. It is that state which, in every one, even in those of the most gloomy disposition, remains for some time after any event of unexpected happiness, though the event itself may not be present to their conception at the time; and which, in many of gayer temperament, seems to be almost a constant frame of the mind. In the early period of life, this alacrity of spirit is like that bodily alacrity, with which every limb, as it bounds along, seems to have a delightful consciousness of its vigour. To suspend the mental cheerfulness, for any length of time, is then as difficult as to keep fixed, for any length of time, those muscles to which exercise is almost a species of repose, and repose itself fatigue. In more advanced life, this sort of animal gladness is rarer. We are not happy, without knowing why we are happy; and though we may still be susceptible of joy, perhaps as intense, or even more intense than in our years of unreflecting merriment, our joy must arise from a cause of corresponding importance. Yet, even down to the close of extreme old age, there still recur occasionally some gleams of this almost instinctive happiness, like a vision of other years, or, like those brilliant and unexpected coruscations, which sometimes flash along the midnight of a wintry sky, and of which we are too ignorant of the circumstances that produce them, to know when to predict their return.

Of Melancholy, I may remark, in like manner, that it is a state of mind, which even the gayest must feel for some time after any calamity, and which many feel for the greater part of life, without any particular calamity, to which they can ascribe it. Without knowing why they should be sorrowful, they still are sorrowful, even though the weathercock should not have moved a single point nearer to the east, nor a single additional cloud given a little more shade to the vivid brightness of the sun.

I need not speak of that extreme depression, which constitutes the most miserable form of insanity, the most miserable disease; that fixed and deadly gloom of soul, to which there is no sunshine in the summer sky, no verdure or blossom in the summer field, no kindness in affection, no purity in the very remembrance of innocence itself, no heaven, but hell,—no God, but a demon of wrath. With what strange feelings of more than commiseration, must we imagine Cowper to have written that picturesque description, of which he was himself the subject:—

Look where he comes. In this embower'd alcove
Stand close conceal'd, and see a statue move;
Lips busy, and eyes fix'd, foot falling slow,
Arms hanging idly down, hands clasp'd below!—
That tongue is silent now; that silent tongue
Could argue once, could jest, or join the song,
Could give advice, could censure or commend,
Or charm the sorrows of a drooping friend.—
Now,* neither heathy wilds, nor scenes as fair
As ever recompens'd the peasant's care,—
Nor gales that catch the scent of blooming groves,
And waft it to the mourner as he roves,
Can call up life, into his faded eye,
That passes all he sees unheeded by.†

Cases of this dreadful kind, however, are fortunately rare: but some degree of melancholy all must have experienced; that internal sadness, which we diffuse unconsciously from our own mind over the brightest and gayest objects without, almost in the same manner, and with the same unfailing certainty, as we invest them with the colours, which are only in our mental vision.

The scenery, which Eloisa describes, is sufficiently gloomy of itself. But with what additional gloom does she cloud it in her description:—

The darksome pines that o'er yon rock reclined
Wave high, and murmur to the hollow wind,
The wandering streams that shine between the hills,
The grots that echo to the tinkling rills,
The dying gales that pant upon the trees,
The lakes that quiver to the curling breeze;
No more these scenes my meditation aid,
Or lull to rest the visionary maid:
But o'er the twilight groves and dusky caves,
Long sounding isles and intermingled graves,
Black Melancholy sits, and round her throws
A death-like silence, and a dread repose.
Her gloomy presence saddens all the scene,
Shades every flower, and darkens every green,
Deepens the murmur of the falling floods,
And breathes a browner horror on the woods.‡

Of the melancholy of common life, there are two species that have little resemblance. There is a sullen gloom, which disposes to unkindness, and every bad passion; a fretfulness, in all the daily and hourly intercourse of familiar life, which, if it weary at last the assiduities of friendship, sees only the neglect which it has forced, and not the perversity of humour which gave occasion to it, and soon learns to hate, therefore, what it considers as ingratitude and injustice; or, which, if friendship be still assiduous as before, sees, in these very assiduities, a proof not of the strength of that affection, which has forgotten the acrimony to sooth the supposed uneasiness which gave it rise, but a proof that there has been no offensive acrimony to be forgotten, and persists, therefore, in every peevish caprice, till the domestic tyranny become habitual. This melancholy temper, so poisonous to the happiness, not of the individual only, but of all those who are within the circle of its influence, and who feel their misery the more, because it may perhaps arise from one whom they strive, and vainly strive, to love, is the temper of a vulgar mind. But there is a melancholy of a gentler species, a melancholy

* Then, in the original.
† Cowper's Poems. Retirement, v. 283—286, 289—292, 331, 332, 337—340.
‡ Pope's Epistle of Eloisa to Abelard, v. 155—170.

which, as it arises, in a great measure, from a view of the sufferings of man, disposes to a warmer love of man the sufferer, and which is almost as essential to the finer emotions of virtue, as it is to the nicer sensibilities of poetic genius. This social and intellectual effect of philosophic melancholy is described with a beautiful selection of moral images, by the Author of the Seasons.

> He comes! he comes! in every breeze the Power
> Of Philosophic Melancholy comes!
> His near approach the sudden-starting tear,
> The glowing cheek, the mild dejected air,
> The softened feature, and the beating heart,
> Pierc'd deep with many a virtuous pang, declare.
> O'er all the soul his sacred influence breathes!
> Inflames Imagination; through the breast
> Infuses every tenderness; and far
> Beyond dim earth exalts the swelling thought.
> Ten thousand thousand fleet ideas, such
> As never mingled with the vulgar dream,
> Crowd fast into the mind's creative eye.
> As fast the correspondent passions rise
> As varied, and as high: Devotion rais'd
> To rapture, and divine astonishment;
> The love of Nature, unconfin'd, and, chief,
> Of human race; the large ambitious wish,
> To make them blest; the sigh for suffering worth
> Lost in obscurity; the noble scorn
> Of tyrant-pride; the fearless great resolve;
> The wonder which the dying patriot draws,
> Inspiring glory through remotest time;
> Th' awaken'd throb for virtue, and for fame;
> The sympathies of love, and friendship dear:
> With all the social offspring of the heart.*

The same influence is, by another poet, made peculiarly impressive, by a very happy artifice. In Akenside's Ode to Cheerfulness, which opens with a description of many images and impressions of gloom, and in which the Power, who alone can dispel them, is invoked to perform this divine office, he returns at last to those images of tender sorrow, which he would be unwilling to lose, and for the continuance of which, therefore, he invokes that very cheerfulness, which he had seemed before to invoke for a gayer purpose:—

> Do thou conduct my fancy's dreams
> To such indulgent placid themes,
> As just the struggling breast may cheer,
> And just suspend the starting tear,
> Yet leave that sacred sense of woe
> Which none but friends and lovers know.†

How universally a certain degree of disposition to melancholy, is supposed to be connected with genius, at least with poetic genius, is manifest from every description which has been given by those who have formed imaginary pictures of the rise and progress of this high character of thought. The descriptions, I have said, are imaginary, but they still show sufficiently the extent of that observation, on which so general an agreement must have been founded. The melancholy, indeed, is not inconsistent with occasional emotions of an opposite kind; on the contrary, it is always supposed to be coupled with a disposition to mirth, on occasions in which others see perhaps as little cause of merriment, as they before saw of melancholy; but the general character to which the mind most readily returns, is that of sadness,—a sadness, however, of that gentle and benevolent kind, of which I before spoke. The picture which Beattie gives of his Minstrel, is exactly of this kind; and even if it had not absolute truth, must be allowed to have at least that relative truth which consists in agreement with the notion which every one, of himself, would have been disposed previously to form.

> And yet poor Edwin was no vulgar boy;
> Deep thought oft seem'd to fix his infant eye:
> Dainties he heeded not, nor gaude, nor toy,
> Save one short pipe of rudest minstrelsy.
> Silent when glad; affectionate, though shy;
> And now his look was most demurely sad,
> And now he laugh'd aloud, yet none knew why.
> The neighbours star'd and sigh'd, yet bless'd the lad:
> Some deem'd him wondrous wise, and some believed him mad.
>
> In truth, he was a strange and wayward wight,
> Fond of each gentle and each dreadful scene,
> In darkness and in storm he found delight,
> No less than when on ocean-wave serene,
> The southern sun diffus'd his dazzling shene.
> Even sad vicissitude amused his soul;
> And if a sigh would sometimes intervene,
> And down his cheek a tear of pity roll,
> A sigh, a tear so sweet he wish'd not to control.‡

The state of melancholy, as I have already remarked, when it is not constitutional and permanent, but temporary, is a state which intervenes between the absolute affliction of any great calamity, and that peace to which, by the benevolent arrangement of Heaven, even melancholy itself ultimately leads. As it is nearer to the time of the calamity, and the consequent profound affliction, the melancholy itself is more profound, and gradually softens into tranquillity, after a period, that is in some degree proportioned to the violence of the affliction.

"Finem dolendi etiam qui consilio non fecerat, tempore invenit,"§ says Seneca. What then, you say, shall I forget my friend? No! He is not to be forgotten. But soon, indeed, would he be forgotten, if his memory were to last only with the continuance of your grief. Fixed and sad as your brow now may be, it will soon require but a trifle to loose it into smiles. "Quid, ergo, inquis, obliviscar amici? Brevem illi apud te memoriam promittis, si cum dolore mansura est. Jam istam frontem ad risum quælibet fortuita res transferet. Non differo in longius tempus, quo desiderium omne mulcetur, quo etiam acerrimi luctus residunt: cum primum te observare desieris, imago ista tristitiæ discedet. Nunc ipse custodis dolorem tuum, sed custodienti quoque elabitur, eoque citius, quo est acrior, desinit."‖

"The great philosopher Citophilus," says Voltaire, in one of the most pleasing of his little tales, "was one day in company with a

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* Thomson's Seasons. Autumn, v. 1002—1027.
† 157—162.

‡ Book i. stanza xvi. and xxii.
§ Epist. 63. ‖ Epist. 63.

female friend, who was in the utmost affliction, and who had very good reason to be so. Madam, said he to her, the Queen of England, the daughter of our great Henry was as unfortunate as you. She was almost drowned in crossing our narrow channel, and she saw her royal husband perish on the scaffold.—I am very sorry for her, said the lady; and she began to weep her own misfortunes.

"But, said Citophilus, think of Mary Stewart. She loved, very honourably, a most noble musician, who sung the finest tenor in the world. Her husband killed her musician before her very eyes; and afterwards her good friend, and good relation, Queen Elizabeth, who first kept her in prison eighteen years, contrived to have her beheaded on a scaffold, covered most beautifully with the finest black.—That was very cruel, answered the lady; and she sunk back into her melancholy as before.

"You have perhaps heard of the beautiful Joan of Naples, said the comforter. She was seized, you know, and strangled.—I have a confused remembrance of it, said the lady.

"I must tell you, added the other, the adventures of a queen, who was dethroned in my own time, after supper, and who died in a desert island.—I know the whole story, she replied.

"Well, then, how can you think of being so miserable, when so many queens and great ladies have been miserable before you? Think of Hecuba! Think of Niobe!—Ah! said the lady, if I had lived in their time, or in the time of those beautiful princesses of whom you speak, and if, to comfort them, you had told them my griefs, do you think they would have listened to you?

"The next day the philosopher lost his only son, and was at the very point of death with affliction. The lady got a list made out of all the kings who had lost their children, and carried it to the philosopher. He read it, found the list to be very accurate, and did not weep the less. Three months afterwards, they met again, and were quite astonished, at meeting, to find themselves so gay. They resolved immediately to erect a beautiful statute to Time, and ordered this inscription to be put upon it, '*To the Comforter.*'"*

The tale, it must be admitted, is a very faithful picture of the power of time, the universal comforter, and of the comparative inefficacy of the ordinary topics of consolation. But how is it that time does produce this effect? Some remarks, which I formerly made in treating of association, will aid us, I think, in explaining the mystery.

A very easy solution of it is sometimes attemped by the analogy of bodily pains and pleasures, which become more tolerable in the one case, and less delightful in the other case, when long continued; and the analogy must be admitted to a considerable extent, but is far from affording the complete solution required. We feel bodily pain, indeed, less acutely, after long torture, because our nervous frame is oppressed by the continued suffering. But, in the case of grief, there is not this oppression; and when we have ceased to grieve for one calamity, we are still as susceptible as before of the emotion itself, and require only some new calamity to feel again, with the same acuteness, all the agony which we suffered.

It is not mere corporeal exhaustion, therefore, that can account for the diminution of sorrow. It is because the source of the sorrow itself is removed as it were at a distance, and has admitted in the mean while of various soothing associations; and still more, of various other emotions, which, without any relation to our grief itself, have modified and softened it, by exciting an interest that was incompatible with it, or rather that changed its very nature, by the union with it which they may have formed.

The melancholy emotion, which remains after any great affliction,—after the death, for example, of a husband or a child,—is, of course, when recent, combined with few feelings that do not harmonize with the grief itself, and augment it, perhaps, rather than diminish it. In a short time, however, from the mere unavoidable events of life, other feelings, suggested by these events, combine with that melancholy with which they coexist, so as to form with it one complex state of mind. When the melancholy remembrance recurs, it recurs, therefore, not as it was before, but as modified by the combination of these new feelings. In the process of time, other feelings, that may casually but frequently coexist with it, combine with it in like manner; the complex state of mind partaking thus gradually less and less of the nature of that pure affliction which constituted the original sorrow, till at length it becomes so much softened and diversified by repeated combinations, as scarcely to retain the same character, and to be rather sadness, or a sort of gentle tenderness, than affliction. The coexistence of the melancholy thought, when it recurs, with other new feelings that may be accidentally excited at the time, constitutes, then, I conceive, one of the chief circumstances on which the softening influence depends.

It must be remembered too, as a very strong circumstance additional, that the effect is not confined to the direct feeling it

* Les deux Consolés, Œuvres, 4to. edit. of 1771, tom. xiv. p. 86, 87.

self, but that every surrounding object, which before was associating perhaps chiefly with the object of regret, and recalled this object more frequently than any other, becomes afterwards associated with other objects, which it recalls more frequently than the object of regret, in consequence of that secondary law of suggestion, by which feelings, recently coexisting or proximate, rise again more readily in mutual succession.

There is scarcely an object which can meet a father's eye, soon after the death of his child, which does not bring that child before him; thus aggravating, at every moment, the sorrow which was felt the very moment preceding. If, even at this period of recent affliction, we could, by any contrivance, prevent these melancholy suggestions by suggestions of a different kind, it is evident that we should not merely prevent the aggravation of distress which they occasion, but could not fail even to alleviate what was felt before, by the revival of thoughts and emotions which would have no peculiar relation to the object lost. This, which we cannot by any contrivance completely produce, is the effect which time necessarily produces by rendering stronger the suggestion of recent objects and events, and thus making every thing which meets our eyes, a memorial of every thing more than of him whom we lament. What time more fully produces, is produced, in some degree, by mere change of scene, especially if the country through which we pass be new to us; and is produced evidently in both cases, by the operation of the same principle.

Another very abundant source of the misery which is felt, in such a recent affliction, is the relation of the object lost to all the plans which have engaged us, and all the hopes which we have been forming. These, as the recent objects of thought, and its liveliest objects, must, of course, by the operation of the common laws of suggestion, frequently arise to the mind. They all now, however, seem frustrated, and our whole life, as it were, in those feelings which alone constituted life to us, suddenly rent or broken. He who listens to the lamentations of a disconsolate parent, for the loss of an only child, cannot fail to perceive how much of the affliction depends on this very circumstance, and how readily the delightful cares of education in past years, and the equally delightful hopes of years that were to come, arise to imbitter the anguish of the present. These cares and hopes must then arise, indeed, because they were the chief feelings with which the mind has been occupied. In the progress of time, however, other cares and other hopes unconnected with the lost object of regard, must necessarily engage the mind; and these, as more recent, arise, of course, more readily by suggestion, and thus fill, not the busy hours of action only, but the very hours of meditation and repose.

On these causes combined, I conceive the soothing influence of time to depend. The melancholy is less frequently excited, because fewer objects now recall it, and it is at the same time gentler when it is excited; because it rises now, mingled as it were with other feelings that have at different times coexisted with it, and modified it; and these circumstances, if they be not sufficient to account for the tranquillity or serene grief which ultimately arises, must at least be allowed to be circumstances that concur powerfully with whatever other unknown circumstance may be instrumental in producing the same happy influence.

Of the facts which this theory of the mollifying influence of time assumes, there can be no question. The same principle, by which the objects that surround us were originally connected with the conception of the object of our regret, must, of course, continue its operation, when that object itself has certainly ceased to exist, and must connect new objects, therefore, as it before connected the past. In like manner, the principle which led to the combination of feelings that gave peculiar vividness to any one of our emotions, must continue to combine new feelings with the very affliction; and to combine new feelings with it, is in some degree to alter its nature, in the same way as the thousand offices of kindness, to which reciprocal friendship gives occasion, alter continually, by augmenting with their own united influence, those simple feelings of regard in which the friendship had its origin.

Such, then, is the bountiful provision of heaven, that man cannot long be wretched, from griefs to which his own guilt has not led,—and that sorrow, even though it had nothing else to comfort it, derives a never-failing comfort from that very continuance of affliction, which, but for our experience, might have seemed capable only of aggravating it. Time is truly *the comforter*, at once lessening the tendency to suggestion of images of sorrow, and softening that very sorrow when the images arise.

LECTURE LIII.

I. IMMEDIATE EMOTIONS, WHICH DO NOT NECESSARILY INVOLVE ANY MORAL FEELING, CONTINUED.—2. WONDER AT WHAT IS NEW AND STRANGE—UNEASY LANGUOR WHEN THE SAME UNVARIED FEELINGS HAVE LONG CONTINUED.—3. ON BEAUTY AND ITS REVERSE.

In my last Lecture, Gentlemen, I entered on the consideration of our Emotions; and

after stating the small number of elementary feelings to which they seem to admit of being reduced, and the reasons which led me to prefer the consideration of them in the complex state in which they usually exist, I proceeded to arrange these complex varieties of them in three divisions, according to the relation which they bear to time, as immediate, retrospective, prospective. There are certain emotions which arise or continue in our mind, without referring to any particular object or time, such as cheerfulness or melancholy; or which regard their objects simply as existing, without involving, necessarily, any notion of time whatever, such as wonder, or our feelings of beauty and sublimity: these I denominate immediate. There are certain others which regard their objects as past, and which cannot exist without this notion of the past, such as remorse, or revenge, or gratitude: these I denominate retrospective emotions. There are certain others which regard their objects as future, such as the whole tribe of our desires: these I denominate prospective emotions.

It was to the first of these divisions, of course, that I proceeded in the first place; and since man, in the most important light in which we can consider him, is a social being, united by his emotions with whatever he can love or pity, or respect or adore, these, and other moral emotions, seemed to form a very proper subdivision of this particular order, as distinct from the emotions of the same order in which no moral feeling is involved.

The immediate emotions, in which no moral feeling is involved, and which admit, therefore, of being arranged apart, we found to be the following; cheerfulness, melancholy, our wonder at what is new or unexpected, and that emotion of languid uneasiness, which arises from the long continuance of the same objects, or of objects so nearly similar, as scarcely to afford the refreshment of variety; our feeling of beauty, and the emotion opposite to that of beauty; the emotion excited by objects which we term sublime, and the emotion, almost opposite to this, excited by objects which we term ludicrous.

I proceeded, accordingly, to consider these in their order; and, in my last lecture, offered some remarks on the first two in the series, cheerfulness and melancholy, that are obviously mere forms of two of the elementary feelings mentioned by me. I now, then, proceed to the consideration of the next in our arrangement, our feeling of wonder at what is new and strange, and of uneasy languor, when the same unvaried objects have long continued.

Long before we are capable of philosophizing on the different states of our mind, in different circumstances, or even of preserving any distinct memory of these states, for subsequent speculations on their nature, we have already become familiar with many of the most important successions of events in that part of the physical universe, with which we are immediately connected, so that it is impossible for us to form any conjecture which can be said to approach to certainty, as to the positive nature of our primary feelings, when these successions of events were first observed by us. It seems most probable, however, that the feeling of wonder, which now attends any striking event that is unexpected by us, would not arise in the infant mind, on the occurrence of events, all of which might be regarded as equally new to it; since wonder implies not the mere feeling of novelty, but the knowledge of some other circumstances which were expected to occur, and is therefore, I conceive, inconsistent with absolute ignorance.

At present, with the experience which we have acquired of the order of physical changes, the situation of the mind is very different, on the occurrence of any seeming irregularity. The phenomena of nature are conceived by us, not as separate events, but as uniformly consequent in certain series. We, therefore, do not only see the present, but seeing the present, we expect the future. When the circumstances, which we observe in any case, are very similar to the circumstances formerly observed by us, we anticipate the future with confidence; when the circumstances are considered different, but have many strong similarities to the past, we make the same anticipation, but not with confidence; and if the event should prove to be different from the event anticipated by us, we treasure it up, for regulating our future anticipations in similar circumstances; but we do this, without any emotion of astonishment at the new event itself. It is when we have anticipated with confidence, and our anticipation has been disappointed by some unexpected result, that the astonishment arises, and arises always, with greater or less vividness of feeling, according to the strength of that belief which the expectation involved.

When new and striking objects occur, therefore, in any of the physical trains of events, or when familiar objects occur to us, in situations in which we are far from expecting to find them, a certain emotion arises, to which we give the name of astonishment, or surprise, or wonder, but which, whatever the name may be, is truly the same state of mind,—at least, as an emotion, the same; though different names may be given, with distinctive propriety, to this one emotion, when combined or not combined with a process of rapid intellectual inquiry, or with other feelings of the same class.

When the emotion arises simply, for instance, it may be termed, and is more com-

monly termed, surprise; when the surprise, thus excited by the unexpected occurrence, leads us to dwell upon the object which excited it, and to consider in our mind, what the circumstances may have been, which have led to the appearance of the object, the surprise is more commonly termed wonder; which, as we may dwell on the object long, and consider the possibilities of many circumstances that may have led to the unexpected introduction of it, is, of course, more lasting than the instant surprise, which was only its first stage.

Still, however, though the terms in this sense be not strictly synonymous, but expressive of states more or less complex, the wonder differs from the surprise, only by the new elements which are added to this primary emotion, and not by any original diversity of the emotion itself. Whether it be a familiar object, which we perceive in unexpected circumstances, or an object that is itself as new as it is unexpected, the first feeling of astonishment, which is the emotion now considered by us, is the same in kind, however different the series of subsequent feelings may be. We may feel, for example, only the momentary surprise itself, or we may begin to consider what circumstances are the most likely to have occasioned the presence of the object, and our surprise is, by this union of uncertain and fluctuating thought, converted into wonder; or we may be struck at the same time with the beauty or grandeur of the new object, and our mixed emotion of the novelty and beauty combined will obtain the name of admiration; the simple primary emotion, which we term surprise or astonishment, being in all these cases the same, and being only modified by the feelings of various kinds, that afterwards arise, and coexist with it.

In the History of Astronomy, that very elegant specimen of scientific history, which Dr. Adam Smith has bequeathed to us, in one of the Essays of his posthumous volume, he commences his inquiry with some remarks on the emotion which we are now considering; and contends, as many other philosophers have contended, for an essential distinction of the varieties of the emotion, both with respect to the objects that excite these varieties, and to the nature of the feelings themselves.

What is new and singular, he conceives to excite that feeling,—or sentiment, as he terms it,—which, in strict propriety, is called wonder; what is unexpected, that different feeling which is commonly termed surprise.

"We wonder," he says, "at all extraordinary and uncommon objects, at all the rarer phenomena of nature, at meteors, comets, eclipses, at singular plants and animals, and at every thing, in short, with which we have before been either little or not at all acquainted; and we still wonder, though forewarned of what we are to see."

"We are surprised," he continues, "at those things which we have seen often, but which we least of all expected to meet with in the place where we find them; we are surprised at the sudden appearance of a friend, whom we have seen a thousand times, but whom we did not imagine we were to see then."*

This distinction, which Dr. Smith makes of wonder and surprise, seems, when we first consider it, a very obvious and accurate one; and yet I conceive, that if we analyse it more minutely, the difference, as I have already endeavoured to show, is more in the circumstances in which the emotions arise; and the thoughts, which are the consequences of the emotions, than in these emotions themselves, as simple feelings of the mind. The circumstances, in which they arise, are obviously very different; since, in the one case, the object is familiar, in the other, new; and the consequences are usually as different; since, in the one case, we are generally able to discover, by mere inquiry, what has led to the presence of the familiar object, in the unexpected situation; and when we know this, we know every thing, or cease to think of it, if such inquiry be ineffectual. In this case, therefore, there is little fluctuation of doubtful and varying conjecture, blending with the emotion and modifying it. In the other case, the very novelty of the object is gratifying to our love of the new, which is one of the strongest of our desires, and leads us to dwell on it with particular interest, while this very novelty, or uncommonness, which stimulates our curiosity to observe and inquire, renders inquiry less easy to be satisfied; and one inquiry, even when satisfactorily answered, far from giving us the knowledge which we desire, leaves of course, when the object is one with which we are unacquainted, many new properties to be investigated. In the one case, that in which a familiar object appears to us, where we did not expect to find it, there is only surprise, or little more; in the other case, when the object itself is new to us, there is surprise, followed by many very doubtful conjectures; and, during these conjectures, from the little satisfaction which they afford, a constant recurrence and mingling of the surprise, with the imperfect inquiries. It is not the emotion, therefore, which is different itself, but the mixture of inquiry and emotion, which, coexisting, form a state of mind different from the simple emotion itself. "The imagination and memory," to use Dr. Smith's own words, "exert themselves to no purpose, and in vain

* Smith's Works, vol. v. p. 55. Lond. 1811-12, 8vo.

look around all their classes of ideas, in order to find one under which it may be arranged. They fluctuate to no purpose from thought to thought; and we remain still uncertain and undetermined where to place it, or what to think of it. It is this fluctuation and vain recollection, together with the emotion or movement of the spirits that they excite, which constitute the sentiment properly called wonder, and which occasion that staring, and sometimes that rolling of the eyes, that suspension of the breath, and that swelling of the heart, which we may all observe, both in ourselves and others, when wondering at some new object, and which are the natural symptoms of uncertain and undetermined thought. What sort of thing can that be? What is that like? are the questions which, upon such an occasion, we are all naturally disposed to ask. If we can recollect many such objects which exactly resemble this new appearance, and which present themselves to the imagination naturally, and as it were of their own accord, our wonder is entirely at an end. If we can recollect but a few, and which requires too some trouble to be able to call up, our wonder is indeed diminished, but not quite destroyed. If we can recollect none, but are quite at a loss, it is the greatest possible."*

Even from this very description which Dr. Smith has given us,—a description which seems to be, in its chief circumstances, a very faithful picture of the phenomena of wonder,—it might be collected, that wonder, as a mere emotion, independently of the trains of thought that may mingle with it, does not differ essentially from surprise; and so completely does he forget the distinction, laid down by himself, which would confine wonder and surprise to distinct objects, that he afterwards speaks of them both as produced by the same object, remarking, that when one accustomed object appears after another, which it does not usually follow, it first excites, by its unexpectedness, the sentiment properly called surprise, and afterwards, by the singularity of the succession, or order of its appearance, the sentiment properly called wonder. "We start and are surprised at seeing it there, and then wonder how it came there;"† that is to say, if I may attempt the analysis, according to the view which I have given you of the complex state or states of mind described, we are first surprised at the appearance of the unaccustomed object; we are desirous of knowing what circumstances have led to the appearance; and, by the various relations which the circumstances perceived bear to other circumstances that may have been present unobserved, and the consequent operation of the laws of suggestion, not one object only occurs, as a cause in which we might immediately acquiesce, but various possible causes arise to the mind, in judging of which we pass rapidly from one probability to another, and are lost and perplexed with a sort of anxious irresolution. The application of both terms to the emotions excited by one object, in our peculiar situation, is however, as I have before remarked, a sufficient proof that Dr. Smith had either forgotten his original distinction of wonder and surprise, or had seen that the distinction, precise and apposite as it appears at first, involves truly no specific difference of the astonishment itself, but merely of the circumstances which precede or attend it.

The defective analysis, however, on which the distinction of the mere emotion appears to me to be founded,—if I may venture to term it defective,—is an error of much less consequence than another error of Dr. Smith with respect to surprise,—and an error which seems rather incongruous with his former speculation, as to the supposed difference which we have been now considering. Surprise, he thinks to be nothing more than the sudden changes of feelings which are commonly regarded, and, I conceive, truly regarded, as only the circumstances which give occasion to the surprise, not the surprise itself. "Surprise," he says, "is not to be regarded as an original emotion, of a species distinct from all others. The violent and sudden change produced upon the mind, when an emotion of any kind is brought suddenly upon it, constitutes the whole nature of surprise."‡ Now, if there be any emotion which is truly original, it really seems to me very difficult to discover one, which could have a better claim to this distinction, than surprise. It certainly is not involved in either of the successive perceptions, or conceptions, or feelings of any kind, the unusual successions of which appear to us surprising; and, if it be not even in the slightest degree involved in either of them separately, it cannot be involved in the two, which contain nothing more, as successive, than they contained separately. When the two are regarded by the mind as objects, indeed, they may give rise to feelings which are not involved in themselves, and the emotion of surprise may be, or rather truly is, one of these secondary feelings; but the surprise is then an original emotion, distinct from the primary states of mind which gave rise to it, indeed, but do not constitute it. Sudden joy, and sudden sorrow, even in their most violent extremes, might succeed each other, reciprocally, in endless succession, without exciting surprise, if the

* Ibid. p. 68. † Ibid. p. 70. ‡ Ibid. p. 60.

mind had been unsusceptible of any other feelings than joy and sorrow. Surprise is evidently not joy; it is as evidently not sorrow; nor is it a combination of joy and sorrow: it is surely, therefore, something different from both; and we may say with confidence, that before the mind can be astonished at the succession of the two feelings, it must have been rendered susceptible, at least, of a third feeling.

The error of Dr. Smith, in this case, is precisely the same as that fundamental error which we before traced in the system of Condillac and the other French metaphysicians; the error of supposing that a feeling, which is the consequence of certain other previous feelings, is only another form of those very feelings themselves. Joy and sorrow, as mere states or affections of the mind, are as truly different from that state or affection of mind which we term surprise, that may arise from the rapid succession of the two former states, as the fragrance of a rose, the bitterness of wormwood, or any other of our mere sensations, differs from those emotions of gratitude or revenge, into which these, or similar mere sensations, are, according to the very strange doctrine of Condillac, transformed; though, as we found, in examining that system, which assumes without any proof what it would certainly not have been very easy to prove, all which constitutes the supposed transformation, is the mere priority of one set of feelings and subsequence, in time, of another.

Surprise, in like manner, is not, as Dr. Smith contends, a mere rapid change of feelings, but is a new feeling, to which that rapid change gives rise; a state of mind, as clearly distinguishable from the primary feelings that may have given occasion to it, as gratitude is distinguishable from the mere memory of kindness received, or revenge, as an emotion from that mere feeling of injury received, which attends it, indeed, for ever in the mind of the vindictive, but preceded the first desire of vengeance that was kindled by the thought.

The importance of our susceptibility of this emotion of surprise of things unexpected, as a part of our mental constitution, is very obvious. It is in new circumstances that it is most necessary for us to be upon our guard; because, from their novelty, we cannot be aware of the effects that attend them, and require, therefore, more than usual caution, where foresight is impossible. But, if new circumstances had not produced feelings peculiarly vivid, little regard might have been paid to them, and the evil, therefore, might have been suffered, before alarm was felt. Against this danger nature has most providentially guarded us. We cannot feel surprise, without a more than ordinary interest in the objects which may have excited this emotion, and a consequent tendency to pause, till their properties have become, in some degree, known to us. Our astonishment may thus be considered as a voice from that almighty goodness which constantly protects us, that, in circumstances, in which inattention might be perilous, whispers, or almost cries to us, Beware.

Of a kind very different from astonishment, which implies unexpected novelty, is the emotion of weary and languid uneasiness, which we feel from the long continuance of one unvaried object, or from a succession of objects so nearly similar, as scarcely to appear varied. Even objects that originally excited the highest interest, if long continued, cease to interest, and soon become painful. Who, that is not absolutely deaf, could sit for a whole day in a music-room, if the same air, without any variation, were begun again in the very instant of its last note? The most beautiful couplet of the most beautiful poem, if repeated to us without intermission, for a very few minutes, would excite more uneasiness than could have been felt from a single recitation of the dullest stanza of the most soporific inditer of rhymes. By a little wider extension of this principle, we may perceive, how the very excellence of a work of genius often operates against it, in the later estimation which we form of it. What is intrinsically excellent, may indeed admit of being frequently perused, without any diminution, or perhaps even with increase of pleasure,—a circumstance which has been assigned as the distinguishing mark of excellence in works of this sort. But there are limits to this susceptibility of repeated perusal with delight; and, if a work be very excellent, especially if the work be comprised in small compass, we are in great danger of passing these limits, till it become too familiar to us to give us any direct pleasure; and, if it were not for our remembrance of the pleasure which we formerly received, we might be led to think it incapable of giving us any very high delight, merely because it has given us so much delight, as to have wearied us with the too frequent voluntary repetition of it.

What works of genius gain with the multitude by extensive diffusion of the admiration which they excite when very popular, they thus often lose, in its intensity, as a permanent feeling of individuals. How weary are we of many of the lines of our best poets, which are quoted to us for ever, by those who read only what others quote: and the same remark may be made as to those longer passages, or whole pieces, which are collected in the volumes of so many publishers of beauties, as they term them, who see only the beauties which others have seen, and extract, therefore, and collect only what their com-

piling predecessors have extracted and collected, presenting to us very nearly the same volumes, with little more than the difference of the order of the pages. What we admired when we read it first, fatigues and disappoints us when we meet with it so often; and the author appears to us almost trite and common, in his most original images, merely because these images are so very beautiful, as to have become some of the commonplaces of rhetorical selection. He gains, indeed, by this ubiquity, many admirers, whom he otherwise would not have found; but he loses probably more than he gains, by the diminished pleasure which he affords to the few whose approbation is far more than equal in value to the homage of a multitude of dull admirers.

In travelling over a flat country, amid unvaried scenery, how weary does the mind become! and what refreshment would a single eminence give, that might show us, at a distance, rivers, and woods, and villages, and lakes, or the ocean, still more remote; or at least something more than a few hedge-rows, which, if they show us any thing, seem to show us constantly the same meadow which they have been showing us for miles before. Notwithstanding our certainty, that a road, without one turn, must lead us sooner to our journey's end, it would be to our mind, and thus indirectly to our body also, which is soon weary when the mind is weary, the most fatiguing of all roads. A very long avenue is sufficiently wearying, even when we see the house which is at the end of it. But what patience could travel for a whole day, along one endless avenue, with perfect parallelism of the two straight lines, and with trees of the same species and height, succeeding each other exactly at the same intervals? In a journey like this, there would be the same comfort in being blind, as there would be in a little temporary deafness, in the case before imagined, of the same unvaried melody endlessly repeated in a music-room.

I need not, however, seek any additional illustration of a fact, which, I may take for granted, is sufficiently familiar to you all, without any illustration. You cannot fail to have been subject to the influence of which I speak, in some one or other of its forms; and may remember that weariness of mind, which you would gladly have exchanged for weariness of body, and which it is perhaps more difficult to bear with good humour, than many profound griefs; because it involves, not merely the uneasiness of the uniformity itself, but the greater uneasiness of hope, that is renewed every moment, to be every moment disappointed. The change which we know must come, seems yet never to come. In the case of the supposed journey of a day along one continued avenue, there can be no doubt, that the uniformity of similar trees, at similar distances, would itself be most wearisome. But what we should feel with far more fretfulness, would be the constant disappointment of our expectation, that the last tree which we beheld in the distance, would be the last that was to rise upon us;—when, tree after tree, as if in mockery of our very patience itself, would still continue to present the same dismal continuity of line.

The great utility of this uneasiness, that arises from the uniformity of impressions which may even have been originally pleasing, it is surely superfluous for me to point out. Man is formed, not for rest, but for action; and if there were no weariness on a repetition of the past, the most general of all motives to action would be instantly suspended. We act, that is to say, we perform what is new, because we are desirous of some result which is new; and we are desirous of the new, because the old, which itself was once new, presents to us no longer the same delight. If the old appeared to us, as it once appeared to us, we should rest in it with most indolent content.

> Hope, eager Hope, the assassin of our joy,
> All present blessings treading under foot,
> Is scarce a milder tyrant than Despair.
> Possession, why more tasteless than pursuit?
> Why is a wish far dearer than a crown?*

It is not because hope treads our present blessings under foot, that they seem to us to have lost their brightness, but in a great measure, because they already seem to us to have faded, that we yield to the illusions of that hope which promises us continually some blessing more bright and less perishable, from the enjoyment of which it is afterwards to seduce us with a similar deceit.

The diminished pleasure, however, fading into positive uneasiness, which thus arises from uniformity of the past, answers, as we have seen, the most benevolent of purposes. It is to our mind, what the corresponding pain of hunger is to our bodily health. It gives an additional excitement, even to the active; and to far the greater number of mankind, it is perhaps the only excitement which could rouse them, from the sloth of ease, to those exertions by which their intellectual and moral powers are, in some degree at least, more invigorated, or by which, notwithstanding all their indifference to the welfare of others, they are forced to become the unintentional benefactors of that society, to which otherwise they might not have given the labour of a single bodily exertion, or even of a single thought.

After these remarks, on two of our very

* Night Thoughts, VII. v. 107—109, and 112, 113.

common emotions, I proceed to that which is next in the order of our arrangement.

> And lo! disclosed in all her smiling pomp,
> Where Beauty, onward moving, claims the praise
> Her charms inspire.—O source of all delight,*
> O thou that kindlest in each human heart
> Love, and the wish of poets, when their tongue
> Would teach to other bosoms what so charms
> Their own!—Thee, form divine! thee, Beauty, thee
> The regal dome, and thy enlivening ray
> The mossy roofs adore:—thou, better sun!
> For ever beamest on the enchanted heart
> Love, and harmonious wonder, and delight
> Poetic! Brightest progeny of Heaven!
> How shall I trace thy features? where select
> The roseate hues to emulate thy bloom?†

The emotions of beauty, and the feelings opposite to those of beauty, to which I now proceed, are, next to our moral emotions, the most interesting of the whole class. They are emotions, indeed, which, in their effects, either of vice or virtue, may almost be considered as moral, being mingled, if not with our own moral actions, at least in our contemplation of the moral actions of others, which we cannot admire, without making them, in some measure, our own, by that desire of imitating them, which, in such a case, it is scarcely possible for us not to feel; or which, in like manner, we cannot view with disgust and abhorrence, without some strengthening in ourselves of the virtues that are opposite to the vices which we consider.

Delightful as our emotions of beauty are, important as they are in their indirect effects, and universally as they are felt, there is perhaps no class of feelings, in treating which so little precision has been employed by philosophers, and on which so little certainty has been attained. It is a very striking though a quaint remark of an old French writer, La Chambre, in his Treatise on the Characters of the Passions, that beauty has had a sort of double effect, in depriving men of their reason. "The greatest men," says he, "who have felt its effects, have been ignorant of its cause; and we may say, that it has made them lose their reason, both when they have been touched with the charms of it, and when they have attempted to say any thing about that very charm which they felt."

So many, indeed, have been the opinions of philosophers on this subject, and opinions so very confused, and so very contradictory, that I conceive it safest to proceed at once to the consideration of the subject itself, without attempting to give you any previous view of the opinions of others with respect to it. I am quite sure, that, if these opinions were exhibited to you in succession, your powers of inquiry would be distracted and oppressed rather than enlightened or invigorated, and therefore would not be in a state very well fitted for prosecuting the investigation on which you might be called to enter. In questions which relate to objects that cannot be directly submitted to the senses, and that have been thus perplexed by many opposite doctrines and speculations, it is often necessary to endeavour to forget as much as possible what others have thought, and to strive to think as if the opinions of others had been unknown to us. I know no question in which this temporary forgetfulness could be of more profit than in that on which we are to enter.

When we speak of the emotion which beauty excites, we speak necessarily of an emotion that is pleasing; for it is only in the case of pleasing emotions that all writers concur in using the name, and only in such cases that the name is used, even by the vulgar, in their common phraseology. It is, in truth, only one of the many forms of that joyous delight, which I ranked as one of the elementary feelings to which our emotions are reducible. The pleasure, then, I may remark in the first place, is one essential circumstance of the emotion.

Another circumstance, which may not seem so obvious, but which I consider as not less constituent of beauty, in that maturer state of the mind in which alone we are capable of considering it, is, that we transfer, in part at least, the delight which we feel, and embody it in the object which excited it, whatever that object may have been; combining it at least partially with our very conception of the object as beautiful; much in the same way as we invest external forms with the colours which exist as feelings of our own mind, or as, in our vague conceptions of the sapid or odoriferous substances that are gratifying to our luxury, we consider as almost present in them and permanent, some part of the very delight which they afford. I know well that, philosophically, we consider these sapid and odoriferous substances, merely as the unknown causes of our sensations of sweetness and fragrance; but I have little doubt, at the same time, that it is only philosophically we do so consider them, and that while we smell a rose, without thinking of our philosophy, we do truly consider the fragrance, which we are at the moment enjoying, or at least a charm which involves a sort of shadowy resemblance of that peculiar species of delight, to be floating around that beautiful flower, as if existing there, independently of our feeling. We do not indeed think of the sensation of fragrance as existing without; for, if we characterized it as a sensation, this very judgment would imply a sort of philosophizing on its nature, which is far from taking place in such a moment. But, without regarding it as a sensation, and enjoying mere-

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* "O Beauty, source of praise."—Orig.

† Pleasures of Imagination, book i. v. 271—273. second form of the poem, v. 282, 284—287, (from "O source," to "Their own!") first form of the poem, v. 275—282.

ly the actual feeling of the moment, we incorporate the charm as it were with the colours of the rose, with as little intention of forming this combination, and even with as little consciousness that any such combination is taking place, as when, in vision, we invest the external hardness,—the mere feeling of gentle and limited resistance, which the rosebud gives us as an object of touch, or of muscular compression, with the colours, which are at the moment arising from affections of a different organ. In the case of fragrance, it is more easy for us, indeed, to separate the sensation from the external form with which we combine it, and to imagine a rose without odour, than, in the case of vision, to separate the mere form and hue that mingle as if in one sensation; because there are many objects which we touch, that excite in us no sensations of fragrance, and no objects of touch which do not excite in us some sensations of colour. The coexistence is, therefore, more uniform, and the subsequent suggestions consequently more uniform and indissoluble in the one case than in the other. It is much easier for us, accordingly, to persuade those who have never read, or discoursed, or thought on such subjects, that the feelings of smell and taste are not inherent in their objects, than to persuade them that the actual colours, which form their sensations of vision, are not spread over the surfaces of external things. But the actual investment of external things, with the feelings of our own mind, does take place in our sensitive references to objects without; and, in some cases, as in those of vision, constitutes a union so close, that it is impossible even for our philosophy to break the union while the sensation continues. We know well, when we open our eyes, that whatever affects our eyes, is within the small compass of their orbit; and yet we cannot look for a single moment, without spreading what we thus visually feel over whole miles of landscape.

Still, I must repeat, not the slightest doubt is philosophically entertained by those who, when they open their eyes, yield like the vulgar to the temporary illusion, that the colours, thus supposed to be spread over the external scenery, are truly feelings of the mind, of which the external objects, or rather the rays of light that come from them, are merely the unknown causes. When questioned on the subject of vision, we state this opinion with confidence, and even with astonishment, that our opinion on the subject, in the present age of philosophy, should be doubted by him who has taken the superfluous trouble of putting such a question. At the very moment, probably, at which we give our answer, we have our eyes fixed on him to whom we address it. His complexion, his dress, are regarded by us as external colours, and we are practically, at the very moment, therefore, belying the very opinion which we profess, and in speculation truly profess to hold.

These remarks show sufficiently the distinction of our speculative limitation of our feelings to mind, as the only subject of feeling, and our practical diffusion of these very feelings over matter, which, by its nature, is incapable of being the subject of any feeling; and they show, that it is very possible for the same mind to combine both, or rather, that there is no individual, who has accurately made the distinction, that does not, in almost every moment of his life, certainly in every moment of vision, go through that very process of spiritualizing matter, or of diffusing over matter his own sensations; which, in his speculations, appears to him to involve an absolute contradiction.

It is not enough, therefore, to urge in disproof of any diffusion of our mental feelings over material things, that our feelings are affections of mind, and cannot be affections of matter; since this would be to disprove a fact which, certainly in vision, and, as I conceive, in some degree in our other senses also, is continually taking place, notwithstanding the supposed demonstration of its impossibility.

To apply these remarks, however, to our particular subject.—Beauty, I have said, is necessarily an emotion that is pleasing; and it is an emotion which we diffuse, and combine with our conceptions of the object that may have excited it. These two circumstances, the pleasing nature of the emotion itself, and the identification of it with the object that excites it, are essential to it in those years in which alone it can be an object of reflection; and are, as I conceive, the only circumstances that are essential to it in all its varieties, and in whatever way the emotion itself may be produced. It is true, indeed, that when questioned, precisely as in the case of simple vision, whether we think that the emotion of beauty is a state or affection of matter, we should have no hesitation in affirming instantly, that it is a state of the mind, and is absolutely incapable of existing in any substance that is purely material. All this we should say with confidence, as we say with confidence that colour is an affection of the mind, and only an affection of the mind. Yet still, as in the case of colour, the temporary diffusion of our own feeling over the external object would take place as before. The beauty, as truly felt and reasoned upon, would be in our mind; the beauty, as considered by us at the time of the feeling, would be a delight that seemed to float over the object without—the object which we, therefore, term beautiful, as we term certain other objects red or green; not the mere unknown causes of the feelings

which we term redness, or greenness, or beauty, but objects that are red, and green, and beautiful. Even at the time of the diffusion, however, we do not say or even think that we diffuse the emotion of beauty any more than we say or think that we diffuse the sensations of colour; for this, as I have said, would be to have philosophized on the nature of the feelings or states of a substantial mind; but without any thought of the colours as sensations, or of the beauty as an emotion, we feel them as in the objects that excite them, that is to say, we reflect them from ourselves on the objects. The diffusion may be temporary, indeed, and depend on the actual presence of the object, but still the temporary diffusion does take place; and while the object is before us, it is as little possible for us not to regard it as permanently beautiful, though no eye were ever to behold it, as it would be for us to regard its colour as fading the very moment in which we close our eye. Beauty, then, is a pleasing emotion, and a delight which we feel, as if diffused over the object which excites it.

I shall proceed further in my inquiry in my next lecture.

LECTURE LIV.

OF IMMEDIATE EMOTIONS, NOT NECESSARILY INVOLVING ANY MORAL FEELING. — 3. BEAUTY AND ITS OPPOSITE, CONTINUED.

GENTLEMEN, the latter part of my Lecture, yesterday, was employed in considering one of the most interesting of our emotions,—that which constitutes the charm of beauty,—an emotion which every one must have felt sufficiently to understand, at the mere mention of the name, what it is, which is the subject of inquiry, and which, notwithstanding, when we endeavour to explain to others what we feel, no two individuals certainly would define by the same terms.

Of an emotion which is so delightful, and so universal, and, by a singular and almost contradictory character of thought, at once so clearly felt and so obscurely comprehended, many theories, as might well be supposed, have been formed by philosophers; and if the accurate knowledge of a subject bare any necessary proportion to the number of opinions with respect to it, that have been stated and canvassed, and the labour and ability of those who have advanced their own theories, or examined the theories of others, there now could be scarcely any more doubt, as to the nature of what is beautiful, than as to any property of a circle or a triangle, which geometricians have demonstrated.

Such a proportion however, unfortunately, does not hold. There are subjects, which as little grow clearer by a comparison of many opinions with respect to them, as the waters of a turbid lake grow clearer by being frequently dashed together, when all that can be effected by the agitation is to darken them the more.

In such a case, the plan most prudent is to let the waters rest, before we attempt to discover what is at the bottom; or, to speak without a metaphor, where there is so much confusion and perplexity, from opposite opinions, it is often of great advantage to regard the subject, if we can so regard it, without reference to any former opinion whatever, as if the phenomena were wholly new, or ourselves the first inquirers.

This I in part attempted in my last lecture, the results of which it may be of advantage briefly to recapitulate.

Though we use the general name of *beauty*, in cases in which there is a great variety of the objects that excite it, and a very considerable variety also in the emotion itself which is thus excited, the emotion, to which we give the name, in all its varieties, is uniformly pleasing. This, then, is one essential circumstance of the emotion of beauty, or, to speak more accurately, of the tribe of different, though kindred emotions, which, from their analogy, we comprehend under that general name.

Another circumstance, which distinguishes the emotions of beauty, in all its varieties, from many other emotions that are pleasing in themselves, is, that, by a sort of reflex transfer to the object which excited it, we identify or combine our agreeable feeling with our very conception of the object, whether present or absent from us. Whatever is delightful at the moment in which we gaze or listen with delight, seems to us to be contained in the beautiful object, as the charms which were contained in that fabulous cestus described by Homer, that existed when none beheld them, and were the same whether the cestus itself was worn by Venus or by Juno.

In illustration of this embodying or reflecting process, the result of which seems to me to be that which constitutes an object to our conception as beautiful, it was necessary to offer some remarks, and especially to make some distinctions, without which, the supposition of this transfer of our delight, and diffusion of it, in the conception of the object that gave birth to it, might appear to involve a sort of absurdity; as if it implied, in the same object, a combination of material and mental affections, which are incapable of union.

It is particularly of importance, in this case, to distinguish our momentary sentiments from our philosophical judgments. As

I behold the sun, for example, it is impossible for me to regard it but as a plane circular surface of a few inches diameter. As I regard it philosophically, it is a sphere of such magnitude, as almost to pass the limits of my conception. If I were asked, what is the diameter of the sun? I should endeavour to state it, with as exact an approximation to its real magnitude as was possible for me. But if I were to state what every one feels, who knows nothing of astronomy, and what even the astronomer feels as much as the vulgar, when he turns his eye to that great luminary, I should say, that the diameter was scarcely a foot;—so different is our momentary sentiment, while we gaze, from the judgments which we form philosophically, after we have ceased to gaze; the impression of the momentary sentiment too, it must be remembered, being as irresistible as that of the judgment, or rather the more irresistible of the two. In like manner, when I look at any distant landscape, first with my naked eye, afterwards with a telescope held in one direction, and then with the same telescope inverted, I have a most undoubting belief that the objects thus seen in three different ways have continued exactly at the same distance from me; but, if I were to state what I feel visually, and what, with all my knowledge of the optical deception, it is impossible for me not to feel visually, I should say, in each of these ways of viewing the scene, that the objects were at different distances. To recur, however, to that instance which brings the difference of the philosophical and the momentary belief nearest to that which takes place in the feeling of beauty,—the case of the visual perceptions of colour,—it is well known, to every one who is acquainted with the theory of the secondary or acquired perceptions of sight, that the colours, which seem to us spread over that wide surface of landscape which terminates in the remote horizon, are spiritual, not corporeal modifications; the effect, indeed, of the presence of a few rays within the small orbit of the eye, but an effect only, not a part of the radiance; and that we yet diffuse as it were the colour, which exists but as a sensation of our mind, over those distant objects, which are not mind, but matter. If we were asked, what the material colour is, we should state, philosophically, that it is the unknown cause of that colour which is our sensation; that redness, for example, is a feeling of our own mind, and greenness a feeling of our own mind, and that what are truly redness and greenness in the external objects, being both equally unknown to us in themselves, have no other difference in our conception than as being the unknown causes of different mental feelings. This answer we should give, philosophically; but, at the same time, it would be impossible for us to look on these unknown causes of our sensations of colour, without blending with them the very sensations which they cause, and seeing, therefore, in them the very greenness and redness which are feelings of our own mind. In like manner, when we philosophize on beauty, and separate the delight which is in us from the cause of the delight which is within us, beauty is simply that which excites in us a certain delightful feeling; it is like the greenness or redness of objects, considered separately from our perception of objects,—the greenness and redness, which material objects would have, though no mind sentient of colour were in existence. But still this is not the beauty which we feel; it is only the beauty which we strive in vain to conceive. The external beauty which we feel, involves our very delight reflected on it, and diffused, as much as, in the case of a visual object, it involves our sensations of colour diffused in it; the colour which we reflect, being in our mind, as the charm which we reflect, is also in our mind. In this sense, indeed, that ancient theory of beauty, which refers it to mind as its source, is a faithful statement of the phenomena; since it is our own spiritual delight which we are continually spreading around us; though, in the sense in which Plato and his followers intended their reference to be understood, it is far from being just, or at least far from having been proved to be just. In borrowing, therefore, the language which they use, we do not borrow a mere poetic rhapsody; but it becomes, with the interpretation which I would give it, the expression of a philosophic truth.

> Mind, mind alone (bear witness, Earth and Heaven!)
> The living fountains in itself contains
> Of beauteous and sublime: here hand in hand,
> Sit paramount the Graces; here enthron'd,
> Celestial Venus, with divinest airs,
> Invites the soul to never-fading joy.*

It is the mind indeed alone that, in the view which I have given you, is the living fountain of beauty, because it is the mind which, by reflection from itself, embodies in the object or spreads over it its own delight. If no eye, that is to say, if no mind were to behold it, what would be the loveliest of those forms, on which we now gaze with rapture, and more than rapture? A multitude of particles more or less near or remote. It is the soul, in which these particles, directly or indirectly, excite agreeable feelings, which invests them in return with many seeming qualities that cannot belong to the mere elementary atoms which nature herself has made; which gives them, in the first place, that unity as a single form, which they do not possess of themselves, since, of themselves, however near they may be in seeming coherence,

* Pleasures of Imagination, book i. v. 481—486.

they are a multitude of separate and independent corpuscles, which, at the same time, spreads over them the colours, that are more truly the effect of our vision than the cause of it, and which diffuses among them still more intimately those charms and graces, which they possess only while we gaze, and without which, when the eyes that animate and embellish them are closed, they are again only a multitude of separate particles, more or less near or remote.

Another distinction, to which I alluded in my last lecture, and which, though apparently, and even really a verbal one, is a distinction of great importance, in its influence on our assent,—is the difference of the phrases, colour, and sensation of colour, beauty, and emotion of beauty. When we speak of colour or beauty simply, we speak of what we feel, without considering any thing more than the feeling itself. When we speak of the sensation of colour and of the emotion of beauty, we speak of these feelings, with reference to the mind; and, though colour, as felt by us, must of course be the sensation of colour, and beauty, as felt by us, be the emotion of beauty, it appears to us a very different proposition, to state, that in vision we combine our sensation of colour with external things, or our emotion of beauty with external things, and to say simply that we combine with them colour and beauty. We combine them, without knowing that we are combining them, consequently without thinking that the one is a sensation, the other an emotion, and both affections of mind alone. To think of them as a sensation and emotion, would be to have formed already the philosophic judgment, which separates them from the object, not the mere momentary sentiment, which combines them with it. In the case of vision, there can be no doubt that this is done every moment by the lowest of the people, who have not the slightest suspicion that the colour, or rather the cause of colour, as it exists without, is different from that redness or blueness which they think they see spread over the surface of objects; and it is not wonderful, therefore, that in combining, in our notion of the beautiful object, the delightful feeling of our mind, we should do this, with as little suspicion that the delight, which we have diffused over the object itself, is our own internal emotion.

That, in thinking of a beautiful object, we do consider some permanent delight as diffused, and as it were embodied in it, is, I think, evident on the slightest reflection on the objects which we term beautiful. And yet, when we first think of this diffusion of a mental feeling over a material object, if we have not been in the habit of attending to other phenomena of the mind, the very supposition of such a process may seem to involve an assumption that is scarcely warrantable; precisely as the uneducated multitude, and perhaps a very great majority of the smaller multitude who are educated, would smile, with something more than unbelief, if we were to endeavour to make them acquainted with that part of the theory of vision which relates to colour. But, to those who have been in the habit of considering the mental phenomena in general, and particularly the phenomena commonly ascribed to association, the diffusion of this feeling, and combination of it with our notion of the cause of the feeling, will seem only an instance of a very general law of our mental constitution. It is, indeed, only an instance of that general tendency to condensation of feelings, which gives the principal value to every object that is familiar to us; to the home of our infancy, to the walks of our youth, to every gift of friendship; nor only to these inanimate things, but, in a great measure also, to the living objects of our affection, to those who watched over our infant slumbers, or who were the partners of our youthful walks, or who left with us, in absence, or in death, those sacred gifts, which for a moment supply their place, with that brief illusion of reality, which gives to our remembrance a more delightful sadness. When we look to the gray hairs of him, in the serenity of whose parental eye, even in its most serious contemplation, there is a silent smile that is ever ready to shine upon us;

> Whose authority, in show
> When most severe, and mustering all its force,
> Was but the graver countenance of love;
> Whose favour, like the clouds of spring, might low'r,
> And utter now and then an awful voice,
> But had a blessing in its darkest frown:*—

When we look to that gracious form, in whose thought, even in the moments in which he addresses to Heaven his gratitude or his prayer, we are still present, as he thinks of that common home of our immortality, to which he is only journeying before us,—or commends us to the protection of that great Being who has been, in his own long earthly career, the protection and happiness of his youth and of his age,—are there no feelings of our heart, no enjoyments of early fondness and increasing gratitude, and reverence unmixed with fear, which we have combined with the very glance of that eye, and the very tone of that voice, whose glance and tone are to us almost like a blessing? The friend whom we have long loved, is, at each single moment, what he has been to us, in many successive years. Without recalling to us the particular events of those years, he recalls to us their delights; or, rather, the very notion which we form of him contains in itself this diffused pleasure, like

* Cowper's Task, book vi. v. 30—35.

some ethereal and immortal spirit of the past.

Nor, as I have already said, is it only in our moral affection for beings living like ourselves, and capable, therefore, of feeling and returning our kindness, that this condensation of regard takes place. It produces an affection of almost moral sympathy, when there can be no feeling of it, and therefore no possibility of return; and where that softening influence accordingly must be wholly reflected from our own mind. That, for inanimate objects, long familiar to us, we have a regard, in some degree similar to that which we feel for a friend, has been the remark of all ages; since every individual, in every age, must have been subject to the universal influence which gives occasion to it. A little attention to this process, by which an object of trifling value becomes representative of feelings that are inestimable, will not be uninteresting in itself, and will throw much light on that similar process, by which, in the case of beauty, I conceive objects to become representative, by a sort of spiritual reflection, of the pleasure which they excite. I cannot prepare you better for this discussion, than by quoting some remarks from the eloquent work of Dr. Smith.

"The causes of pain and pleasure, whatever they are, or however they operate, seem to be the objects which, in all animals, immediately excite those two passions of gratitude and resentment. They are excited by inanimated as well as by animated objects. We are angry, for a moment, even at the stone that hurts us. A child beats it, a dog barks at it, a choleric man is apt to curse it. The least reflection, indeed, corrects this sentiment, and we soon become sensible, that what has no feeling is a very improper object of revenge. When the mischief, however, is very great, the object which caused it becomes disagreeable to us ever after, and we take pleasure to burn or destroy it. We should treat in this manner the instrument which had accidentally been the cause of the death of a friend; and we should often think ourselves guilty of a sort of inhumanity, if we neglected to vent this absurd sort of vengeance upon it.

"We conceive, in the same manner, a sort of gratitude for those inanimated objects, which have been the cause of great or frequent pleasure to us. The sailor, who, as soon as he got ashore, should mend his fire with the plank on which he had just escaped from a shipwreck, would seem to be guilty of an unnatural action. We should expect that he would rather preserve it with care and affection, as a monument that was, in some measure, dear to him. A man grows fond of a snuff-box, of a pen-knife, of a staff, which he has long made use of, and conceives something like a real love and affection for them. If he breaks or loses them, he is vexed out of all proportion to the value of the damage. The house which we have long lived in, the tree whose verdure and shade we have long enjoyed, are both looked upon with a sort of respect that seems due to such benefactors. The decay of the one, or the ruin of the other, affects us with a kind of melancholy, though we should sustain no loss by it. The Dryads and the Lares of the ancients, a sort of genii of trees and houses, were properly first suggested by this sort of affection, which the authors of those superstitions felt for such objects, and which seemed unreasonable, if there was nothing animated about them."*

The reason of this friendship for inanimate objects seems to me to be, that, with such objects, in the circumstances supposed, there is really combined a great part of that which forms the complex conception of our friend; and it is not wonderful, therefore, that there should be a considerable similarity of the feeling excited. There is not, indeed, and cannot be, in the case of lifeless matter, that admiration of virtue and genius, that gratitude for a preference voluntarily made, and for kindness voluntarily shown, and that confidence in future displays of similar devotion, which forms so gratifying and ennobling a part of friendship. But what constitutes the real tenderness of friendship, is something more than all these feelings. These may be felt, in attachments that are formed at any period of life, and at a very early period of mutual acquaintance. But that which gives to such a union its chief tenderness is long and cordial intimacy, and especially that intimacy which has taken its origin in an early period of life. The friend of our boyish sports, of our college studies, of our first schemes and successes, and joys, and sorrows, is he in whose converse the heart expands most readily, and with whom, in latest old age, we love to grow young again. With the very image of the person is mingled the remembrance of innumerable enjoyments and consolations shared in common. They are, as it were, condensed and fixed in it, and are reflected back upon us, as often as the image arises. But the remembrance of a long series of agreeable emotions may be mingled with inanimate scenes, as well as with persons; and if, by the reflection of these past emotions, it produce tenderness in the one case, it surely is not surprising that the same cause should produce a feeling of tenderness in the other; and that, as the chief source of the affection is thus in circumstances that are common to both, we should feel something very like regard for every long familiar object, while

* Theory of Moral Sentiments, Part II. sect. iii. c. 1.

it exists, and of grief, when it exists no more.

The old man, who pointed out the house of a deceased friend, and said, "Formerly I had only to climb those steps, to forget all the miseries of life,"* must have felt for the steps which he had so often trod, that regard which arises from the remembrance of past delight; a remembrance, which constituted so important a part of the pleasure formerly received by him, when they led him to the apartment of his friend, and to all that happiness, which was more than the mere forgetfulness of grief, even when there was grief, or the very miseries of life, to be forgotten.

The same effect, in heightening friendship, which is produced by long intimacy, is produced, in a great degree, by any single feeling of very vivid interest; such as that of peril shared together, the strong emotion of the moment of enterprise, the joy of the escape, and, in many cases, the glory which attended it, being blended and reflected from each individual, as from another self. In one of those admirable tragedies, which form a part of the series of plays on the Passions, there is a very striking picture of this kind, in the speech of an old maimed soldier, who, with all his modesty, has been forced to allude to some of his past exploits.

> For I have fought, where few alive remain'd,
> And none unscathed; where but a few remain'd
> Thus marr'd and mangled;—as belike you've seen
> O' summer nights, around the evening lamp,
> Some wretched moths, wingless and half-consumed,
> Just feebly crawling o'er their heaps of dead.
> In Savoy, on a small, though desperate post,
> Of full three hundred goodly chosen men,
> But twelve were left;—and right dear friends were we
> For ever after. They are all dead now;—
> I'm old and lonely.†

In a real case of this sort, every vivid feeling which attended the action,—and the remembrance of which was, in a great measure, the remembrance of the action itself,—would be combined with the perception of each individual survivor. The common peril, the common escape, the common glory, would be conceived as one; and, in consequence of this unity, as often as the thought of the glorious action recurred, each would be to the others as it were another self. Indeed, so closely would the conception of the action itself, and of the right-dear friends be blended, that, in a case like that which the drama supposes, I have little doubt, that when all but one of the little band of heroes had perished, it would seem to the melancholy survivor,—when all the real component parts of the action had thus ceased to exist,—as if the happiness and glory of the action had perished likewise; and old age and loneliness would be felt the more, as if stripped, not of the enjoyments of friendship only, but almost of the very honours of other years.

The same feeling in this case, too, it must be remarked, extends itself, if not equally, at least in a very high degree, to inanimate things; and there can be no question, that the sword which has been worn only as an ornament, and the sword which has been often wielded in battle, and in battle the most perilous, will be viewed by their possessors with very different regard. The weapon is itself a real component part of the glorious actions which it represents; and we transfuse, as it were, into the mere lifeless steel, a consciousness and reciprocity of our vivid feelings, exactly as, in the case of beauty, we animate the external object with our own delight, without knowing that we have done so.

The grief which we feel for the loss of an object, insignificant in itself, and deriving all its value from associations formed with it, presents, in another form, that transfusion of feeling from the mind, and concentration of it in the object, which constitute our lively pictures of beauty, when it is regarded, not as the unknown cause of our delightful feeling, but as that embodied delight itself.

An object long familiar to us, by occurring frequently, either in perception, or in trains of thought, together with many of our most interesting emotions, and the images of those friends of whom we think most frequently, is, by the common laws of suggestion, so closely associated with these emotions and ideas, that, when it is present to our mind, these shadowy images of happiness may almost be considered as forming with it a part of one complex feeling, or at least are very readily recalled by it. When such an object, therefore, is lost, and we think of it as lost, we do not conceive it as that simple object of perception which it was originally, when it first affected our senses; in which case, the loss of it could not be very seriously regarded by us; but we conceive it as that complex whole which it has become—the image or representative of many delightful feelings. Though it be only a snuff-box, or a walking-stick, as in the cases supposed by Dr. Smith, the mere circumstance of the loss would of itself give some degree of additional interest to our conception of the object, which makes it dwell longer in our mind than it would otherwise have done, and allows time, therefore, for the recurrence of a greater number of the images associated with it, that rise accordingly, and mingle with the conception. But with that complex state of mind, which arises from the union of these, in our rapid retrospect of

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* De St. Lambert, tom. iii.
† Count Basil, a Tragedy, Act III. Scene 1.

other years,—a state which is not the mere conception of the walking-stick which we have lost, but of it and the other associate feelings,—the feeling of the loss is mingled, and is mingled, not more with the conception of the stick, than with all the co-existing associate feelings, vague and indistinct as these may be,—the conception, perhaps, of the friend who presented it to us,—of the walks during which it has been our companion,—of many of the innumerable events, of joy or sorrow, that have occupied us, since the time at which, like a new limb added to us, it became, as it were, a part of ourselves. Since the notion of the loss, therefore, is combined with all these conceptions, in one complex state of mind, it is not wonderful that it should appear to us, for the moment, as the loss, not of one part only, and that, if absolutely considered, the least important part of the whole, but as the actual loss of the associate group of images and emotions of which it is more than representative, and that it should excite our momentary sorrow, accordingly, as for that actual loss. We know, indeed, whenever we reflect, that all these objects are not lost, but the walking-stick only; and our reason, every moment, checks us with this truth; but still, every other moment, in spite of reason, the feeling of the loss and the conception of the vague complex whole, continuing to be blended, affect our mind with the blended regret. It is only one of the innumerable instances, in which our feelings continue obstinately to delude us, in spite of the knowledge which might be supposed capable of saving us from the illusion, as particularly in those striking cases of optical deception, to which, on account of the important light which they throw on the phenomena of the mind in general, I have already so frequently directed your attention. When we look at a pictured cylinder, or at any landscape in which the laws of perspective are observed, we know well that it is a flat surface at which we are looking. Yet it is absolutely impossible for us, notwithstanding this knowledge, to consider the cylinder as a plane, and all the rocks and groves and long-withdrawing vales of the landscape, as comprehended in a few inches of colouring. When we receive the portrait of a friend, it is vain for reason to tell us, that we have received only a flat surface of a little paint; when we lose a walking-stick, the gift of a friend, it is equally vain for reason to tell us, that we have suffered only a loss which we can repair for a few shillings at a toyshop.

It is in a great measure, then, by the momentary belief of the loss of more than the object itself, that I would explain that disproportioned emotion, which is felt to be absurd, yet is not felt the less on account of this seeming absurdity.

But, whatever may be thought of this explanation of that grief,—so far beyond the absolute value of the object,—which we feel, on the loss of any object that has been long familiar to us, there at least can be no doubt, as to the great fact itself, that an object, long familiar to us, does acquire additional value by this familiarity; and, as the object is absolutely the same, however frequently it may have met our eyes, or been used by us for any of the common purposes of life, it is only a relative value which it can have acquired,—a value consisting in our own feelings merely, which we must therefore have condensed in it, or attached to it in some way or other.

After these illustrations from phenomena that, if not absolutely of the same class, are at least very closely analogous, since they imply a sort of charm conceived by us as treasured in external things, and a charm which consists merely in the reflected feelings of our own mind, I trust it will not appear to you too bold an affirmation, to say, that the agreeable emotions which certain objects excite in us, are capable of being, in our conception, combined with the very notion of the objects themselves, and that we term such objects beautiful, by combining, in our notion of them, the delight which we feel, as we term them green, blue, crimson, by combining with them our feelings of colour. What is true of objects of sight, may be conceived as easily in every other species of beauty, natural or artificial, material or mental. Whatever excites the emotion, may be felt as of itself combined with the emotion which it excites; forms, colours, sounds, all that is ingenious in art, or amiable in morals. My limits will not permit me to trace all the varieties of beauty with any minute investigation, through this variety of its objects; but you may yourselves equally apply to them whatever remarks I have applied, more particularly, to one species of the delightful emotion.

It is of external objects, indeed, and particularly of objects of sight, that we think most frequently, when we speak or hear of beauty; but this does not arise from any exclusive peculiarity of the feeling excited by these objects, as if the term were only metaphorically applied to others, but because external objects are continually around us, so as more frequently to excite the emotion of beauty; and in a great measure, too, because the human form, itself an object of vision, is representative to us of the presence of all which we love, or those with whom our life is connected, and from whom its happiness has been derived, or from whom we hope to derive it. It is not wonderful, therefore, that when we think of beauty, we should think of that by which the emotion is

most vividly excited, and should be led accordingly to seek it there,—

> Where Beauty's living image, like the Morn
> That wakes in Zephyr's arms the blushing May,
> Moves onward; or as Venus, when she stood
> Effulgent on the pearly car, and smil'd,
> Fresh from the deep, and conscious of her form,
> To see the Tritons tune their vocal shells,
> And each cerulean sister of the flood
> With loud acclaim attend her o'er the waves,
> To seek th' Idalian bower.*

That we are susceptible of a similar delightful emotion from works of intellect, is sufficiently shown by the fine arts, which are founded on this happy susceptibility; nor is the delight felt only on the contemplation of works of fancy,—at least of fancy in the sense in which that term is commonly employed; it is felt in the result of faculties that seem, while exercised in the operations that produce the beautiful result, to be very foreign from every emotion, but that tranquil satisfaction which may be supposed to constitute a part of our assent to any interesting truth. How many theorems are there, to which a mathematician applies the term *beautiful*, as readily as it is applied by others to the design or the colouring of a picture, or to the words or air of a song; and though the delightful emotion which he expresses by that word is at once far inferior in degree, and only analogous in kind to the emotion excited by those objects, it still is so analogous as to deserve the denomination. In general physics, in like manner, how instantly do we speak of the beauty of an experiment, which is so contrived as to decide a point that has been long in controversy, by very simple means, and with the exclusion of every foreign circumstance that might affect the accuracy of the result; or of the beauty of a theory, which brings together many facts that were before dispersed, without any obvious bond of union, and exhibits them in luminous connexion to our view. The delightful emotion, in these intellectual forms of beauty, is, it will be admitted, far less lively than when it results from external things. But when we thus apply the term *beautiful* to the works of faculties, that are not immediately conversant with beauty, or in which, at least, beauty is scarcely even a secondary consideration, we are far from using a metaphor, any more than we use a metaphor, when we employ the same word in speaking of the beauty of a landscape, and of the beauty of human form, which are both objects of sight, but of which the resulting emotions, thuogh analogous, are far from being the same. We employ the term, because, from the analogy of the delight in the different cases, it is the only term which can express our meaning; we do truly feel, on the contemplation of such intellectual works, a delightful emotion, —as we feel a delightful emotion very similar, however superior it may be in intensity of pleasure, when we look on the charms of nature, or the imitative creations of art; and, as we conceive the very charm which we feel, to be diffused and stored in those beautiful forms on which we gaze, so does the charm which we feel, seem, for the moment, to flow over the severest works of intellect, in the conceptions which are embodied to us. Even reason itself, austere as it may seem, is thus only a part of Beauty's universal empire, that extends over mind and over matter with equal sway.

But though by some minds, which have not been conversant with the beautiful results of scientific inquiry, these severe and less obvious charms may not be readily admitted, of moral beauty it is surely impossible for any one to doubt; that charm which is felt by us, even before we have learned to distinguish virtue by its name, and which, even to the guilty who have abandoned it, still retains a sort of dreadful loveliness, which they would gladly forget, but which no effort can wholly banish from their remembrance, that is forced still to shudder and admire. It is the analogy of this moral beauty, indeed, which gives its most attractive charm to the beauty of the inanimate universe, and which adorns poetry with its most delightful images. To give our mere approbation to virtue, as we give our assent to any truth of reasoning, seems to be as little possible, as for those who are not blind, to open their eyes, in the very sunshine of noon, on some delightful scene, and to view it as a mere collection of forms without any colouring. The softer moral perfections, so essential to the happiness, and almost to the very existence of society, are like those mild lights and gentle graces, in the system of external things, without which the repose of nature would not be tranquillity but death, and its motions, in the waving bough, and the foamy waterfall, and the stream that glides from it, would be only the agitation of contiguous particles of matter. Well, indeed, may the poet of imagination exclaim,—

> Is aught so fair
> In all the dewy landscapes of the Spring,
> In the bright eye of Hesper or the Morn,
> In Nature's fairest forms, is aught so fair
> As virtuous friendship? as the candid blush
> Of him who strives with fortune to be just?
> The graceful tear that streams for others' woes
> Or the mild majesty of private life,
> Where Peace with ever-blooming olive crowns
> The gate,—where Honour's liberal hands effuse
> Unenvied treasures, and the snowy wings
> Of Innocence and Love protect the scene?*

In all these cases of moral beauty, as in that to which our senses more immediately give rise, we conceive the delight which we

* Pleasures of Imagination, book i. v. 327—335.

* Pleasures of Imagination, book i. v. 500—511

feel, to be centred in the moral object; and the very diffusion of the delight seems to connect us more closely with that which we admire,—producing what is not a mere sympathy, but something more intimate,—that union of mind with mind, in reflected and mingled feeling, which, notwithstanding all the absurd mysticism that has been written concerning it, has, in the manner which I have now described, in part at least, a foundation in nature.

But though, in all these great provinces of beauty, the material, the intellectual, and the moral, an object which we feel to be beautiful be merely an object with which, in our conception, or continued perception, if it be an object of sense, or, in our mere conception, if it be an object of another kind, we have combined, by a sort of mental diffusion, the delight which it has excited in us; why, it will be said, do certain objects produce this effect?

The examination of this point, however, I must defer till my next lecture.

LECTURE LV.

I. IMMEDIATE EMOTIONS NOT INVOLVING NECESSARILY ANY MORAL FEELING.—3. BEAUTY, AND ITS REVERSE, CONTINUED.—DIFFERENT SORTS OF BEAUTY.

GENTLEMEN, my last Lecture was employed in considering and illustrating, by various analogous phenomena of the mind, the process by which I conceive our feeling of delight, that arises from the object which we term beautiful, to be reflected, as it were, from our mind to the objects which excite it; very much in the same way as we spread over external things, in the common phenomena of vision, the colour, which is a feeling or state, not of matter, but of mind. A beautiful object, when considered by us philosophically, like the unknown causes of our sensations of colour in bodies, considered separately from our visual sensations, is merely the cause of a certain delightful emotion which we feel; a beautiful object, as felt by us, when we do not attempt to make any philosophic distinction, is, like those coloured objects which we see around us, an object in which we have diffused the delightful feeling of our own mind. Though no eye were to behold what is beautiful, we cannot but imagine that a certain delight would for ever be flowing around it, as we cannot but imagine, in like manner, that the loveliest flower of the wilderness, which buds and withers unmarked, is blooming with the same delightful hues, which our vision would give to it, and surrounded with that sweetness of fragrance, which, in itself, is but a number of exhaled particles, that are sweetness only in the sentient mind.

An object, then, as felt by us to be beautiful, seems to contain, in its own nature, the very delight which it occasions. But a certain delight must in this case be excited, before it can be diffused by reflection on that object which is its cause; and it is only by certain objects that the delightful emotion is excited. Why, then, it will be said, is the effect so limited? and what circumstances distinguish the objects that produce the emotion, from those which produce no emotion whatever, or, perhaps, even an emotion that may be said to be absolutely opposite?

If the same effect were uniformly produced by the same objects, it might seem as absurd to inquire, how certain objects are beautiful and others not so, as to inquire, how it happens that sugar is not bitter, nor wormwood sweet,—the blossom of the rose not green, nor the common herbage of our meadows red. The question, however, assumes a very different appearance, when we consider the diversity of the emotions excited by the same object, and when we consider the very powerful influence of accidental association on our emotions of this kind. In such circumstances we may be fairly allowed to doubt, at least, whether objects, primarily and absolutely, have a power of producing this emotion, or whether it may not wholly depend on those contingent circumstances, which we find and must allow to be capable of modifying it to so very great an extent.

That certain circumstances do truly modify our emotion of beauty, there can be no doubt; and even that they produce the feeling, when there is every reason to believe that, but for such circumstances, no emotion of the kind would have been excited. The influence of what is called fashion, in giving a temporary beauty to various forms, is a most striking proof of this flexibility of our emotion; and it is a fact too obvious to require illustration by example.

"If an European," says Sir Joshua Reynolds in one of his discourses delivered at the Royal Academy, "if an European, when he has cut off his beard, and put false hair on his head, or bound up his own natural hair in regular hard knots, as unlike nature as he can possibly make it, and after having rendered them immoveable by the help of the fat of hogs, has covered the whole with flour, laid on by a machine with the utmost regularity,—if, when thus attired, he issues forth, and meets a Cherokee Indian, who has bestowed as much time at his toilet, and laid on with equal care and attention his yellow and red ochre, on particular parts of his forehead and cheeks, as he judges most becoming; whoever of these two despises the other for this attention to the fashion of his

country, which ever first feels himself provoked to laugh, is the barbarian."*

It is not necessary, however, to have recourse to savage life, to feel how completely the ornamental and the ridiculous in all the adventitious embellishments of fashion, differ only as the eyes which behold them are different. The most civilized European may soon become, in this respect, a Cherokee, and in his nice absurdities of decoration, be himself the very thing at which he would have laughed before.

Weary as we soon become of whatever we have admired, our weariness is not more rapid than our admiration of something new, which follows it, or rather precedes it. It seems as if, in order to produce this delightful emotion, nothing more were necessary for us than to say, Let this be beautiful. The power of enchantment is almost verified in the singular transformations which are thus produced; and in many of these, fashion is employed in the very way in which magic has been commonly fabled to be employed, —in making monsters, who are as little conscious of their degradation, while the voluntary metamorphosis lasts, as the hideous but unknowing victims of the enchanter's art. A few months, or perhaps even a few weeks, may, indeed, show them what monsters they have been; but what is monstrous in the past, is seen only by the unconscious monsters of the present hour, who are again, in a few months, to laugh at their own deformity. What we are, in fashion, is ever beautiful; but nothing is in fashion so ridiculous, as the beauty which has been; as in journeying with sunshine before us, what is immediately under our eye is splendour; but if we look back, we see a long shadow behind us, though all which is shadow now was once brilliant, as the very track of brightness along which we move.

The influence of fashion, on the mere trappings of dress, or furniture, or equipage, is the more valuable as an illustration, from the rapidity of its changes, and the universality of the emotion which it excites, that render it absolutely impossible for the most sceptical to doubt its power. The influence of particular associations on individual minds is, indeed, as powerful as the more general influence which, in each individual on whom it operates, is only one of the forms of that very particular influence. But, in these cases, it might have been doubted whether the peculiarity ascribed to association, might not rather have arisen from constitutional diversity. In the changes of universal fashion, however, there can be no doubt as to the nature of the sway that has been exercised; since every one will readily allow in another, that change of which he is conscious in himself.

Yet, even though what is commonly termed fashion, the modifier or creator of general feeling, had not been, it is scarcely possible that we should not have discovered the influence of circumstances on our individual emotions. Even in the mere scenery of nature, which, in its most majestic features, its mountains, its rivers, its cataracts,—seems, by its permanence, to mock the power of man, how differently do the same objects affect us, in consequence of the mere accidents of former feelings and former events! The hill and the waterfall may be pleasing to every eye; but how doubly beautiful do they seem to the very heart of the expatriated Swiss, who almost looks, as he gazes on them, for the cottage of his home, half gleaming through the spray; as if they were the very hill and the waterfall which had been the haunt of his youth. To the exile, in every situation, what landscape is so beautiful as that which recalls to him perhaps the bleakest and dreariest spot of the country, which he has not seen for many dismal years? The softest borders of the lake, the gentle eminences, that seem to rise only to slope into the delightful valleys between, the fields, the groves, the vineyards, in all their luxuriance, these have no beauty to his eye. But let his glance fall on some rock that extends itself without one tuft of vegetation, or on some heath or morass of still more gloomy barrenness, and what was indifference till then, is indifference no more. There is an instant emotion at his heart, which, though others might scarcely conceive it to be that of beauty, is beauty to him; and it is to this part of the scene that his waking eye most frequently turns, as it is it alone which he mingles in his dream with the well-remembered scenery of other years.

That our emotion of beauty, which arises from works of art, is susceptible of modification by accidental circumstances, is equally evident. There are tastes in composition, of which we are able to fix the period, almost with the same accuracy as we fix the dates of any of those great events which fill our tables of chronology. What is green or scarlet to the eyes of the infant, is green or scarlet to the same eyes in boyhood, in youth, in mature manhood, in old age; but the work of art which gives delight to the boy, may excite no emotion but that of contempt or disgust in the man. It must be a miserable ballad, indeed, which is not read or heard with interest in our first years of curiosity; and every dauber of a village sign-post, who knows enough of his art to give four legs, and not two merely, to his red lion and blue bear, is sure of the admiration of the little critic who stops his hoop or his top to gaze on the wonders of his skill.

* Discourse VII.

Even in the judgments of our maturer years, when our discernment of beauty has been quickened by frequent exercise, and the study of the works of excellence of every age has given us a corresponding quickness in discerning the opposite imperfections, which otherwise we might not have perceived, how many circumstances are there, of which we are perhaps wholly unconscious, that modify our general susceptibility of the emotions of this class. Our youth, our age, our prevailing or temporary passions, the peculiar admiration which we may feel for some favourite author, who has become a favourite, perhaps, from circumstances that had little relation to his general merit, may all concur with other circumstances as contingent, in giving diversity to sentiments which otherwise might have been the same. It is finely observed by La Bruyere in his Discours de Reception, in 1693, when Corneille was no more and Racine still alive,—"Some," says he, "cannot endure that Corneille should be preferred or even thought equal to him. They appeal to the age that is about to succeed. They wait, till they shall no longer have to count the voices of some old men, who, touched indifferently with whatever recalls to them the first years of their life, love perhaps in his Œdipus only the remembrance of their youth." The same idea is happily applied, by another Academician, to account for the constant presence of love in French tragedy, by the universal sympathy which it may he expected to excite. "This passion," says he, "which is almost the only one that can interest women, has nearly an equal influence on the other sex. How many are there, who have never felt any very violent emotions of ambition or vengeance! Scarcely is there one who has been exempt from love. The young are perhaps under its influence at present. With what pleasure do they recognise themselves in all which they see and hear! The old have loved. How delightful to them, to be recalled to their fairest and happiest years, by the picture of what was then the liveliest occupation of their thought! The mere remembrance is, to them, a second youth."

If the emotion of beauty, which we receive from external things and works of intellectual art, be thus under the control of our passions and remembrances, the pleasure of moral beauty is also, in some measure, under the same control. The great principles of moral distinction are indeed too deeply fixed in our breast, by our divine Author, to allow approbation and pleasure to be attached to the contemplation of pure malignity, or withheld from pure benevolence. When evil is admired, therefore, it is in consequence of some disproportionate admiration attached to some real or supposed accompanying good; but still it is in the power of circumstances to produce this disproportionate admiration, and consequently to modify, in a great degree, the resulting emotion of moral beauty. In one age, or in one country, the self-denying virtues are held in highest estimation; in another age, or another country, the gentler social affections. There are periods of society in which valour, that gave virtue its name in the early ethics of one mighty people, constitutes almost the whole of that national virtue which commands general reverence, at the expense of the calmer and far nobler virtues of peace. There are other systems of polity in which these civil virtues rise to their just pre-eminence, and in which valour is admired, less for its absolute unthinking intrepidity, than for its relation to the sacred rights of which it is the guardian or the avenger; nor does the estimation perish completely with the circumstances that gave rise to it. At Rome, even when Roman liberty had bowed the neck to that gracious despot who prepared, by the habit of submission to usurped power, the servility that was afterwards,—while executioner succeeded executioner on the throne of the world,—to smile, and to shudder, and obey, because others had smiled, and shuddered, and kissed the dust before:—in the very triumph of usurpation, when a single hour at Pharsalia had decided the destiny of ages, and Utica had heard the last voice of freedom, like the fading echo of some divine step retiring from the earth, still slavery itself could not overcome the silent reverence of the heart for him who had scorned to be a slave.

> Even when proud Cæsar, 'midst triumphal cars,
> The spoils of nations, and the pomp of wars,
> Ignobly vain, and impotently great,
> Show'd Rome her Cato's figure drawn in state,
> As her dead father's reverend image pass'd,
> The pomp was darken'd, and the day o'ercast.
> The triumph ceased—tears gush'd from every eye;
> The world's great victor pass'd unheeded by.
> Her last good man dejected Rome adored,
> And honour'd Cæsar's less than Cato's sword.*

Such were the emotions with which the actions of Cato were regarded at Rome, and continued to be regarded during the whole reign of the stoical philosophy, producing those extravagant comparisons of a mortal and the gods, which were not more impious than absurd, and which were little accordant with the general spirit of a system of philosophy, of which piety to the gods was one of the most honourable characteristics. The character of perfect moral beauty, however, which the life of Cato seemed to exhibit to a Roman,—who, if not free, was at least a descendant of the free,—is very different from that which it would exhibit to the slaves, the descendants of slaves, that minister, as their ancestors have ministered, to the insignifi-

* Pope's Prologue to Cato, v. 27—36.

cant grandeur of some eastern court. I need not say, how very different feelings also it excites in the mind of those whom Christianity has taught a system of morals, that surpasses the morality of stoicism as much as the purest doctrines of the Porch surpassed, in moral excellence, the idle and voluptuous profligacy of other systems.

With these striking facts before us, it seems impossible then to contend for any beauty that is absolutely fixed and invariable. That general susceptibility of the emotion, sensitive, intellectual, and moral, which forms a part of our mental constitution, is, it appears, so modified by the circumstances in which individuals are placed, that objects which, but for these circumstances, would not have appeared beautiful to us, do seem beautiful; and that other objects, from the same cause, cease to give that delight which they otherwise would have produced. It is obviously, therefore, impossible to determine, with perfect certainty, the great point in question as to original beauty; since, whatever our primary original feelings may have been, they must, by the influence of such modifying circumstances, that are operating from the very moment of our birth, be altogether diversified, before we are able to speculate concerning them, and perhaps even in the infant, before any visible signs of his emotions can be distinctly discovered.

Since we cannot, then, decide with confidence, either affirmatively or negatively, in such circumstances, all which remains, in sound philosophy, is a comparison of mere probabilities. Do these however lead us to suppose, that originally all objects are equally capable of receiving the primary influences of arbitrary or contingent circumstances, which alone determine them to be beautiful? or do they not rather indicate original tendencies in the mind, in consequence of which it more readily receives impressions of beauty from certain objects than from others, however susceptible of modification these original tendencies may be, so as afterwards to be varied or overcome by the more powerful influence of occasional causes?

It must not be supposed, in an inquiry of this kind, that we are to look to those high delights which beauty, in its most attractive forms, affords; for though it may be false, that all the pleasure of beauty is derived from adventitious circumstances, it is certainly true, at least, that our most valuable pleasures of this class are derived from circumstances with which our imagination has learned to embellish objects. The only reasonable question is, not whether the chief emotions which we now term emotions of beauty, be referable to this source, but whether we must necessarily refer to it every emotion of this class, of every species and degree.

If then, in our estimate of mere probabilities, we attend to the signs which the infant exhibits, almost as soon as objects can be supposed to be known to him, it is scarcely possible not to suspect, at least, that some emotions of this kind are felt by him. The brilliant colours, in all their variety of gaudiness, which delight the child and the savage, may not indeed be the same which give most gratification to our refined sensibility; but still they do give to the child, as they give to the savage, a certain gratification, and a gratification which we should perhaps still continue to feel, if our love of mere gaudy colouring were not overcome by the delight which, in after-life, we receive from other causes that are inconsistent with this simple pleasure —a delight arising from excellencies which the child and the savage have not had skill to discern, but which, when discerned, produce the impression of beauty, in the same manner as the brilliant varieties of colour that are easily distinguished, and, therefore, instantly felt to be beautiful. What child is there who, in a toyshop, does not prefer the gaudiest toy, if all other circumstances of attraction be the same? or rather, to what child are not this very glare and glitter the chief circumstances of attraction? and in what island of savages have our circumnavigators found the barbarian to differ in this respect from the child? The refined critic may indeed feel differently; but this, as I have said, does not arise from defect of that original tendency to receive a pleasing emotion from the contemplation of those brilliant patchworks of colours which, though he has learned to regard them as tawdry, he would, in other circumstances, have admired with the savage, but from the development of tendencies to receive pleasure from other causes, which are inconsistent with this earlier delight,—tendencies which are original, like the other, existing in the mind of the savage as much as in his own more cultivated mind, but existing there inertly, because circumstances have not arisen to develop them.

It is vain to say, in this case, that the pleasure which the gaudy patches of colour afford, is not an *emotion* of any sort, but a mere pleasure of sense; for, of the direct sensual pleasure of the different rays of light, we are capable of judging, as well as the child; and, though we still continue to feel, in many cases, an emotion of beauty from objects on which brilliant colours are spread in various proportions, we are able to make a sort of analysis of our complex feeling, so as in some degree to distinguish our admiring emotion as a result of the previous sensitive feeling, by which the colours became visible to us. If we were to judge by these primary sensitive feelings alone, it certainly would not be on the most brilliant colours that our eye would love to rest, with that continued in-

tentness of vision to which the subsequent emotion of beauty leads, by the delight which it superadds, before the tawdry has been distinguished from finer species of beauty. On such colours, it would even be painful for it to rest, with that species of contemplation which the child indulges,—a contemplation in which, if there be many dazzling hues to glitter on him, he exhibits often to those around him an intensity of delight, that, if we did not make allowance for the more violent natural expression of pleasure, in our early years, might seem even to surpass our more refined gratifications, when the sources of this happy emotion have been rendered at once more copious and more pure, and our sensibility has been quickened by the very happiness which it has enjoyed.

The delight, it must be remembered too, arises not merely from the specific differences of colours as more or less pleasing, in which case the most pleasing could not be too widely spread, but from distributions of colours in gaudy variety, exactly as in the finer arrangements of tints, which are beauty to our maturer discernment.

I have said, that from the undoubted effect of circumstances, in modifying our original tendencies, and of circumstances that may in some degree have operated before we are capable of ascertaining their influence, it is only an estimate of probabilities to which our inquiry can lead. In vision, however, as far back as we can trace the emotion of beauty, some original emotion of this kind does seem to be felt in colours, and varied arrangements of colours; and if from vision we pass to that sense which is next to it in importance as a source of the feelings that produce our emotion of beauty, we shall find another tribe of our sensations that seem, in like manner, to favour the supposition of some original beauty, however inferior to those other analogous emotions of delight which are to be the growth of our maturer years. The class to which I allude, are our sensations of sound, a class which seems to me peculiarly valuable for illustration, as showing, I conceive, at once, the influence of original tendencies, and also of the modifying power of contingent circumstances. In different nations, we find different casts of music to prevail; in the variety of these national melodies, therefore, we recognise the power of circumstances in diversifying the original feelings. But to the diversifying power there are limits; for, however different the peculiar spirit of the national melodies may be, we find that in all nations certain successions of sounds alone are regarded as pleasing,—those which admit of certain mathematical proportions in their times of vibration. It is not every series of sounds, then, that is capable of exciting the emotion of beauty, but only certain series, however varied these may be. The universality of this law of beauty in one of our senses, in which delight is felt from mere arrangements or successions of sounds, is a ground of presumption, at least, that all beauty is not wholly contingent, and affords analogies, which, not as proofs indeed, but simply as analogies, may fairly be extended to the other senses.

Even that fine species of beauty which is to be found in the expression of character, in animated forms, at least if we admit that species of silent language, which has been called the language of natural signs, does not seem to be, in all its varieties, absolutely dependent on the mental associations of the being who beholds it. These connexions, indeed, of the corporeal signs of mental qualities, with the qualities which they have been found to express, give to the beauty that is admired by us, in our maturer years, its principal power; but, though many, and, perhaps, the far greater number of these signs are unquestionably learned by experience, there seems reason to think, or at least there is no valid ground of positive disbelief, that there are at least some natural signs independent of experience, and equally universal in use and in interpretation. A smiling countenance, for example, appears, if we may judge from the language of his own little features, to be agreeable to the infant, and a frowning countenance to be disagreeable to him, as soon as he is capable of observing the different lineaments or motions which are developed in the smile or frown; though, I admit, it would be too much to say, with certainty, that even these signs, which we term natural, may not themselves be acquired by earlier observations than any which we are accustomed to take into account. Yet still, though the interpretation, even in these cases, may, however early, result from still earlier experience only, this has not been proved; nor is it necessary, from the general analogies of mind, to assume it as certain, without particular proof in the particular case. To those, therefore, whose philosophic spirit is easily alarmed by the word instinct, as if it expressed a connexion peculiarly mysterious, when, in truth, every connexion of one feeling with another, is equally mysterious, or equally free from mystery, and cannot fail to be so regarded by every one who has learned to consider accurately what is meant, even by the most regular antecedences and consequences of the events of nature; to that class of philosophers, who think that the word experience accounts for every thing, without reflecting on what it is that experience itself must primarily have been founded,—it may seem unphilosophic thus to speak of the possible instinctive use, or instinctive interpretation of smiles, or frowns, or signs of any sort. Yet, how many cases are there, in which it is ab-

solutely impossible to deny these very instincts; and cases too, in which the immediate effect of the instinct, as much as in the supposed case of beauty, is the production of emotion of some sort, or at least of the visible signs of emotion. In some of the lowest of the animals which we have domesticated,—in the cry of the hen, for example, the first time that a bird of prey is seen hovering at a distance, that cry, of which the force is so instantly, and so fully comprehended, by the little tremblers that cower beneath her wing, who does not perceive, in this immediate emotion of terror, an interpretation of natural signs, as instinctive as the language of affection that is instinctively used? Such a cry of alarm, indeed, is not necessary to the human mother of the little creature that has a safer shelter continually around him. But there are positive signs of pleasure, of which a delightful emotion may be the immediate consequence, as there are negative signs, which are merely warnings of evil to be shunned, that are followed immediately by an emotion of a different kind; and these additional sources of enjoyment, it is not unworthy of the kindness of Heaven to have communicated to the infant, who may thus feel, in the caress, a delight of more than mere tactual softness. The cry of the parent fowl scarcely seems more quick to be understood, than the smile of the mother, to awake in the little heart that throbs within her arms an answering delight; nor is there any philosophic inconsistency in supposing it, whatever error there might be in affirming it positively, to be a part of a natural language of emotion, which, like the undoubted natural language of other animals, is instinctively understood, in every age of life, as in every nation of the globe, and which is already felt as happiness or affection, before the happiness, of which it is the promise, can itself have been felt or even anticipated.

Of a still finer species of emotion, perhaps, than even that which arises from looks or features of the living countenance, may be counted the pleasure which is felt from the contemplation of moral beauty; and yet, if we trace back this feeling through a series of years, in the progress of individual emotion, though we may find many variations of it in various circumstances; it is far from certain, that we shall find it more lively in manhood, than in the early years of the unreflecting boy. It is not to be expected, indeed, that moral beauty is to be felt, before the consequences of actions, which render them to our conception moral, can be appreciated, or that it is to be felt, but in those very cases, in which such consequences can be known. There are many offences, therefore, that excite our instant abhorrence, of which a boy cannot feel the moral atrocity, as there are many virtues, of which he is incapable of feeling the moral charm. But, in virtuous actions, of which the nature can be distinctly conceived by him, he is not the dullest to feel what is lovely, nor the dullest to feel, mixed with his indignation and his pity, disgust at actions of a different sort. In the ballad which he exults or weeps to hear, he loves and hates with a love and hatred, at least as strong as are felt by those to whom he listens; and it seems as if, far from requiring any slow growth of circumstances, to mature or develop his emotions, there were nothing more necessary to his feeling of the beauty of an heroic sacrifice, than his knowledge that an act was truly heroic, and nothing more necessary to his emotions of an opposite kind, than his knowledge that there was cruelty, or ingratitude on earth.

The observations which I have now made on different species of beauty, are not urged by me, as if of evidence sufficient to prove, positively, that we have feelings of beauty, which may be said to be original or independent of accidental associations of every sort; since this point, as I have already stated, is beyond our power to determine with perfect accuracy, because the mind cannot be a subject of our distinct examination, till many accidental causes, of the power of which, in the peculiar circumstances of the infant mind, we may be without the slightest suspicion, may have modified its original tendencies in the most important respects. The burthen of proof, however, does not rest with the believers, but with the deniers of original beauty; and, since the inquiry has not for its object what may be affirmed with certainty, but merely what may be regarded as more or less probable, even these very slight remarks may perhaps have been sufficient to show the greater probability to be on the side of that opinion, which supposes that all objects are not originally to the mind the same in beauty or deformity, or, to speak more accurately, that all objects are not originally equally incapable of exciting either of these emotions; but, on the contrary, that, though accidental circumstances may produce one or other of these emotions, when, but for the mere accidents, neither of them would have been produced, or may variously modify, or even reverse in some cases, the original tendencies; there yet are in the mind some original tendencies, independent of all association,—tendencies to feel the emotion of beauty on the contemplation of certain objects, and the emotion opposite to that of beauty, on the contemplation of certain other objects.

This latter supposition, which, doubtful as the question must, from the very nature of the circumstances, always be, seems to my own belief the more reasonable, is rendered, I think, not less, but more certain, by

the arguments which are urged against it, arguments that seem to me founded on a very false view of the circumstances that should be expected to follow, if the doctrine against which they are urged were just, or which, at least, are not applicable to the particular view which I have given you of beauty as an emotion, not a direct sensation.

It is not a sense of beauty, you must have remarked, for which I have contended,—a sense which, like our other senses, must force upon the mind constantly, or almost constantly, a particular feeling, when a particular object is present. The feeling of beauty, according to my view of it. is not a sensation, but an emotion, a feeling subsequent to the perception or conception of the object termed beautiful; and which, like other emotions, may, or may not, follow the particular perception or conception, according to the circumstances in which those primary feelings, to which it is only secondary, may have arisen.

It is vain, therefore, to contend, that objects which previously impressed us with no feeling of their beauty, may become beautiful to us, in consequence of associations; that is to say, of former pleasing or unpleasing feelings, peculiar to ourselves; for though it might be absurd to suppose that these former feelings could give us a new sense, it is far from absurd, that the objects of them may become to our minds the subjects of new pleasing emotions, and of emotions similar, perhaps, to those which were formerly excited by other objects. That we are originally susceptible of various other emotions is admitted, and even contended, by those who would trace to the suggestion of them our feeling of beauty; and these original susceptibilities, they will surely allow, may, like the susceptibility of beauty, be variously modified, by the circumstances in which the individual may be placed, and may be produced, in consequence of former associations, in circumstances in which they otherwise would not have arisen. There is not a single emotion, indeed, which does not admit of constant modifications in this way. Our love, our hate, our wonder, are at least as much dependent on the nature of our past feelings, as our delight in what seems to us beautiful. Why should this one emotion, then, be expected to differ from our other emotions, which are confessedly capable of being awakened or suspended, in different circumstances, though the mere object of contemplation be the same? To those, accordingly, who, from being accustomed to consider beauty as either permanent and unchangeable in objects, or as absolutely contingent on accidental associations, may find some difficulty in reconciling original beauty, of any sort or degree, with that influence of circumstances, which may modify it or overcome it, it may be of some assistance, to consider the analogy of our other emotions; since we shall find, that this original tendency, subject to modification, which I suppose to take place in our feelings of beauty, is what truly takes place in our other emotions; with which, therefore, the emotion of beauty, in its variations in various circumstances may well be supposed to correspond. Let us take, for example, our emotions of desire—feelings as lively, at least, as our emotion of beauty, and in many cases far more lively—which arise in the mind, too, in circumstances in some degree similar; not on the contemplation of a present delightful object, indeed, like beauty, but on the contemplation of some delight that is future. No one, surely, whatever his opinion may be, as to the original indifference of objects that now seem beautiful, will maintain that all objects, painful and pleasing, are equally capable, originally, of exciting the emotion of desire. Yet no one, I conceive, will deny, that it is in the power of general fashion, or of various accidental circumstances, to render objects desirable, or, in other words, capable of exciting, when contemplated, this emotion of desire, that otherwise would have been not indifferent merely, but perhaps positively disliked; and to make objects cease to be desirable, which would have been highly prized by us, but for the factitious circumstances of society, or accidents that may have operated on ourselves with peculiar influence. There is a mode, in our very wishes, as there is a mode in the external habiliments which we wear; and, in their different objects, the passions of different ages and countries are at least as various, as the works of taste, to which they give their admiration. When, at the Restoration, the austerity of the Protectorate was succeeded by the disgraceful profligacy of the royal court, and when there was an immediate change of the desirableness of certain objects, as if our very susceptibilities of original passion had been changed, we do not suppose that any real change took place in the native constitution of man. In every original moral tendency or affection, he was precisely what he was before. In all ages, the race of mankind are born with certain susceptibilities, which, if circumstances were not different, would lead them as one great multitude to form very nearly the same wishes; but the difference of circumstances produces a corresponding diversity of passions, that scarcely seem to flow from the same source. In like manner, the race of mankind, considered as a great multitude, might be in all ages endowed with the same susceptibilities of the emotion of beauty, which would lead them upon the whole, to find the same pleasure, in the contemplation of the same objects, if different circumstances did not produce views of utility, and associations of various sorts, that diversify the emo-

tion itself. It is the same in different periods of life of the same individual; the desirableness of objects varying, at least, as much as the feeling of beauty. I may add, that as there seem to be, in individuals, original constitutional tendencies to certain passions, rather than to others; so there might be a constitutional difference, with respect to the original susceptibility of the emotion of beauty, that, of itself, might render certain objects more delightful to certain minds than others. But still, when the race of mankind are considered as one great multitude, as their native original tendencies to passion may be considered as the same, their native original susceptibilities of the pleasing impressions of beauty, in certain cases, might also have been the same; though, as these original tendencies, if they did exist, might yet admit of being variously diversified, to measure them by any standard, would, even in these circumstances, be still as impracticable, as if there were no original tendencies whatever. There is no standard of desire; and as little, even in these circumstances, should we expect to find an absolute standard of beauty. All of which we might philosophically speak, would be the agreement of the greater number of mankind in certain desires, and the agreement of the greater number of cultivated minds in certain emotions of beauty.

That the feeling of beauty, which so readily arises when the mind is passive, and capable, therefore, of long trains of reverie, should not arise when the mind is busied with other objects of contemplation, or even, in any very high degree, when the mind is employed in contemplating the beautiful object itself, but in contemplating it, with a critical estimation of its merits or defects, is no proof, as has been supposed, that trains of associate images are essential to the production of the emotion, but is what might very naturally be suspected, though no such trains were at all concerned. The feeling of beauty, it must be remembered, is not, as I have already said, a sensation, but an emotion. A certain perception must previously exist; and though the perception may have a tendency to induce that different state of mind which constitutes the emotion, it has a tendency also, by suggestion, to induce many other states, and in certain circumstances, when there are any strong desires in the mind, may induce those other states, which may be accordant with the paramount existing desires, more readily than the emotion which has no peculiar accordance with them. It is the same in this case, too, with our other emotions, as with that of beauty. When we are intent on a train of study, how many objects occur to the mind, which, in other circumstances, would be followed by other emotions,—by various desires, for example,—but which are not followed by their own specific desires, merely in consequence of our greater interest in the subject, the relations of which we are studying. Nor is this peculiar to our emotions only. It extends in some degree even to our very sensations. In two individuals who walk along the same meadow, the one after suffering some very recent and severe affliction, and the other with a light heart, and an almost vacant mind, how very different, in number and intensity, are the mere sensations that arise at every step! Yet we surely do not deny, to him who scarcely knows that there are flowers around him, an original susceptibility of being affected by the fragrance of that very violet, the faint odour of which is now wafted to him in vain.

The great argument, however, which is urged by the deniers of any original beauty, is founded on that very view of the fluctuations of all our emotions of this class, which I endeavoured to exhibit to you in the early part of this lecture. When we consider the changes of every kind, with respect to all, or, at least, nearly all the varieties of this order of our emotions, not merely in different nations, or different ages of the world, but even in the same individual, in the few years that constitute his life; and in many important respects, perhaps, in a few months or weeks, can we suppose they say, that amid these incessant changes, of which it is not difficult for us to detect the source, there should be any beauty that deserves the honourable distinction of being independent and original? In what respect, however, does this formidable argument differ from that equally formidable argument which might be urged against the distinctions of truth and falsehood? those distinctions, which it is impossible for the very sceptic, who professes to deny them, not to admit in his own internal conviction, and the validity of which, the deniers of any original beauty would be far from denying, or even wishing to weaken; since the very wish to convince of the truth of their theory, whatever it may be, must be founded on this very distinction of a peculiar capacity in the mind, of a feeling of the truth of certain arguments, rather than of certain opposite arguments. If our tastes, however, fluctuate, do not our opinions of every sort vary in like manner? and is not the objection in the one case, then, as powerful as in the other? or, if powerless in one, must it not be equally powerless in both? I need not speak of different nations, or ages of the world, in this, more than of the other case, of the very different systems of opinions of savage, semi-barbarous, and civilized life, in all their varieties of climate and state. Here, too, it is sufficient to think of one individual, to compare the wisdom of the mature well-educated man, with the ignorance

of his boyhood, and the proud, but irregular and fluctuating acquirements of his more advanced youth; and if, notwithstanding all these changes, when perhaps not a single opinion ultimately remains the same, we yet cannot fail to believe, that truth is something more than a mere arbitrary feeling, the result of accidental circumstances, that there is, in short, an original tendency in the mind to assent to certain propositions, rather than to certain other propositions opposite to these; we surely are not entitled to infer from the changes in the emotion of beauty, not more striking, that all in the mental susceptibility of it, is arbitrary and accidental.

Again, however, I must repeat, that in this review of the argument, I am not contending for the positive originality and independence of any species of beauty, but merely considering probabilities; and that, although, from the circumstances as they appear to us, I am led to adopt the greater probability of some original tendencies to feelings of this class, I am far from considering these as forming the most important of the class, or even as bearing any high proportion, in number or intensity, to the multitude of delightful feelings of the same order, that beam for ever, like a sort of radiant atmosphere within, on the cultivated mind, becoming thus, in their ever-increasing variety, one of the happiest rewards of years of study, that were too delightful in themselves to need to be rewarded.

LECTURE LVI.

I. IMMEDIATE EMOTIONS, NOT NECESSARILY INVOLVING ANY MORAL FEELING. —3. BEAUTY, AND ITS REVERSE, CONTINUED.—THE EMOTION OF BEAUTY SEEMS TO BE AN ORIGINAL FEELING OF THE MIND.—MR. ALISON'S THEORY.

Gentlemen, the inquiries which engaged us in the Lecture of yesterday, related to the influence of accidental circumstances, on our emotion of beauty, an influence which we found to be capable of producing the most striking diversities, in our susceptibility of these emotions, of every species, whether arising from the contemplation of objects material, intellectual, or moral. So very striking, indeed, did these diversities appear, on our review, as naturally to give occasion to the inquiry, whether feelings, that vary so much, with all the variety of the circumstances that have preceded them, may not wholly depend on that influence, on which they have manifestly depended, to so great an extent. I stated to you, that, in such an inquiry, it is not possible to attain confidence in the result, since all the circumstances which it would be necessary to know, cannot be known to us. It is long before the intellectual processes of the infant mind are capable of being distinctly revealed to another, directly or indirectly; and, in this most important of all periods, when thought is slowly evolved from the rude elements of sensation, the very circumstance, the influence of which we wish to trace, must have been exerting an influence that is wholly unperceived by us. The question, therefore, as to any susceptibility in the mind, of being affected with impressions of original beauty, is a question of probabilities, and nothing more.

Proceeding, then, with this limited confidence, in the results of our inquiry, we endeavoured to consider the phenomena of this order of our emotions, not, indeed, in perfect freedom from the influence of preceding accidental circumstances, since this distinct analysis is beyond our power, but with as near an approach to it as it was possible for us to attain; and, after a comparison of the probabilities, we found, I think, reason, I will not say to believe, but at least to incline to the opinion, that we are truly endowed with some original susceptibilities of this class,—susceptibilities, however, that are not so independent of arbitrary circumstances of association as to be incapable of being modified, or even wholly overcome by other tendencies that may be superinduced, but which, at the same time, are not so dependent on such circumstances, as, when these circumstances have not occurred to favour them, nor any other circumstance more powerful to counteract them, to be, of themselves, incapable of affecting us in the slightest degree with any of those delightful emotions, of which we have been endeavouring to trace the origin.

In examining this point, it was of great importance to make you sufficiently acquainted with one radical distinction; and, I trust, that now, after the remarks which I made, you are in no danger of confounding that view of beauty, which regards it as an emotion, dependent on the existence of certain previous perceptions or conceptions, which may induce it, but may also, by the operation of the common laws of suggestion, induce, at other times, in like manner, other states of mind, exclusive of the emotion,—with the very different doctrine, that regards beauty as the object of a peculiar internal sense, which might, therefore, from the analogy conveyed in that name, be supposed to be as uniform, in its feelings, as our other senses, on the presence of their particular objects, are uniform, or nearly uniform, in the intimations afforded by them. Such a sense of beauty, as a fixed regular object, we assuredly have not; but it does not follow that we are without such an original suscep-

tibility of a mere emotion, that is not, like sensation, the direct and uniform effect of the presence of its objects, but may vary in the occasions on which it rises, like our other emotions; love, for example, or hate, or astonishment, which various circumstances may produce, or various other circumstances may prevent from arising.

In conformity, then, with this view, though, from a comparison of all the circumstances of the case, as far as they can be known to us, I am led to regard the mind, as having originally certain tendencies to emotions of beauty, in consequence of which it may be impressed with them, on the contemplation of certain objects, without the necessary previous influence of any contingent circumstances, I yet allow the power of such circumstances, not merely to produce analogous emotions, when otherwise these would not have arisen, but also to modify, and even in some cases, to overcome our original tendencies themselves, in the same manner as we found that our original tendencies to other emotions might be modified and overcome, in particular cases of a different kind. I allow this influence of circumstances on our emotions of beauty, in the same manner as I allow the very general empire of prejudice, and the power of all the accidental circumstances, which may prepare the mind, less or more, for the reception, or for the denial of truth, though I do not regard truth itself as arbitrary in its own nature; that is to say, since truth is only a general name of a feeling common to many propositions, I do not regard all propositions, and the propositions opposite to them, as equally fitted to excite this feeling of truth in the mind. The analogy of truth, indeed, as that which there is a greater original tendency to feel, in certain propositions, than in others, though a tendency, which circumstances may, in certain minds, weaken and even reverse, seems to me a very important one, in this discussion, since precisely the same arguments which are urged by those who contend for the exclusive influence of association in the production of beauty, might be urged, as I showed you, with equal force, against those distinctions of truth and falsehood, which the assertors of the creative influence of association, in the less important department of taste, would surely be unwilling to abandon. If it be in the power of circumstances to make us regard objects as beautiful, which, but for those circumstances, would not have excited any emotion whatever, and, in many cases, even to reverse our emotions, which is all that the deniers of original beauty can maintain; it is not less in the power of circumstances, as the history of the different superstitions of the world, and of the very schools of wisdom, in all the various departments of philosophy, sufficiently shows, to make us regard as true, what we otherwise should have regarded as false, and false what we otherwise should have regarded as true. The mind is formed, indeed, to feel truth, and to feel beauty; but it is formed also to be affected by circumstances, the influence of which may, in any particular case, be inconsistent with either of those feelings; and the resulting belief, or the resulting emotion, may naturally be supposed to vary with the strength of these accidental circumstances.

When I say, then, of the mind, that there seems greater reason, on the whole, to suppose it endowed with some original susceptibility of this pleasing emotion, I speak of these original susceptibilities, as developed in circumstances, in which the feelings which certain objects would naturally tend to excite, are not opposed by more powerful feelings; by views of utility, for example, which are promoted, in many cases, by deviations from forms, that of themselves would be the most pleasing—or, by the influence of habitual or even accidental associations. These unquestionably may, as we have already seen, suspend and even reverse our emotions of beauty, as they suspend or reverse our other emotions, even our most powerful emotions of desire; but, though they do this, it may be only in the same way, as every greater force overcomes a less, which still implies the existence of that less, though, if we saw only the one simple emotion, that results from the conflict of the unequal forces, we might be led to think that the impelling cause also was simple, and wholly in the direction of the emotions which we perceive. The writers, therefore, who would reduce our emotions of beauty entirely to the influence of association, and who endeavour to justify their theory by instances of the power of particular associations, seem to make far too great an assumption. They do not prove the influence of original beauty to be nothing, by proving the influence of other principles to be something more. What eye is there, however little exercised it may be in discriminating forms, which does not, at least in the mature state of the mind, whatever it may have done originally, feel the beauty of the circle or of the ellipse, considered simply as figures, without regard to any particular end? and though it may be easy to collect instances, in which we prefer to these forms, some one of the angular figures, on account of some useful purpose to which the angular figure, though less pleasing in itself, may be subservient, this does not prove that the curve is not felt as more beautiful in itself, but only that it is not felt to be beautiful, where the pleasing emotion which of itself it would excite, is overcome by the painful feeling that arises from obvious unfitness, in comparison with some other figure more suit-

able. Though a circle, for example, may in itself be more pleasing than an oblong, we may yet prefer an oblong for our doors and windows; the feelings of comparative convenience and inconvenience being more powerful than the feelings which they overcome, of beauty in the mere form, considered without reference to an end; or rather the fitness of one form for the use intended, involving in itself a species of beauty which may be termed natural beauty as much as the other. In the mere bodily sense of taste, we never think of contending, that all the original affections of the sense are indifferent, and become agreeable or disagreeable, by mere association; yet we know well, that it is in the power of habit to modify and reverse these feelings, so as to render a luxury to one, what is absolutely nauseous to another. Different nations have, indeed, an admiration of very different works of genius; but the mere cookery of different nations is, perhaps, still more strikingly various than their prevalent intellectual tastes. There is unquestionably, however, an original tendency to delight in sweetness, though certain circumstances may induce a preference of what is bitter, and there may, too, easily be an original tendency to feel the emotion of beauty from certain objects, though, by the similar influence of circumstances, we may be led to prefer to them, colours or proportions of a different kind. Upon the whole, the probable inference which, as I have already said, seems to me the most legitimate that can be drawn from the phenomena of beauty, with respect to its existence as an original emotion, is, that certain objects, various perhaps in different individuals, do tend originally, and without any views of indirect utility, or any previous associations, to excite emotions that are agreeable in themselves, and capable of being reflected back, and combined with the agreeable object; but that these may be variously modified by views of utility, or by permanent or even accidental associations; since there is nothing in any of our original tendencies which implies that they must be omnipotent, and the same in all times and circumstances. To the child, at least as soon as he is capable of making known to us in any way his delights and preferences, certain objects seem to be productive, in a higher degree than others, of that pleasing emotion, which we denominate beauty, when reflected and embodied, as it were, in the objects that excite it; and as certainly this delightful emotion varies in the course of his life, from object to object, innumerable times, according to circumstances, which we may not always be able to detect, but which it is generally not very difficult to trace, at least in some of their most striking and permanent influences.

In the case of those theories, which would refer all beauty in the forms and colours, or other qualities of material things, to the suggestion of mental qualities, and the succession of associate trains of images in accordance with these, there is one circumstance which may have led to the illusion, if the theories are truly to be held to be illusive; and it is a circumstance common, you will perceive, to all those cases on which the theories are professedly founded. But the mere laws of suggestion, though no other laws of mind were concerned, and though beauty, as a primary direct emotion, were the exclusive invariable result of certain perceptions in all mankind alike, as immediate as the perceptions themselves, analogous objects would unquestionably suggest analogous objects; and, where the suggestions were rapid, and the pleasing emotion of beauty continued to coexist with various suggestions, it might not be very obvious, when we endeavoured to review the whole series of feelings, to which set of feelings the priority should be assigned; and whether the emotion which perhaps led to the suggestions of the analogous objects, by the mere influence of this common delightful feeling, might not be itself rather the result of them. The pleasure which preceded the suggestion of an agreeable object, and still continued after that object was suggested, might thus seem to be the effect of the suggestion of the agreeable object itself. When, therefore, in our endeavour to explain the beauty of any corporeal form, we dwell on it for any length of time, or even when we dwell on it with that mere passive gaze of pleasure which its beauty excites, a variety of analogous objects may be suggested during the delightful contemplation; and, among these, since the different mental affections, intellectual and moral, which we feel in ourselves, or observe in others, must present to us the most interesting of all analogies, it is not wonderful that some analogous mental qualities should very readily arise in our mind, as any other analogous object is suggested in any other train. The pleasure attached to the contemplation of the mental quality will, of course, blend with the pleasure previously felt from the material object; and may be conceived to be itself the chief constituent of that primary pleasure, since the subsequence is too rapid to be distinguishable on reflection. There is a pleasure also, it must be remembered, in such a case, from the mere perception of the analogy of the coexisting objects of thought,—a pleasure that constitutes the whole charm of the metaphorical language of the poet and the rhetorician,—which gives, therefore, an additional delight to the mental suggestion when the kindred image is suggested, and consequently leads us the more to ascribe to it the whole delight which we feel. But

though, when we consider any forms and colours, simple or combined, the analogy of some mental affection may be suggested, and though, when the analogous feeling is suggested, the pleasure of the beauty may be greatly increased, this is no proof that the material objects themselves are not pleasing, independent of the suggestion, though not perhaps to an equal degree. The softness of moonshine may derive no slight charm, and perhaps its chiefest charm, from the mild graces of the mind which it suggests, or the remembrance of many a delightful evening walk with friends whom we loved. But this certainly is far from proving that this softness of moonshine would not be delightful, in any degree, if it had not excited such analogous conceptions. The sun, bursting in all his majesty, like the sovereign of the ethereal world, through the clouds, which he seems to annihilate with the very brightness of his glory, presents unquestionably many moral analogies which add to our delight, when we gaze, above or below, on that instant change which all nature seems to feel:—

Denso velamine nubis
Obsitus, et tetrâ pressus caligine Titan,
Nativo demum radiantis acumine lucis
Nubila perrumpit Victor, seque asserit orbi,
Splendidus, et toto rutilans spatiatur Olympo.

The similitude which these beautiful verses develop, is unquestionably most pleasing. But would there, indeed, be no delight in the contemplation of so magnificent an object, if some moral analogy were not excited, and if the sun itself, with the instant succession of darkness and splendour, and the light diffused over every object beneath, were all of which our mind could be said to be conscious?

Though, in this question of probabilities which we have been considering, the preponderance seems to me to be in favour of the belief of some original tendencies to the emotion of beauty, on the contemplation of certain objects, I have already said, that it is only a small part of this order of emotions, which we can ascribe to such a source; and these, as I conceive, of very humble value, in relation to other more important emotions of the order, which are truly the production of associations of various kinds. Though all objects might not have been originally indifferent, the objects of our livelier emotions at present, are certainly those which speak to us of moral analogies and happy remembrances. It will not be an uninteresting inquiry, then, in what way these associations operate, in giving birth to the emotions, or in aiding them with such powerful accessions of delight. Let us pass, then, from the question of original beauty, to this still more important investigation.

The investigation, when we first enter on it, may seem a very easy one. It is, as we have found from our examination of the laws of mind, the nature of one object, either perceived or conceived, to suggest, by the common laws which regulate our trains of thought at all times, some other object or feeling, that has to it some one of many relations; and this again may suggest others, related to it in like manner. Each suggestion, during a long train of thought, may be the suggestion of some delightful object, and thus indirectly of the delightful emotions which such objects were of themselves capable of inducing; and though the amount of gratification additional, in each separate suggestion, may be slight, the gratification afforded by a long series of such images, all delightful in themselves, and all harmonizing with the object immediately before us, may be very considerable,—so considerable as to be sufficient not to favour merely, but absolutely to constitute that emotion, to which we give the name of beauty. Such is the view of the origin of this emotion, which has been given, with much felicity of language, and with much happy illustration of example and analysis, by my very ingenious and very eloquent friend, the author of the Essays on the Nature and Principles of Taste. The continued suggestion of trains of harmonizing images, Mr. Alison considers as essential to the emotion, which consists, according to him, not more in the kindred associate feelings themselves, that are recalled to the mind, than in the peculiar delight attending what he terms the exercise of the imagination in recalling them; that is to say, according to the view which I have given you of our mental functions, the delight which he supposes to attend the mere suggestion of image after image in associate and harmonizing trains of thought. This opinion, as to the delight of the mere exercise of imagination, seems to be founded on the belief of a sort of voluntary exertion of the mind, in such trains, when all which truly takes place in them, as I endeavoured, in former lectures, to explain to you, is the operation of the common laws of suggestion, that may be pleasing or painful in their influence, precisely as the separate feelings that rise by suggestion, are themselves pleasing or painful. The exercise of imagination, in such a case, is nothing more than these separate states themselves. When we gaze on a beautiful object, we do not call up the analogous images that may arise, but they arise of themselves unwilled; and if the images were of an opposite kind, the process would itself be painful. Indeed, if the supposed exercise of imagination were in itself as an exercise of the mind, necessarily pleasing, this exercise, Mr. Alison should have remembered, is not confined to objects that are beautiful, but is common to these

with the objects that excite emotions opposite to those of beauty, in which, therefore, it would not be very easy for him to account for its different effect. Since, according to his theory, the same species of exercise of imagination is involved in these likewise, it is very evident that, if necessarily pleasing, it should tend, not to increase, but to lessen the disagreeable feelings, and to convert ugliness itself into a minor sort of beauty. On the fallacy of this supposed part of the process, however, it is unnecessary for us to dwell. I allude to the supposed delight of the mere exercise at present, only to show, how necessary it has been felt, in this theory, to account by a multitude of images, for an amount of delight, which seems too great for any single image in suggestion. Here, then, lies the great difficulty, which that theory has to overcome. To him, who reflects on the circumstances that have attended the emotion, in cases in which it has been most strongly felt, does it appear, on this review, that a series of images succeeding images have passed through his mind? When we turn our eye, for example, on a beautiful living form, is there no immediate or almost immediate feeling of delight whatever,—but do we think of many analogies,—and, till these analogies have all been scanned, and the amount of enjoyment, which may have attended the different objects of them, been measured, is the countenance of smiles, or the form of grace, only a mass of coloured matter to our eyes? There are cases, surely, in which the feeling of beauty is immediately consequent on the very perception of the beautiful form,—so immediately consequent, that it would be difficult to convince the greater number of those, who have not been accustomed to reflect on such subjects, that there is any subsequence whatever, and that the delightful emotion is not itself the very glance, which gives that happy feeling in instant sequence to the soul. I have no hesitation even in saying, that the more intense the feeling of beauty may be, the less is the tendency of the mind to pass from the delightful form, which fills the heart as it fills the eyes, to images of distant analogy; that this transition takes place chiefly where the emotion is of a slight kind; and that what is said to constitute beauty, has thus an inverse and not a direct proportion to that very beauty which it is said directly to constitute. There can be no question, at least, that, in the language of every poet, and of every impassioned describer of these impassioned feelings, the total suspension of all our faculties, but of that which is fixed on the contemplation of the dazzling object itself, is stated as an essential character of excess of this emotion. There is uniformly described a sort of rapturous stupefaction, which overwhelms every other thought or feeling; and though this, in its full extent, may be true only in those excessive emotions which belong rather to poetry than to sober life, even in sober life there is assuredly an approach to it; and we may safely, therefore, venture to assert, that the beauty which scarcely allows the mind to wander for a moment from itself, is not less than the beauty which allows its happy admirer to run over the thousand kind and gentle qualities which it expresses, or to wander, still more widely, over a thousand analogies in other objects.

If we attend, then, to the whole course of our feelings, during our admiration of the objects which we term beautiful, we are far from discovering the process of which Mr. Alison speaks. We do not find that there is, at least that there is necessarily, any wide combination, or rapid succession, of trains of those associate images or feelings which he terms ideas of emotion; and yet we have seen reason to believe, that the chief part of beauty is truly derived from that mental process which has been termed association, —the suggestion of some feeling or feelings, not involved in the primary perception, nor necessarily flowing from it. In what manner, then, does the suggestion act?

The modes, in which it acts, seem to me to be what I am about to describe,—modes, that are in perfect accordance with the general processes which we have found to take place in the mind, in the phenomena before considered by us.

The associate feelings, that produce this effect, are, I conceive, of two kinds. In the first place, any very vivid delight that may have been accidentally connected with any particular object, may be recalled in suggestion by the same object, so as afterwards to make it seem, in combination with this associate feeling, more pleasing than it originally seemed to us; and may, in like manner, and with similar effect, as when it is recalled by the same object, be recalled directly by an object similar or analogous to the former, which thus, even when we first gaze upon it, may appear to have a sort of original loveliness, which, but for the rapid and unperceived suggestion, it would not have possessed. One degree of beauty is thus acquired, by every object similar to that which has been a source to us of any primary pleasure; and with this faint degree of pleasing emotion, other pleasures, arising perhaps wholly from accidental sources, at various times, may be combined, in like manner, rendering the state of mind, in the progressive feeling, more complex, but still, as one feeling or state of the mind, not less capable of being again suggested by the perception of the same or similar objects, than the less complex emotion, that in the first stage preceded it. With every new accidental acces-

sion of pleasure, in the innumerable events that occur from year to year, the delight itself becomes more complex; till at length the whole amount of complex pleasure, which the same object may afford by this rapid suggestion to the mind which contemplates it, may be as different from that which constituted the feeling of beauty in the fourth or fifth stage of the growth of the emotion, as that beauty itself, in its fourth or fifth stage, differed from the simple original perception. Still, however, the pleasing emotion, though the gradual result of many feelings of many different stages, is itself always one feeling, or momentary state of the mind, that, as one feeling, admits of being suggested as readily and rapidly in any one stage, as in any of the stages preceding; and it is this immediate state of complex emotion, however slowly and gradually formed, which I conceive to be suggested, when objects appear to us beautiful; not the number of separate delightful states, which Mr. Alison's theory supposes to be essentially necessary. We feel the instant emotion of loveliness, on the perception of a particular object, though we may have been years in forming those complex associations, which have rendered the mind capable of now feeling that instant emotion. It is in this way, that a landscape, which bears a resemblance to the scene of our early youth, or to any other scene where we have been peculiarly happy, cannot fail to be felt as more beautiful by us, than by others who have not shared with us that source of additional embellishment. The countenance of one who is dear to us, sheds a charm over similar features, that might otherwise scarcely have gained from us a momentary glance. An author, whose work we have read at an early period with delight, when it was, perhaps, one of the earliest gifts which we received, or the memorial of some tender friendship, continues for ever to exercise no inconsiderable dominion over our general taste. In these, and innumerable cases of the same kind, which must have occurred to every one in his own experience, the direct suggestion is of an amount of particular delight, associated with the particular object. This, then, is one of the modes in which I conceive the emotion of beauty to be excited, and the chief source of all the pleasure which we class under that comprehensive name. It is sufficiently easy to be understood; it accounts for the variety of emotions in different individuals, when the object which one admires is such as to others seems scarcely of a nature to afford any pleasing emotion whatever; and, above all, it accounts for those more perplexing anomalies, which we sometimes find in the taste of the same individual, when he admires, in some cases, with an admiration that seems to us scarcely consistent with the refined fastidiousness which he displays on other occasions. The delightful emotion which he feels from objects that appear to others inferior to the far nobler objects of which he disapproves, may, in such cases, be confined to him, because the associations from which the emotion has arisen, were his alone.

It is in this way, I have said, that the chief pleasure of the emotion arises. But, if all the influence of association on beauty were exercised in this way, by the direct suggestions of a particular amount of pleasure resulting from accidental causes, that have been peculiar to the individual, it would not be easy to account for the whole phenomena of this tribe of emotions; above all, for those regular gradations of beauty in different objects, which are felt in most cases with so general an agreement by the greater number of cultivated minds, and so uniformly, or almost uniformly, by the same individual. If every object had its own particular associations in the mind of every individual, and every object many opposite associations, it might be expected, that the emotion of beauty, or at least the estimate of the degree of beauty, would fluctuate in the same individual according to these caprices of accidental suggestion, and in the great multitude of society, would fluctuate at different moments, so as scarcely to admit of being fixed in any way. A face which at one time suggested one particular delight, might suggest by its various analogies, or various circumstances of the past, various degrees of delight, and with these, therefore, a perpetual variety of the resulting emotion. Notwithstanding all this variety, however, we estimate objects very nearly in the same way. There is a notion of excellence acquired in some manner,—a relative notion of fitness to excite a certain amount of delight, which seems to be for ever in our mind to direct us, according to which, we fix at some precise degree the varying beauty of the moment. There is every appearance, therefore, in such cases, of the suggestion of one general feeling, and not merely of various fluctuating feelings. The suggestion of this general feeling, which is in perfect accordance with the laws of thought already investigated by us, forms, I conceive, a second mode of association, in its influence on the emotion of beauty; and it is this chiefly which aids us in fixing the degrees of what we constantly, or almost constantly, recognise as less or more beautiful than certain other objects; that is to say, less or more fit to excite in cultivated minds a certain amount of pleasure.

I have already explained to you in what manner the process of generalizing takes place. We see two or more objects, we are struck with their resemblance in certain respects, we have a general notion of the circumstances in which they thus resemble each other, to the exclusion, of course, of the cir-

cumstances in which they have no resemblance. For many of these mere relative suggestions of resemblance we invent words, which, from the generality of the notion expressed by them, are denominated general terms; such as quadruped, animal, peace, virtue, happiness, excellence; but, though we invent many such general terms, we invent them, it is evident, only in a very few cases, comparatively with the cases of general feeling of resemblance of some sort, in which they are not invented, and we apply the same name frequently, in different cases, when the general feelings in our mind, however analogous, are not strictly the same. We apply the word peace, for example, to many states of international rest from war, which are far from conveying the same notions of safety and tranquillity; the word happiness, to many states of mind which we feel at the same time, or might feel, if we reflected on them, to be, in species and intensity, very different; the word beauty, to many objects which excite in us very different degrees of delightful emotion, and which we readily recognise as fit only to excite the emotion in these different degrees. In short, though our general terms be few, our general feelings are almost infinite,—as infinite as the possible resemblances which can be felt in any two or more objects; and though we have not words expressive of all the degrees of feeling, we have notions of these degrees as different,—notions of various degrees of beauty,—various degrees of happiness,—various degrees of excellence in general,—not imbodied in words, but capable of being suggested to the mind by particular objects, as if they were so imbodied. These notions have been formed by the mind, in the same way as all its other general notions have been formed, by the observation and comparison of many particulars, and they arise to the mind on various occasions, when the particulars observed correspond with the particulars before observed, in the same way as the word quadruped, which we have invented for expressing various animals known to us, occurs to our mind when we see for the first time some other animal, of which we had perhaps never heard, but which agrees, in the feeling of general resemblance which it excites, with the other animals formerly classed by us under that general word. This ready suggestion of general feelings which is continually taking place, in applications of which all must be sensible, and the possibility and likelihood of which no one will deny, is that which I suppose, in the case of the emotion at present considered by us, to direct our general estimate of degrees of beauty, or, in other words, our relative notion of the fitness of certain objects to excite a pleasing emotion of a certain intensity.

We discover this fitness, as we discover every other species of fitness, by observation of the past, and by observing this past in others, as well as in ourselves, we correct, by the more general coincidence of the associations of others, what would be comparatively irregular, and capricious in the results of our own limited associations as individuals. The accidents of one, or of a few, when variously mingled, become truly laws of thought of the many. As this observation is more and more enlarged, the irregularities of individual association are more and more counteracted by the foresight of the diversities of general sentiment, till, at length, the beauty of which we think, in our estimates of its degree of excellence, though still, in a certain degree, influenced by former accidental feelings of the individual, is, in a great measure, the beauty which we foreknow that others are to feel; and which we are capable thus of foreknowing, because we have made a wide induction of the objects, that have been observed by us, to excite the emotion in its various degrees, in the greater number of those whose emotions we have had opportunities of measuring.

As we say of a well-cultivated memory, that it is rich in images of the past, we may say of a well-cultivated mind in general, that it is rich in notions of beauty and excellence,—notions, which it has formed by attentive observation and study of various objects, as exciting, in various circumstances, various degrees of delight; but which ever after rise simply and readily to the mind by suggestion, according as the objects, perceived or imagined, are of a nature to harmonize with them. The general notion of what will be most widely regarded as beauty or excellence, in some one or other of its degrees, rises instantly, or at least may arise instantly to the mind, on the perception of the beautiful or excellent object, and with it the emotions, which have usually attended it. In our estimate of degrees of beauty, then, as often as we attempt to calculate these, it is the general notion, that has resulted from the contemplation of many excellent qualities, which, as one state of mind, arises to us, and directs us; not the many separate states, which constitute the remembrances of many separate qualities. These, indeed, are not necessarily excluded; though, as I have already said, they arise less, where the beauty is felt to be great, than where it is felt only in a less degree. Many analogous images may arise, and they do frequently arise; and, if pleasing in themselves, may add to the gratification previously felt; but though they may arise, and when they arise, they increase the amount of pleasure, they are far from being absolutely necessary to the pleasing emotion itself. Though we have a general notion attached to the word

peace, this cannot exist long in our mind, without exciting some particular conception in accordance with it; though we know what is meant by the general word animal, independently of the particular species, which it may at different moments suggest, we yet cannot continue long to think of what is meant by the mere general word, without the suggestion of some particular animals. It would not be wonderful, then, that the general notion of beauty, which we have attached to a particular form, should, of itself, give rise to particular suggestions of analogy, even though the form, on which we gaze, were not, of itself, capable of suggesting them; and it cannot, surely, be more wonderful, that it should allow these suggestions of objects analogous, when the particular form perceived is of a kind to concur in the tendency to this suggestion, with the general notion of beauty itself. It is this subsequent suggestion of trains of associate images, increasing perhaps the effect of the emotion that existed previously as a state of the mind, but not producing it, which has led the very ingenious theorist to whom I have before alluded, to ascribe to these mere consequences of the feeling of beauty, that very feeling itself, which more probably gave occasion to them. Indeed, if the suggestion of particular images after images, and not the suggestion of one general delight, or the more general suggestion of beauty or excellence itself, be essential to the very existence of the emotion, it seems to me quite impossible to account for that instant or almost instant delight, which beauty, in its form of most powerful attraction, seems to beam on the very eye that gazes on it.

> What sublimer pomp
> Adorns the seat where Virtue dwells on earth,
> And Truth's eternal daylight shines around!
> What palm belongs to man's imperial front,
> And woman, powerful with becoming smiles!*

In these cases, there are instant conceptions of dignity, or of gentleness, which we attach to the imperial front of man, or to the more powerful, and more truly imperial smiles of woman. What we term expression, is the suggestion of that general character of intelligence and virtue, which is said to be expressed, not the necessary suggestion of many separate truths, nor the suggestion of many separate acts of kindness, which may be suggested, indeed, if we continue long to contemplate the intelligent and benevolent form; but which are, in that case, subsequent to the emotion, that, in its origin at least, truly preceded them.

Such are the modes in which I conceive the past, in our emotion of beauty, to influence the present. But if all which the past presents to us, be conceptions of former delight, how happens it, that these conceptions, which often pass along our mind in reverie, with only faint and shadowy pleasure, should be heightened to so much rapture, when suggested by some real object before us? The images suggested may afford the sources of the delight; but the delight itself must be in some way modified, before it is converted into beauty. There is another part of the process, then, which we have not yet considered, to which it is necessary to direct your attention.

What is truly most important to the emotion of beauty, is this very part of the process which theorists have yet neglected. It is not the mere suggestion of certain conceptions, general or particular, for these often form a part of our trains of thought, without any very lively feeling as their consequence. It is the fixing and imbodying of these in a real object before us, which gives to the whole, I conceive, one general impression of reality. This, I have little doubt, takes place, in the manner explained by me in former Lectures, when I treated of the peculiar influence of objects of perception, in giving liveliness to our trains of suggestion, and consequently greater liveliness to all the emotions which attend them. The delight of which we think, when images of the past arise, is very different from the delight which seems to be imbodied in objects, and to meet our very glance, as the terror of the superstitious, when they think of a spectre in twilight, is very different from that which they feel, when their terror is incorporated in some shadowy form that gleams indistinctly on their eye. But for a process of the kind which I have stated, I do not see how the effect of beauty, as seen, should be so very different as it most certainly is, from the effect produced by a long meditation on all those noble and gracious characters of virtue and intelligence, the mere expression, that is to say, the mere suggestion of which is stated to be all which constitutes it. It is, in short, as I have said, this very part of the process which seems to me the most important in the whole theory of beauty.

The increased effect of that incorporating process, which, I suppose, in the case of beauty, is, in truth, nothing more than what we have found to take place in all the cases of suggestion of vivid images, by objects of perception rather than by our fainter and more fugitive conceptions. The reality of what is truly before us, gives reality to all the associate images that blend and harmonize with it. We think of ancient Greece —we tread on the soil of Athens or Sparta. Our emotion, which was before faint, is now one of the liveliest of which our soul is susceptible, because it is fixed and realized in the existing and present object. The same

* Pleasures of Imagination, second form of the poem, book i. v. 547—551.

images arise to us, but they coexist now as they rise, with all the monuments which we behold, with the land itself, with the sound of those waves which are dashing now, as they dashed so many ages before, when their murmur was heard by the heroes of whom we think—all now lives before us, and when we behold a beautiful form, all the images suggested by it, live in like manner in it. It does not suggest to us what was once delightful, but it is itself representative of what was once delightful. The visions of other years exist again to our very eyes. We see imbodied all which we feel in our mind; and the source of delight which is itself real gives instant reality to the delight itself, and to all the harmonizing images that blend with it. We may, even in solitude, think with pleasure of the kindness of smiles and tones which we have loved; but when a smile of the same kind is beaming on us, or when we listen to similar tones, it is no longer a mere dream of happiness, the whole seems one equal perception, and we are surrounded again, as it were, with all the vivid happiness of the past.

Though the result of our inquiry into original beauty, then, has led us to adopt the greater probability of some original susceptibilities of emotions of this sort, that are independent of the arbitrary associations which must be formed in the progress of life, we have found sufficient reason to ascribe to this slow and silent growth of circumstances of adventitious delight, almost all the beauty which is worthy of the name; and we have seen, I flatter myself, in what manner these circumstances operate in inducing the emotion. This happy effect, I have shown to be too instantaneous to be the result of a rapid review or suggestion of many particulars, in each separate case, but to depend on the combination with the objects which we term beautiful, of some instant complex feeling of past delight, or of those general notions of beauty and excellence, which, themselves, indeed, originally resulted from the observation of particulars, but which afterwards are capable of being suggested as one feeling of the mind, like our other general notions of every species; and, when combined with objects really existing, or felt as if really existing, to derive from this impression of reality in the harmonizing objects with which they are mingled in our perception, a liveliness without which they could not have exercised their delightful dominion on our heart.

Such, I conceive, then, in the principles on which it depends, is that delightful dominion which is exercised on our heart, not directly by mind only, but by the very forms of inanimate nature.

> Hence the wide universe,
> Through all the seasons of revolving worlds,
> Bears witness with its people, gods and men,
> To Beauty's blissful power, and, with the voice
> Of grateful admiration, still resounds;—
> That voice, to which is Beauty's frame divine,
> As is the cunning of the master's hand
> To the sweet accent of the well-tuned lyre.*

LECTURE LVII.

I. IMMEDIATE EMOTIONS, NOT INVOLVING NECESSARILY ANY MORAL FEELING.—3. BEAUTY, AND ITS REVERSE, CONCLUDED.—4. SUBLIMITY, LIKE BEAUTY, A MERE FEELING OF THE MIND.—SOURCES OF SUBLIMITY.

For several Lectures, Gentlemen, we have been engaged in considering one of the most interesting of our emotions—an emotion connected with so many sources of delight, material, intellectual, and moral, that it is not wonderful that it should have attracted, in a very high degree, the attention of metaphysical inquirers, and should even have become a subject of slight study with those lovers of easy reading, to whom the word metaphysical is a word of alarm, and who never think that they are studying metaphysics, when they are reading only of delicate forms, and smiles, and graces. What they feel in admiring beauty, is an emotion so very pleasing, that they connect some degree of pleasure with the very works that treat of it, and would perhaps be astonished to learn, that the inquiry into the nature of this emotion, which it would seem to them so strange not to feel, is one of the most difficult inquiries in the whole philososphy of mind.

It may be of advantage, then, after analytical investigation, which is in itself not very simple, and which has been so much confused by a multitude of opinions, to review once more, slightly, our progress and the results which we have obtained.

In whatever manner the pleasing emotion itself may arise, and however simple or complex it may be, we term *beautiful*, the object by which it is excited. But though, philosophically a beautiful object be considered by us merely as that which excites a certain delightful feeling in our mind, it is only philosophically that we thus separate comletely the object from the delight which it affords. It is impossible for us to gaze upon it, without reflecting on it this very delight, or even to think of it, without conceiving some spirit of delight diffused in it,—a never-fading pleasure, that, as if in independence of our perception, exists in it or floats around it, as much when no eye beholds it, as when it is the gaze and happiness of a thousand eyes.

Such in its reflection from our mind, on

* Pleasures of Imagination, second form of the poem, book i. v. 682—689.

the object that seems to imbody it, is the beauty which we truly feel; and if the objects that excite it, were uniformly the same in all mankind, little more would have remained for inquiry. But, far from being uniform in its causes in all mankind, the emotion is not uniform in a single individual, for a single year, or even, in the rapid changes of fashion, for a few months of a single year. These rapid changes, at once so universal and so capricious in their influence, led us naturally to inquire, whether fashion, in all its arbitrary power, and other circumstances of casual association, peculiar to individual minds, be not the modifiers only, but perhaps the very sources of all those emotions which seem to vary with their slightest varieties.

In this inquiry, which, from the peculiar circumstance in which alone it is in our power to enter on it, cannot afford absolute certainty of result, but only such a result as a comparison of greater and less probabilities affords, we were led, on such a comparison, to a conclusion favourable to the supposition, that the mind has some original tendencies to receive impressions of beauty from certain objects, rather than from others, though it has, without all question, at the same time, other tendencies, which may produce feelings inconsistent with the pleasing emotion, that otherwise would have attended the contemplation of those objects, or sufficient of themselves to constitute the pleasing emotion, in cases in which there was no original tendency to feel it—that what is beauty, therefore, at one period of life, or in one age or country, even in cases in which there may have been an original tendency to feel it, may not be beauty at another period of life, or in another age or country, from the mere difference of the arbitrary circumstances which have variously modified the original tendency; in the same manner as we find circumstances capable of modifying, or even reversing other species of emotions; this difference of result being, not of itself, a proof of the unreality of all original distinctions of this sort, more than the prejudices and delusions of mankind, and their varying desires, are a proof, that truth and error are themselves indifferent, and all things originally equally desirable. It is like the descent of one of the scales of a balance, from which alone it would be absurd to conclude that the whole weight is in that single scale. The descent may have arisen only from the preponderance of a greater weight over a less, when, but for the addition of some new substance thrown into it, the sinking scale would have arisen, and the other scale have obeyed that natural tendency, which, of itself, would have directed its motion to the earth.

The error of those who ascribe to the suggestion of mental qualities, the whole emotion of beauty, in every case, corporeal as well as mental, we found to be very probably occasioned, in part at least, by the very nature of the laws on which suggestion depends—analogous objects suggesting analogous objects—and corporeal qualities thus suggesting the very striking analogies of mind, in the same way as these mutually suggest each other—analogies which are pleasing in themselves, and may, when suggested, mingle their own pleasure with the delightful emotion previously excited by the corporeal object. But it is very evident that the suggestion of the mental quality may, in this case, be the effect, or the mere concomitant, not the cause, of that delightful emotion, which was itself, perhaps, the very circumstance that led us to dwell on the external object till the analogy was suggested; and, though no suggestion of this kind had taken place, the object might still have been felt by us as beautiful. The same remark may be applied to all the other forms of association, as much as to the suggestions of mere analogy. These may coexist with the emotion, and may add to it their own mingled delight; but they are not, therefore, proved to be essential to it in all its degrees. On the contrary, in many cases, it may be only because we have previously felt an object to be beautiful, that it suggests to us various objects of former similar delights—the delightful effect itself, when produced, being the very principle of analogy which alone may have connected the one object with the other.

Association, however, whether as primarily giving rise to the emotion of beauty, in certain cases, or as modifying it in others, is, without all doubt, the source of the most important pleasure of this kind which we feel. But how does this association act? Is it, as is commonly supposed, by the suggestion of a number of images related to the object, that transfer to it, as it were, the emotions which originally belonged to them?

This opinion, though supported and illustrated by genius of a very high order, we found, notwithstanding, by reflection on all which we feel during our admiration of beauty, to be little warranted by the phenomena. Such a train of images passing through the mind, and images accompanied with lively emotion, could scarcely fail to be remembered by us; or, at least, if they are not remembered by us, there is no reason, *a priori*, to suppose the existence of them. Yet we surely feel the charm of external loveliness, without any consciousness of such trains. The very moment in which we have fixed our eye on a beautiful countenance, or at least with an interval after our first perception so short as to be absolutely undistin-

guished by us, we feel, with instant delight, that the countenance is beautiful; and the more beautiful the object, the more, not the less, does it fix the mind, as if absorbed in the direct contemplation and enjoyment of it; and the less, therefore, in such a case, do we wander over the trains of images, on which the very feeling of beauty is, in this theory, said to depend.

It is not a number of images, then, which necessarily arise in the mind, though these may arise, and when they arise, may increase the pleasure that was felt before. What is suggested in the instant feeling of loveliness must itself be an instant feeling of delight; and the source of such instant delight, we found accordingly in the common laws of suggestion, that have been already so fully considered by us. The perception of an object has originally coexisted with a certain pleasure,—a pleasure which may perhaps have frequently recurred together with the perception, and which thus forms with it in the mind one complex feeling, that is instantly recalled by the mere perception of the object in its subsequent recurrences. With this complex state, so recalled, other accidental pleasures may afterwards coexist in like manner, and form a more complex delight; but a delight which is still, when felt, one momentary state of mind, and, as one state of mind, capable of being instantly recalled by the perception of the object, as much as the simpler delight in the earlier stage. The embellishing influence of association may thus be progressive in various stages; because new accessions of pleasure are continually rendering more complex the delight that is afterwards to be suggested; but that which is suggested in the later stages, though the result of a progress, is itself, in each subsequent perception of the object which it embellishes, immediate. We spread the charm over the object, with the same rapidity with which we spread over it the colours which it seems to beam on us.

Such is the great source of all the embellishments of beauty, when association operates by the direct suggestion of an amount of delight associated with the particular object. But though our estimate of degrees of beauty, if wholly dependent on associations peculiar to the object, might seem scarcely capable of any precision, we yet form our estimate with a precision and uniformity which almost resemble the exactness of our measurements of qualities, that do not depend on any arbitrary and capricious principle. There must, therefore, be in the mind some scale, in whatever way it may be acquired, by which we correct, in part at least, these accidental irregularities. This intellectual scale we found to be the result of the comparisons which a cultivated mind is continually making; or of those general notions of resemblance which rise to us, when there has been no intentional comparison of object with object. We observe, not merely what gives delight to ourselves, but what gives delight also to the greater number of the cultivated minds around us; and what might be capricious in one mind, is thus tempered by the result of more general associations in the many. As we form various notions of brightness from many varieties of light,—various notions of magnitude from many forms and proportions,—various notions of pleasure from many agreeable feelings,—so do we form, from the contemplation of many objects that have excited certain pleasing emotions in ourselves and others, various notions of beauty, which, in their various degrees, are suggested by the new objects that are similar to those which originally induced them; and many comparisons, in various circumstances, thus gradually rectifying what might have seemed capricious, if the comparisons had been fewer, we learn at last to attach certain notions of beauty to certain objects, with a precision which otherwise we should have been incapable of attaining. The mind becomes rich with many varieties of the general feeling of beauty,—a feeling that was the result of many particular images and emotions in ourselves, and of much observation of the similar impressions of others; but which is itself one state of mind, and capable, as one state of mind, of being suggested in constant sequence. From the multitude of former pleasing objects that have interested us, we have formed, in consequence of their felt resemblance—as it was impossible for us, with our power of feeling resemblance, not to form—a general notion of beauty or excellence; or rather, we have formed progressively various general notions of various species and degrees of beauty and excellence; and these general notions are readily suggested by the objects which agree with them, precisely in the same way as our other general notions, such, for example, as those expressed by the words, flower, bird, quadruped, when once formed in the mind are afterwards readily suggested by any new object that seems referable to the species or genus.

It is not enough, however, when we gaze on a beautiful object, that certain conceptions of former delight should be suggested; for these rise equally, on innumerable occasions, in our trains of thought, with little liveliness of present joy. The distinguishing liveliness of the emotion of beauty, as it lives before us, seems to me, if it depend on association, to be absolutely inexplicable, but for a process, which we considered fully, when the general phenomena of suggestion were under our review; the process which, when the images of a train are connected, not

with some former conception only, but with a real object of perception, invests with illusive present existence the whole kindred images of the harmonizing group, of which a part, and an important part, is truly recognised as existing.

The countenance on which we gaze recalls to us some complex feeling of beauty, that was previously formed; but, while it recalls it, it exists permanently before us; and imbodying, as it were, this complex visionary delight in the object of our continued perception, we give a reality, that is in the object only, to the shadowy whole, of which the perception of the object, and the associate feelings of suggestion, are harmonizing parts; and the images of tenderness and joy, which, as mere conceptions, unimbodied in any real object, might have passed through the mind in its train of reverie, with little pleasure, thus fixed, as it were, and living before us in the external loveliness, affect us with a delight that is more than mere imagination, because the object of it seems to be as truly existing without, as any other permanent object of our senses,—a delight that may have resulted from many former pleasures, but that is itself one concentrated joy.

In all our inquiries on this subject, we have had regard, as you may have remarked, to many feelings of the mind, and not to one simple quality of objects that can be termed the beautiful, for the beautiful exists nowhere, more than the soft, or the sweet, or the pleasing; and to inquire into the beautiful, therefore, if it have any accurate meaning, is not to inquire into any circumstance which runs through a multitude of our emotions, but merely to inquire what number of our agreeable emotions have a sufficient similarity to be classed together under one general name.

Beauty is not any thing that exists in objects independently of the mind which perceives them, and permanent therefore, as the objects in which it is falsely supposed to exist. It is an emotion of the mind, varying, therefore, like all our other emotions, with the varying tendencies of the mind, in different circumstances. We have not to inquire into the nature of any fixed essence which can be called the beautiful,—τὸ καλὸν,—but into the nature of transient feelings, excited by objects which may agree in no respect, but as they excite emotions in some degree similar. What we term the emotion of beauty, is not one feeling of our mind, but many feelings, that have a certain similarity, as greenness, redness, blueness, are all designated by the general name *colour*. There is not one beauty, more than there is one colour or one form. But there are various beauties; that is to say, various pleasing emotions, that have a certain resemblance, in consequence of which we class them together. The beautiful exists no more in objects, than species or genera exist in individuals. It is, in truth, a species or genus,—a mere general term, expressive of similarity in various pleasing feelings. Yet even those writers, who would be astonished, if we were to regard them, as capable of any faith in the universal *a parte rei*, believe this universal beauty *a parte rei*, and inquire, what it is which constitutes the beautiful, very much in the same way as the scholastic logicians inquired into the real essence of the universal.

By some, accordingly, beauty is said to be a waving line, by others, a combination of certain physical qualities; by others, the mere expression of qualities of mind, and by fifty writers, almost as many different things, as if beauty were any thing in itself, and were not merely a general name for all those pleasing emotions, which forms, colours, sounds, motions, and intellectual and moral aspects of the mind produce,—emotions that have a resemblance, indeed, but are far from being the same. They are similar, only as all the feelings of the mind, to which we give the name of pleasure, have a certain similarity, in consequence of which we give them that common name, though there is nothing which can be called pleasure, distinct from these separate agreeable feelings.

What is it which constitutes the pleasing? would be generally counted a very singular inquiry; and to say that it is a sight, or a smell, or a taste,—the brilliant, or the sweet, or the spicy, or the soft, would be counted a theory still more singular than the inquiry which led to it. Yet no one is surprised when we inquire what it is which constitutes the beautiful; and we are scarcely surprised at the attempts of those who would persuade us, that all our emotions, to which we give that name, are only one, or a few of these very emotions.

Various forms, colours, sounds are beautiful; various results of intellectual composition are beautiful; various moral affections, when contemplated by the mind, are attended with a similar feeling. But we are not to suppose, because there may be a considerable similarity of the emotions excited by these different classes of objects, that any one of the classes comprehends the others, more than colours which are pleasing, comprehend pleasing odours, or tastes, or these respectively each other. A circle or a melody, a song or a theorem, an act of gratitude or generous forbearance, are all beautiful, as greenness, sweetness, fragrance, are pleasing; and the pleasing exists as truly as the beautiful, and is as fit an object of philosophic investigation.

After these remarks on beauty, it is unnecessary to make any remarks on the opposite emotion; the same observations, as to their nature, and the circumstances that produce or modify them, being equally applica-

ble to both. As certain forms, colours, sounds, motions, works of art, and moral affections, are contemplated with delight; the contemplation of certain other forms, colours, sounds, motions, works of art, and affections of our moral nature, is attended with a disagreeable emotion. I have already remarked, that for this opposite emotion, in its full extent, we have no adequate name; deformity, and even ugliness, which is a more general word, being usually applied only to external things, and not to the intellectual or moral objects of our thought; as we apply beauty alike to all. There can be no doubt, however, that the same analogy, which connects our various emotions of beauty, sensitive, intellectual, and moral, exists equally in the emotions of this opposite class; and that, though we are not accustomed to speak of the ugly, and to inquire into what constitutes it, as we have been accustomed to inquire into the beautiful, and its supposed constituents, it is only because beauty is the more attractive, and the empire which itself possesses, is possessed, in some measure, by its very name.

After the attention which we have paid to the emotions that are usually classed together under the general name of beauty, the emotions, to the consideration of which we have next to proceed, are those which constitute our feelings of sublimity. On these, however, it will not be necessary to dwell at any great length, since you will be able, of yourselves, to apply to them many of the remarks that were suggested by the consideration of the former species of emotion.

The feeling of sublimity, it may well be supposed, does not arise without a cause, more than our feeling of beauty; but the sublimity which we feel, like the beauty which we feel, is an affection of our mind, not a quality of any thing external. It is a feeling, however, which, like the feeling of beauty, we reflect back on the object that excited it, as if it truly formed a part of the object; and thus, instead of being merely the unknown cause of our emotion,—as when it is philosophically viewed,—the object which impresses itself on our mind, and almost on our senses, as sublime, is felt by us, as our own imbodied emotion, mingled, indeed, with other qualities that are material, but diffused in them, with an existence that seems independent of our temporary feeling.

When Dryden said of one of our most powerful and most delightful passions,—

> The cause of love can never be assign'd;
> 'Tis in no face, but in the lover's mind,

he probably was not aware that he was saying what was not poetically only, but philosophically true, though in a sense different from that which he meant to convey. It is not the capricious passion alone which the lover feels, as in himself, but the very beauty that is felt by him in the external object, which is as truly an emotion of his own mind as the passion to which it may have given rise. Of all those forms on which we gaze with a delight that is never weary, because the pleasure which we have felt, as reflected by us to the object, is to us almost a source of the pleasure which we feel at the moment, or are about to feel, what, I have asked, would the loveliest be, but for the eyes which gaze on it, and which give it all its charms, as they give it the very unity that converts it into the form which we behold? A multitude of separate and independent atoms,—we found ourselves obliged to answer,—and nothing more. In like manner, I might ask, what, but for the mind which is impressed with the sublimity, would be the precipice, the cataract, the ocean, the whole system of worlds, that seem at once to fill the immensity of space, and yet to leave on our conception an infinity which even worlds without number could not fill? To these, too, sublime as they are felt by us to be, it is our mind alone which gives at once all the unity and sublimity which they seem to us to possess, as of their own nature. They are, in truth, only a number of atoms, that would be precisely the same in themselves, whether existing near to each other or at distances the most remote. But it is impossible for us to regard them merely as a number of atoms, because they affect us with one complex emotion, which we diffuse over them all. When precipice hangs over precipice, and we shrink back upon our perilous height as we strive to look down from the cliff, on the abyss beneath, in which we rather hear the torrent than see it, with our shuddering and dazzled eye, we have one vivid, though complicated feeling, which fills our whole soul; and the whole objects existing separately before us are one vast and terrifying image of all that is within us. In the hurricane that lays waste and almost annihilates whatever it meets, there is to our conception something more than the mere particles of air that form each successive blast. We animate it with our own feelings. It is not a cause of terror only, it is terror itself. It seems to bear about with it that awful sublimity of which we are conscious,—an emotion, that as it animates our corporeal frame with one expansive feeling, seems to give a sort of dreadful unity to the whole thunders of the tempest, or rather to form one mighty being of the whole minute elements, that when they rage, impelling and impelled, in the tumultuous atmosphere, are merely congregated, by accidental vicinity, as they exist equally together in the

gentlest breeze, or in the stillness of the summer sky.

That sublimity should be reflected to the object from the mind like beauty, is not wonderful, since, in truth, what we term beauty and sublimity, are not opposite, but, in the greater number of cases, are merely different parts of a series of emotions. I have already, in treating of beauty, pointed out to you the error into which the common language of philosophers might be very apt to lead you, —the error of supposing that beauty is one emotion, merely because we have invented that generic or specific name which comprehends at once many agreeable emotions; that have some resemblance, indeed, as being agreeable, and diffused, as it were, or concentrated in their objects, and are therefore classed together, but still are far from being the same. The beautiful, concerning which philosophers have been at so much pains in their inquiries, is, as we have seen, in the mode in which they conceive it to exist, a sort of real essence,—a universal *a parte rei*, which has retained its hold of the belief when other universals of this kind, not less real, had been suffered to retain a place only in the insignificant vocabulary of scholastic logic.

Our emotions of beauty, I have said, are various; and, as they gradually rise, from object to object, a sort of regular progression may be traced from the faintest beauty to the vastest sublimity. These extremes may be considered as united by a class of intermediate feelings, for which grandeur might, perhaps, be a suitable term, that have more of beauty or more of sublimity, according to their place in the scale of emotion. I have retained, however, the common twofold division of beauty and sublimity, not as thinking that there may not be intermediate feelings, which scarcely admit of being very suitably classed under either of these names, but because the same general reasoning must be applicable to all these states of mind, whatever names, or number of names, may be given to the varieties that fill up the intervening space. Indeed, if all the various emotions, to which, in their objects, we attach the single name of beautiful, were attentively considered, we might find reason to form of this single order, many subdivisions, with their appropriate terms; but this precision of minute nomenclature, in such a case, is of less importance, if you know sufficiently the general fact involved in it, that there is not one beauty, or one sublimity, but various feelings, to which, in their objects, we give the name of beauty, and various feelings, to which, in their objects, we give the name of sublimity; and that there may be intermediate feelings, which differ from these, as these respectively differ from each other. That which happens in innumerable other cases, has happened in this case; we have a series of many feelings; we have invented the names *sublimity* and *beauty*, which we have attached to certain parts of this series; and, because we have invented the names, we think that the emotions which they designate are more opposed to each other than they seemed to us before. One feeling of beauty differs from another feeling of beauty; but they are both comprehended in the same term, and we forget the difference. One feeling of sublimity differs, in like manner, from another feeling of sublimity; but they also are both comprehended in one term, and their difference too is forgotten. It is not so, when we compare one emotion of beauty with another emotion of sublimity; the feelings are then not merely different, but they are expressed by a different term; and their opposition is thus doubly forced upon us. If we had not invented any terms whatever, we should have seen, as it were, a series of emotions, all shadowing into each other with differences of tint, more or less strong, and rapidly distinguishable. The invention of the terms, however, is like the intersection of the series, at certain places, with a few well-marked lines. The shadowing may still, in itself, be equally gradual; but we think of the sections only, and perceive a peculiar resemblance in the parts comprehended in each, as we think that we perceive a peculiar diversity at each bounding line.

To be convinced how readily the feelings, contrasted as they may seem at last, have flowed into each other, let us take some example. Let us imagine that we see before us, a stream gently gliding through fields, rich with all the luxuriance of summer, overshadowed at times by the foliage that hangs over it from bank to bank, and then suddenly sparkling in the open sunshine, as if with a still brighter current than before. Let us trace it till it widen to a majestic river, of which the waters are the boundary of two flourishing empires, conveying abundance equally to each, while city succeeds city on its populous shores, almost with the same rapidity as grove formerly succeeded grove. Let us next behold it, losing itself in the immensity of the ocean, which seems to be only an expansion of itself, when there is not an object to be seen but its own wild amplitude, between the banks which it leaves, and the sun that is setting, as if in another world, in the remote horizon;—in all this course, from the brook which we leap over, if it meet us in our way, to that boundless waste of waters, in which the power of man, that leaves some vestige of his existence in every thing else, is not able to leave one lasting impression; which, after his fleets have passed along in all their pride, is, the very moment after, as if they had never been, and which bears or dashes those navies that

are contending for the mastery of kingdoms, only as it bears or dashes the foam upon its waves; if we were to trace and contemplate this whole continued progress, we should have a series of emotions, which might, at each moment, be similar to the preceding emotion, but which would become, at last, so different from our earliest feelings, that we should scarcely think of them as feelings of one class. The emotions which rose, when we regarded the narrow stream, would be those which we class as emotions of beauty. The emotions which rose, when we considered that infinity of waters in which it was ultimately lost, would be of the kind which we denominate sublimity; and the grandeur of the river, while it was still distinguishable from the ocean, to which it was proceeding, might be viewed with feelings to which some other name or names might, on the same principle of distinction, be given. This progressive series we should see very distinctly as progressive, if we had not invented the two general terms; but the invention of the terms certainly does not alter the nature of these feelings, which the terms are employed merely to signify.

Innumerable other examples,—from increasing magnitude of dimensions, or increasing intensity of quality,—might be selected, in illustration of that species of sublimity which we feel in the contemplation of external things, as progressively rising from emotions that would be termed emotions of beauty, if they were considered alone. It is unnecessary, however, to repeat, with other examples, what is sufficiently evident, without any other illustration, from the case already instanced.

The same progressive series of feelings, which may thus be traced as we contemplate works of nature, is not less evident in the contemplation of works of human art, whether that art have been employed in material things, or be purely intellectual. From the cottage to the cathedral; from the simplest ballad air, to the harmony of a choral anthem; from a pastoral, to an epic poem or a tragedy; from a landscape or a sculptured Cupid, to a Cartoon or the Laocoon; from a single experiment in chemistry, to the elucidation of the whole system of chemical affinities, which regulate all the changes of the surface of our globe; from a simple theorem, to the Principia of Newton:—In all those cases in which I have merely stated what is beautiful and what is sublime, and left a wide space between, it is easy for your imagination to fill up the interval; and you cannot fill up this interval without perceiving that, merely by adding what seemed degree after degree, you arrive at last at emotions which have little apparent resemblance to the emotions with which the scale began. It is, as in the thermometric scale, by adding one portion of caloric after another, we rise at last, after no very long progress, from the cold of freezing, to the heat at which water boils; though our feelings, at these two points, are as different as if they had arisen from causes that had no resemblance; certainly as different as our emotions of sublimity and beauty.

In the moral scene the progression is equally evident. By adding virtue to virtue, or circumstance to circumstance, in the exercise of any virtue, we rise from what is merely beautiful to what is sublime. Let us suppose, for example, that, in the famine of an army, a soldier divides his scanty allowance with one of his comrades, whose health is sinking under the privation. We feel, in the contemplation of this action, a pleasure, which is that of moral beauty. In proportion as we imagine the famine of longer duration, or the prospect of relief less probable, the action becomes more and more morally grand or heroic. Let us next imagine that the comrade to whose relief the soldier makes this generous sacrifice, is one whose enmity he has formerly experienced on some interesting occasion, and the action is not heroic merely, it is sublime. There is not a virtue, even of the most tranquil or gentle sort, which we may not, in like manner, render sublime, by varying the circumstance in which it is exercised; and by varying these gradually, we pass through a series of emotions, any two of which may be regarded as not very dissimilar; though the extremes, when considered without the parts of the series which connect them, may scarcely have even the slightest similarity.

When I speak of this progression of our feelings, by which emotion after emotion may rise, from the faintest of those which we refer to beauty to the most overwhelming of those which we term sublime, I am far from wishing you to think that such a progress is in all cases necessary to the emotion; I allude to it merely for the purpose of showing that sublimity is not, by its nature of a class of feelings essentially different from beauty; and that we may, therefore, very readily conceive that the laws which we have found applicable to beauty may be applicable of it also.

So far is it, indeed, from being indispensable to sublimity that beauty should be the characteristic of the same circumstance, in a less degree, that, in many instances, what is absolutely the reverse of beautiful becomes sublime, by the exclusion of every thing which could excite of itself that delightful but gentle emotion. A slight degree of barren dreariness in any country through which we travel, produces only feelings that are disagreeable; a wide extent of desolation, when the eye can see no verdure as far as it can reach, but only rocks that rise at irregular in-

tervals, through the sandy waste, has a sort of savage sublimity, which we almost delight to contemplate. In the moral world, the audacity of guilt cannot seem beautiful to us in any of its degrees; but it may excite in us, when it is of more than ordinary atrocity, that species of emotion which we are now considering. Who is there who can love Medea as she is represented to us in the ancient story? But to whom is she not sublime? It is not in Marius that we would look for a model of moral beauty; but what form is there which the painter would feel more internal sublimity in designing, than that bloodthirsty chief, sitting amid the ruins of Carthage, when, as a Roman poet, by a bold rhetorical figure, says, of the memorable scene, and the memorable outcast whom it sheltered, each was to the other a consolation, and equally afflicted and overwhelmed together, they forgave the gods?—

Non ille favore
Numinis, ingenti Superum protectus ab irâ,
Vir ferus, et Romam cupienti perdere fato
Sufficiens. Idem pelago delatus iniquo,
Hostilem in terram, vacuisque mapalibus actus,
Nuda triumphati jacuit per regna Jugurthæ,
Et Pœnos pressit cineres; solatia fati
Carthago, Mariusque, tulit; pariterque jacentes,
Ignovêre Deis.*

An old French opera, of which D'Alembert speaks, on the horrible story of Atreus and Thyestes, that story on which, as on other horrible stories of the kind, the ancients were so strangely fond of dwelling, in preference, and almost to the exclusion of more interesting pathos, concludes after the banquet, with the vengeance of the gods on the contriver of the dreadful feast; and amidst the bolts that are falling around him on every side, Atreus cries out, as if exulting, "Thunder, ye powerless gods, I am avenged." To lessen that triumphant revenge, which is so sublime in this case, would be, not to produce an emotion of beauty, but to produce that disgust and contempt which we feel for petty malice. I need not allude to the multitude of other cases, to which the same remark would be equally applicable.

Whether, then, the emotions be, or be not, of a kind which may be gradually, by the omission of some circumstance, or the diminution of the vivid feeling itself, lessened down to that emotion which we ascribe to mere beauty, it is not the less sublime if it truly involves that species of vivid feeling, which we distinguish, with sufficient readiness, from the gentle delight of beauty, as we distinguish the sensation of a burn from that of gentle warmth, without being able to state in words, in what circumstance or circumstances the difference of the feelings consists. It is the vain attempt to define what cannot be defined that has led to all the errors and supposed mysteries, in the theory of sublimity, as it has led to similar errors in the theory of beauty. Sublimity is not one emotion, but various emotions, that have a certain resemblance,—the sublime in itself is nothing; or, at least, it is only a mere name, indicative of our feeling of the resemblance of certain affections of our mind, excited by objects, material or mental, that agree perhaps in no other circumstance but in that analogous undefinable emotion which they excite. Whatever is vast in the material world, whatever is supremely comprehensive in intellect, whatever in morals implies virtuous affections or passions far beyond the ordinary level of humanity, or even guilt, that is ennobled, in some measure, by the fearlessness of its daring, or the magnitude of the ends to which it has had the boldness to aspire—these, and various other objects, in mind and matter, produce certain vivid feelings, which are so similar as to be classed together; and, if we speak of sublimity merely in reference to the various objects which excite these analogous feelings, so as to make the enumeration of the objects a sort of definition of the species of emotion itself, there can be no risk of mistake, more than in saying that sweetness is a word expressive of those sensations, which sugar, honey, and various other substances that might be named, excite. But, if we attempt to define sweetness itself as a sensation, or sublimity itself as an emotion, we either state what is absolutely nugatory, or what is still more probably false in its general extent, however partially true; because our attention, in our definition, will be given to some particular emotions of the class, not to any thing common to the class, since there is truly no common circumstance, which words can adequately express. Hence it happens, that by this singling out of particular objects, we have many theories of sublimity, as we have of beauty; all of them founded on the supposition of an universal sublimity *a parte rei*, as the theories of beauty were founded on a universal beauty *a parte rei*. Sublimity, says one writer, is the terrible; according to another writer, it is magnitude or amplitude, which is essential to the emotion; according to another, it is mighty force or power; according to another, it is the mere suggestion of images of feelings directly connected with that elevation in place, which has given sublimity its name; according to another, it arises from a wider range of associations, all, however, centring in some prior affections of the mind as their direct source. It is very true that terror, vastness of size, extraordinary force, high elevation, and various associate images, do produce feelings of sublimity; but it is not equally true that any one of these feelings is itself all the other feel-

* Lucan, Pharsalia, lib. ii. v. 85—93.

ings. Great elevation, for example, may excite in me the emotion to which it has given the distinctive name, and it is even possible that many great virtues may, by a sort of poetic analogy, suggest the notion of local elevation, as snow suggests the notion of spotless innocence, or the shadow that follows any brilliant object, the notion of envy pursuing merit. But even though, in thinking of heroic virtue, the analogy of local elevation were excited, which it surely is only in very rare cases, this would be no reason for believing that the heroic virtue itself is incapable of exciting emotion, till it have previously suggested height, and the feelings associated with height. It is the same with magnitude or power; they are causes of sublime feelings, not causes of the sublime, which has no real existence, nor of those other sublime feelings which have no direct relation to magnitude or power. Power itself, for example, is not magnitude; nor magnitude power. The contemplation of eternity or infinity of space, is instantly, and of itself, as a mere object of thought, productive of this emotion, without any regard to my power of conceiving infinity, which may, indeed, be a subsequent cause of astonishment, but which certainly does not precede the emotion as its cause. In like manner, any great energy of mind, either in acting or bearing, though it may suggest, by analogy, magnitude, as it may suggest many other analogies, does not depend, for the emotion which it excites, on the previous suggestion of the analogous amplitude of size. The two primary errors, as I have already said, in all these various theories, which may be considered as confutations of each other, consist in supposing, first, that sublimity is one,—the sublime, to use the language of theory,—which, therefore, as suggested by one object, may be precisely the same with the emotion suggested by other objects; and, secondly, the belief that because certain objects have an analogy, so as to be capable, by the mere laws of association, of suggesting each other, they therefore do uniformly suggest each other, and excite emotion only in this way;—that because any generous sacrifice, for instance, may suggest the notion of magnitude or elevation in place,—which, if it suggests them at all, it suggests only rarely,—it therefore must at all times suggest them, as if it were absolutely impossible for us to see an object, without thinking of any analogous object,—to look on snow without thinking of innocence, or on a shadow, without thinking of envy.

I trust, after the remarks already made, that it is unnecessary for me to repeat any arguments in confutation of the error as to one universal sublime; an error of precisely the same kind as that which would contend that, because the fragrance of a violet, and the simplicity of a comprehensive theorem, are both pleasing, the theorem comprehends the fragrance, or the fragrance the mathematical demonstration. As there are many pleasures excited by many objects, but not the pleasing; many emotions of beauty excited by many objects, but not the beautiful; so are there many emotions of sublimity excited by many objects, but not the sublime. The emotion which I feel, when I think of all the ages of eternity, that, however indefinitely multiplied are as nothing to the ages that still remain,—that which I feel, when I think of a night of tempest on the ocean, when no light is to be seen, but the flash of guns of distress from some half-wrecked vessel; or the still more dreadful light from the clouds above, that gleams only to show the billows bursting over their prey, and nothing to be heard but the shriek that rises loudest, at the very moment when it is lost at last and for ever, in one continued howl and dashing of the storm and the surge,—these feelings, though both classed as sublime, and having some resemblance, which leads to this classification, are yet, in their most important respects, very different from each other; and how different are they both from the emotion with which I regard some moral sublimity,—the memorable action of Arria, when she presented the dagger to her lord, or the more tranquil happiness of the elder Pœtus, when, on being ordered by the tyrant to death, as in the accustomed rites of some grateful sacrifice, he sprinkled his blood as a libation to Jove the deliverer! It is in the moral conduct of our fellow-men that the species of sublimity is to be found, which we most gladly recognise as the character of that glorious nature which we have received from God,—a character which makes us more erect in mind than we are in stature, and enables us, not to gaze on the heavens merely, but to lift to them our very wishes, and to imitate in some faint degree, and to admire at least, where we cannot imitate, the gracious perfection that dwells there. It is to mind, therefore, that we turn, even from the sublimest wonders of magnificence, which the material universe exhibits.

> Look then abroad through Nature, to the range
> Of planets, suns, and adamantine spheres,
> Wheeling unshaken through the void immense;
> And speak, O man, does this capacious scene,
> With half that kindling majesty, dilate
> Thy strong conception, as when Brutus rose
> Refulgent from the stroke of Cæsar's fate,
> Amid the crowd of patriots!—and his arm
> Aloft extending, like eternal Jove,
> When Guilt brings down the thunder, call'd aloud
> On Tully's name, and shook his crimson steel,
> And bade the father of his country, hail!
> For lo! the tyrant prostrate on the dust,
> And Rome again is free.*

* Pleasures of Imagination, B. i. v. 487—500.

Yet, though mind exhibits the sublimities on which we love most to dwell, we must not on that account, suppose, that material objects are incapable of exciting any kindred feeling; that, but for the accident of some mental association, the immensity of space would be considered by us with the same indifference as a single atom; or the whole tempest of surges, in the seemingly boundless world of waters, with as little emotion as the shallow pool that may chance to be dimpling before our eyes.

The remarks which I made on beauty might, however, of themselves, have been sufficient to save you from this mistake; and, indeed, after those remarks, it was perhaps superfluous in me to repeat, in the case of sublimity, any part of the argument which I employed on the former occasion. The further applications of it, which I have not made, you can have no difficulty in making for yourselves.

LECTURE LVIII.

I. IMMEDIATE EMOTIONS, NOT NECESSARILY INVOLVING ANY MORAL FEELING.—RETROSPECT OF THE DISCUSSION OF THE EMOTIONS OF BEAUTY AND SUBLIMITY.—4. LUDICROUSNESS, THE OPPOSITE OF SUBLIMITY.—SOURCES OF THE LUDICROUS.—HOBBES' THEORY ERRONEOUS.—LUDICROUSNESS ARISES FROM UNEXPECTED CONGRUITIES OR INCONGRUITIES IN LANGUAGE, IN THOUGHT, OR IN OBJECTS OF PERCEPTION.—EXCEPTIONS.

Gentlemen, after the remarks which I had made on the varieties of the emotion of beauty, it was not necessary for me to dwell at so much length on the kindred emotions of sublimity, to the elucidation of which I proceeded in my last lecture; the principal inquiries which had engaged us, with respect to the nature of beauty, being only another form of inquiries which we might have pursued, indeed, in like manner, in the case of sublimity, but which it would have been tedious and profitless to repeat.

Opposed as the sublime and beautiful usually are, by a sort of antithetic arrangement, in our works of rhetoric, or of the philosophy of taste, they are far from being essentially distinct, but, at least in the greater number of instances, shadow into each other; the sublime, in these cases, being only one portion of a series of feelings, of which the beautiful, as it has been termed, is also a part. The emotions of sublimity may, indeed, be excited by objects which no diminution of the attendant circumstances, or of intensity of quality, could render beautiful; but which, on the contrary, when thus diminished, are disgusting or ridiculous, rather than agreeable. Yet, though there are, unquestionably, cases of this sort; as when guilt becomes sublime by the very atrocity with which it dares and executes what other bosoms might shudder even to conceive, or the mean wretchedness of some sterile waste acquires a kind of dignity from extent of that very desolation, which, in a less degree, made it meanly wretched, the greater number of cases are, as unquestionably, of a different sort; in which, by gradual increase, or diminution of qualities, or alteration of the attendant circumstances, the emotion is progressively varied, till, by change after change, what was merely beautiful, becomes grand, and ultimately sublime; the extremes seeming, perhaps, to have no resemblance, but this very difference of the extremes resulting only from the number of successive feelings in the long scale of emotion, in each sequence of which, compared with the feelings immediately preceding, there may have been a shadowing of the closest resemblance. How very natural a process this is, I showed you, by examples of progressive beauty, grandeur, and sublimity, in different aspects, both of matter and of mind.

Since beauty, then, by a gradual change of circumstances, can thus rise into sublimity, it is not wonderful that phenomena, which are parts of a series, should be, in many important respects, analogous; so that properties or relations, which are found to belong to one portion of the series, should be found to belong also to the other; that, for example, as we diffuse, unconsciously, our delightful feeling of beauty, in the object which excites it, we should diffuse, in like manner, our feelings of sublimity in the objects which we term sublime, and imagine some awful majesty to hang around them, even when there is no eye to behold them, and consequently no heart to be impressed with their overwhelming presence. The tendency which this continued incorporation of our feeling in those sublime objects on which we gaze, or of which we think, produces, to the belief of a permanent sublimity in objects, may very naturally be supposed to flow into the illusion, which imagines the existence of something that, independently of our feelings, is common to all the objects which thus powerfully impress us, and which may of itself be termed the sublime; as something common to all beautiful objects, independently of our feeling of their beauty, was, in like manner, imagined and termed the beautiful. It was necessary for me, therefore, to expose the fallacy of these last lingering universal essences of the schools, and to show, that, as we have not one emotion of beauty, but a multitude of emotions, which, from their analogy, are comprehended under that one general term, so we have not one feeling of sublimity, but various analogous

feelings, arising from various objects that agree perhaps in no circumstance, but that of the analogous emotions which they excite.

Of feelings which are not the same, then, in every respect, it cannot surprise us, that we should not always find on analysis the elements to be the same. Beauty, as we have seen, is an emotion of vivid delight referred to the object which excites it; and sublimity, as we have also seen, in tracing the progressive emotion through gradual changes of circumstances, is often only this very beauty, united with a feeling of vague indefinable grandeur in its object, and a consequent impression of delightful astonishment, intermediate between mere admiration and awe. In relation to moral actions, it is often a combination of the pleasing emotion of beauty, with admiring astonishment and love, or respectful reverence. In many cases, however, there is no vivid delight of beauty intermingled in the compound feeling, but only astonishment, and a certain vague impression of unmeasurable greatness or power, which is more akin to terror, than to any emotion which can be said to be positively pleasurable. In some cases, indeed, there can be no question that images of terror contribute the chief elements of the emotion,—images, however, not of terror in that direct form in which it assails us, when danger is close and imminent, but of terror softened either by distance as long past, or by mixed feelings of security, that fluctuate with it in rapid alternation, when the danger is only contingently or remotely possible. Different as the elements may be in many cases, and different as the resulting emotions may also be, the different results of the different elements may yet, as complex feelings, be sufficiently analogous to be classed under one rank of emotions; though, in giving one common name to the whole, we must always be aware, that it is only a certain analogy of the feelings which we mean to express, and not one common quality which can be considered as strictly the same in all; and that it is not the sublime, therefore, which we are philosophically to seek, but the sublimities, if I may venture so to term them; the various objects which, in various circumstances, excite emotions, that, in all their diversity, are yet of such resemblance, as to admit of being classed together under one common appellation.

The species of emotion to which I am next to direct your attention, is that which, in the common realism of the language of philosophers, is said to be occasioned by the ludicrous,—an emotion of light mirth, which may be considered as opposite to that of sublimity, though not opposite in the strict sense in which beauty and ugliness are opposed. There are, indeed, some feelings of this kind, which may be said to arise from qualities that are truly the reverse of those on which sublimity depends, and in which, accordingly, the opposition is as complete as that of ugliness and beauty. In the composition of works of fancy, for example, a mere excess or diminution of the very circumstances which renders a thought sublime, produces either bombast or inanity, and a consequent emotion of ridicule or gay contempt; as in the human countenance, an increase or diminution of any beautiful feature may convert into deformity what was beauty before, and produce a corresponding change in our emotions. In this peculiar species of disproportion, when the sublime is intended, but when the images, from the inability of the author to produce and distinguish sublimity, are either overstrained or mean, consists what has been termed *bathos*, as rhetorically opposed to those peculiar emotions, to which, indeed, the very etymology of the term marks the opposition that has been felt.

Of the ludicrousness which arises from this species of actual opposition of the mean or bombastic fancies of the writer to the sublimity which he wished to produce, it would, indeed, scarcely be necessary to say any thing after the remarks that have been made on sublimity itself, any more than it would be necessary to dwell on illustrations of ugliness after a full discussion of the opposite emotions of beauty. But the gay mirthful feeling is not always of this kind. The same species of emotion, or an emotion very nearly similar, may be felt where there is no accompanying belief of imperfection, and where, on the contrary, as in the sprightly sallies of wit, a very high admiration is mixed with our feeling of what is laughable,—an admiration which is much more than mere astonishment, and which, for the moment, though only for the moment, is perhaps as great as that, which, in our hours of reflection, we give to the highest efforts of meditative genius. It will therefore deserve a little fuller consideration, what the nature of the emotion is, or rather to state, what is more within the power of philosophy, what are the circumstances in which the emotion arises.

Before entering on the minuter inquiry, however, I may remark, in the first place, that every theory which would make our feelings of this kind to depend on some modification of mere pride in a comparison of ourselves and others to our advantage, and to the disparagement, therefore, of the person supposed to be compared with us, is founded on a false and very limited view of the phenomena; since the feeling is as strong, where there is the highest admiration of the wit of the speaker, and, consequently, where any comparison, like that which is supposed to be essential to the production of the emotion, would be to our disadvantage. It is in vain,

for example, that Hobbes defines laughter to be "a sudden glory, arising from a sudden conception of some eminency in ourselves, by comparison with the infirmity of others, or with our own formerly;" for we laugh as readily at some brilliant conception of wit, where there are no infirmities of others displayed, as where they are displayed in any awkward blunder. We often laugh, too, as this very definition indeed asserts, in thinking of our own mistakes of this sort, when we surely cannot feel any great glory, nor any eminence in ourselves, more than if we had never been guilty of the mistake; the effect of our discovery of our mistake being merely to raise us to that level of ordinary excellence at which we imagined ourselves before; not to raise us in the slightest degree above it. If the theory of Hobbes, or any theory, which converts our mere feeling of ludicrousness into a proud comparison of ourselves and others, were just, it would then follow, as has been often objected to this theory, that a man who was very self-conceited and supercilious, would be peculiarly prone to mirth, when, on the contrary, it happens that children, and, if persons in advanced life, those whose temper is most social, are the most readily excited to laughter; while the proud, to whom their superiority most readily recurs, are usually very little disposed to merriment. "Seldom they smile," may be said of them, as was said of Cassius; and when they do smile, their smile, like his, so admirably described by Shakspeare, has little in it of the full glorying and eminency of laughter, but is

> of such a sort,
> As if they mock'd themselves, and scorn'd their spirit,
> That could be moved to smile at any thing.*

The mere stupidity of any one, when there is no vanity of pretension to contrast with it, does not make us laugh; yet, if laughter arose from the mere triumph of personal superiority, there would surely, in this case, be equal reason for selfish exultation; and a company of blockheads should be the gayest of all society. In any brilliant piece of wit, it is to the images or thought suggested, in ready eloquence, that we look, without regard to him who is its author; unless, indeed, in those cases in which the very character or situation of the speaker may of itself produce a sort of ludicrousness, by its incongruity with the gravity or levity of what is said. There is scarcely any thing which is more ludicrous than a happy parody, and though the author of the parody may be allowed to feel some triumph over the original author, if even his playful metamorphosis of what is dignified and excellent can be termed a triumph, which is rather an amusement than a victory; this triumph certainly cannot be felt by the mere hearers, since their pleasure is always greater in proportion, not to the infirmity of which Hobbes speaks, but to the excellence of the original, without great merit in which, or supposed great merit, the parody itself could not be felt as having any claim to our laughter or our praise. A parody on any dull verses would, indeed, be still duller than the dullness which it ridicules.

It is not any proud comparison, therefore, which constitutes what is termed the ludicrous; but, even in the proudest of such comparisons, some other circumstance or circumstances. It is the combination of general incongruity with partial and unexpected congruity of the mere images themselves, which may indeed, in some cases, lead to this triumph as an auxiliary pleasure, but which has an immediate and independent pleasure of its own,—a pleasure arising from the discovery of unsuspected resemblance in objects formerly conceived to be known to us, or unsuspected difference in objects formerly regarded as highly similar.

Nothing is felt as truly ludicrous, in which there is not an unexpected congruity developed in images that were before supposed to be opposite in kind, or some equally unexpected incongruity in images supposed to be congruous; and the sudden perception of these discrepancies and agreements may be said to be that which constitutes the ludicrousness; the gay emotions being immediately subsequent to the mere perception of the unexpected relation.

The congruities and incongruities which give rise to this emotion may be either in mere language or in the thoughts and images which language expresses, or, in many cases, in the very objects of our direct perception.

On the first of these, the resemblance of mere sounds, in puns, and other trifling verbal analogies of the same class, it is unnecessary for me to dwell at present, as they before came under our review, when I treated of the influence of verbal similarities on the spontaneous suggestions of our trains of thought. How truly the ludicrousness of the pun consists in the unexpected similarity of discrepant images, is shown by the greater or less pleasure which it affords, in proportion as the images themselves are more or less discrepant; being greatest, therefore, when there is a complete opposition, with the exception of that single tie of similar sound which is found unexpectedly to connect them. When the images themselves are congruous, so as to seem capable of being suggested by their own congruities, the pun is scarcely felt, or rather there is nothing felt to which the name of pun can be given.

But though the unsuspected connexion of objects, by their resemblances of mere sound,

* Julius Cæsar, Act i. Scene 2.

as in puns, and all the small varieties of verbal and literal wit, may be uniformly ludicrous, this is far from being the case with the other species of unsuspected resemblance, in relations of thought to thought, or of existing things. It is necessary, therefore, to form some limitation of the general proposition as to the ludicrousness of relations which we perceive suddenly and unexpectedly, the only circumstance which as yet we have supposed to be necessary to the rise of the emotion.

In the first place, an exception must be made in the case of scientific truths. When it is discovered in chemistry, or in any other physical science, that there truly have been relations of objects or events, which were not suspected by us before, there is no feeling of ludicrousness, though the substances found to have some common property should be opposite in every other respect. What could be more unexpected, or more incongrous with our previous conceptions of the specific gravity of metals, than the discovery that the lightest of all substances, which are not in the state of an aerial fluid, is a metal, the base of another substance with which we had been long acquainted? Yet, though we were astonished at such a discovery, we felt no tendency whatever to laugh. The relation, in short, did not seem to us to involve any thing ludicrous.

Why then do we not laugh, in such a case, at the discovery of the resemblance of objects or qualities, which were before regarded by us as not less incongruous than any of the unsuspected relations which are exhibited to us in the quaintest conundrum, that excites our laughter almost in the very instant in which the strange relation is pointed out? The principal reason of this difference, I conceive, is the importance of the physical relation. The interest attached by us to the discovery of truth occupies the mind too seriously, to allow that light play of thought which is essential to the rise of the gay emotion. In this respect, there is a very striking analogy to a species of animal action, which resembles our emotions of this kind also, in some other striking circumstances, particularly in the tendency to laughter, which is an equal and very curious result of both. If the palm of the hand be gently tickled, when the mind is vacant, the influence of the mechanical operation in this way is very powerful; but, if the faculties be exerted on any interesting subject, the same action on the palm of the hand may take place without any consequent laughter, and even perhaps without any consciousness of the process which has been taking place. A new phenomenon, or a new discovered relation in former phenomena, engages the mind too closely to allow any feeling of ludicrousness, and consequent laughter to arise,—in the same way as those very circumstances would probably be sufficient to prevent the laughter of tickling, if the mechanical cause were applied at the very moment at which we learn the important discovery, and applied precisely in the same manner as when the strange feeling and the laughter were before the result.

There is another circumstance, that, in the case of a law of nature, however strange and apparently incongruous with our former conceptions its phenomena may be, must have considerable effect in occupying the mind more fully with the discovery;—that it is impossible for the mind to rest in the simple discovery, without rapidly passing in review the various circumstances that seem to us likely to be connected with it in the analogous phenomena,—a state of mind which is of itself most unfavourable to the mirthful emotion. There are, unquestionably, states of mind, during the prevalence of affliction, or any strong passion, in which there is no point in the jest, as there is no pleasure in the very aspect of joy. To the friend returning from the funeral of his friend, we of course do not think of uttering any of those common expressions of merriment, in which at other times we might occasionally indulge; the natural respect which we feel for sorrow, being sufficient to check the gaiety, or at least the appearance of gaiety. But, even though in violation of that respect which the sorrowful claim, the happiest effusions of wit were to be poured out on such an occasion, there would be no answering mirth in that heart which at other times would have felt and returned the gaiety. What grief thus manifestly does, other strong interests, that absorb, in like manner, the general feelings of the mind, may well be supposed to do; and we may therefore listen to facts, the most seemingly incongruous with our prior knowledge, when our curiosity is awake to their importance, as objects of science, without the slightest disposition to those light emotions, which almost every other incongruity, or fancied incongruity, would have produced.

It may accordingly be remarked, that to those who have not sufficient elementary knowledge of science, to feel any interest in physical truths, as one connected system, and no habitual desire of exploring the various relations of new phenomena, many of the facts in nature, which have an appearance of incongruity, as first stated, do truly seem ludicrous. If the vulgar were to be told, that they do not see directly the magnitude, or place or distance of bodies, with their eyes alone, but, in some measure, by the indirect influence of other senses, on which light has no effect whatever, that the feelings of cold and heat proceed from the same cause, and that there is a great deal of heat in the coldest ice, they would not merely disbelieve what we might

say, but they would laugh at what we tell them, as if it were absolutely ridiculous. The gravest truths of science would be to them what the pleasantries of wit are to us.

I may remark, too, as a circumstance of some additional influence, that those who have been conversant with physical inquiries, are always prepared, in some degree, for the discovery of new properties, even in objects the most familiar to them. With their full impression of the infinite variety of the powers of nature, there is scarcely any thing, indeed, which can be said to be truly incongruous with any thing. They are, in some degree, with respect to the physical relations of things, in the same situation as the professed wit, with respect to all the lighter analogies, who is too much accustomed to these in his own gay exercise of fancy, to feel much of the ludicrousness of surprise, when these slight and seemingly incongruous relations are developed in the pleasantries of others. It is not from envy or jealousy,—certainly not always from envy or jealousy,—that he does not laugh in such a case; but because the relation exhibited is of a kind with which he is too familiar, to share the astonishment that has animated the laughter of all the rest of the circle. The newly discovered congruities or incongruities of wit, in short, are to him, in a great measure, what some strange newly discovered property of material substance is to the chemist, or general experimental inquirer.

But whatever may be the cause of the difference of feeling, in this case of seeming anomaly, there can bo no question as to the fact itself, that the discovery of a new relation in physics, and even of a relation apparently most incongruous with the relations formerly known, does not produce, in the mind of the scientific observer, or general lover of science, a feeling of any ludicrousness in the discovery itself. The fact, indeed, seems to be reducible, without much difficulty, to the common laws of mind; but still it must be admitted to form an important limitation to the general doctrine of the influence of unexpected and apparently incongruous relations, in producing the emotions referred to ludicrousness in their objects.

Even this limitation, however, is not sufficient. Every metaphor, simile, or other figure of speech, implies some unexpected relation presented to the mind; and, in many cases, a relation of objects, which were before regarded as having no congruity whatever;—and, therefore, it may be urged, the figures, in all such cases, should be felt as ludicrous,—not, indeed, those similes of ancient and well-accredited usage, which form a part of the constant furniture of epic narrative,—similes that, comparing heroes and lions, as heroes and lions have often been compared before, give us no new image, but remind us only that Homer has made the same comparison. These, of course, since they do not present to us any relation which we did not know before as well as after the tiresome similitude has been again unfolded to us in its full detail of circumstances, may be allowed to pass without our laughter, and without even being counted as an anomaly. But every original simile, however just the relation may be which it expresses, and with whatever beauty of language it may be conveyed to our mind, must present to us an unsuspected resemblance in objects formerly known to us, and probably familiar. Why, then, do we feel no tendency to laugh in such a case?

That we do not feel any tendency to laugh in such a case, arises, I think, from this circumstance. It is the art of the poet, in the management of his comparisons, to bring before us only the analogy on which his simile is founded, or at least such circumstances only as harmonize with the sentiment which he wishes to excite, and to keep from us, therefore, every circumstance discordant with it. Accordingly, when he is successful in this respect, the beauty of the similitude itself is all which we feel,—a delight which occupies us sufficiently, to prevent the rise in the mind of any feeling of the opposite qualities of the objects compared, such as I suppose to be necessary to constitute ludicrousness. When, however, the opposition, as may frequently be the case, is too remarkable not to be instantly felt, a certain degree of ludicrousness will as instantly be felt, in spite of all the magnificent language of the poet. Hence, it sometimes happens, that similes, which in one country or age excite no emotion but that of beauty, may yet, in another age or country, excite an emotion of a very different kind, in consequence of the different sentiments with which, in different times and places, the same objects may be viewed. Whatever estimate the Greeks may have more justly formed of the many excellent qualities of the ass, the very name of that animal is with us combined with notions so disparaging, that it has become by this degradation quite unsuitable to be introduced as a subject of laudatory comparison in a poem that treats of gods and heroes. To those, indeed, who had the happiness of listening to the great Rhapsodist himself, the comparison might seem sufficiently dignified, as well as just; but I presume that there are few of our own countrymen, with the exception of those who admire whatever is in the Iliad, because it is in the Iliad, who have not felt some little tendency to smile, on reading the simile, in which Homer compares one of the most undaunted of his war-

riors to that ill-used and much-enduring animal, which, by a very common aggravation of injustice, we have first oppressed, and then despised because we have oppressed it.

In this way, accordingly, I conceive the feeling of beauty, as precluding, in ordinary cases, in which there is no very remarkable opposition of general qualities, the rise in the mind of the circumstances of opposition essential to the feeling of ludicrousness, may account sufficiently for the absence of any light emotion, when new and unsuspected similitudes are developed to us in a comparison. Mere novelty of relation is not sufficient of itself to constitute what is termed the ludicrous; that is to say, for the ludicrous is only a more general term, does not, of itself, give rise to any of those feelings of light emotion, which we comprehend under that general term. There are similes which are sublime, similes which are beautiful, similes which are ludicrous. A newly perceived relation, therefore, is not always ludicrous in itself, but only certain relations. What, then, are these relations, as distinguished from the others, which are felt without any tendency to this gay surprise?

The relations which are ludicrous, and which, as ludicrous, in every instance involve some unsuspected resemblance of objects or qualities before regarded as incongruous, or some equally unsuspected diversity, when the resemblance was before supposed to be complete, admit, perhaps, of being referred to three classes: in the first place, to the class of those in which objects are brought together that are noble and mean, or the forms of language commonly employed in treating subjects high and low, are transferred from one to the other. Such a transfer, as you well know, gives rise in the one case to the burlesque, in which objects, noble in themselves, are made ridiculous by the meanness of phrases and figures; in the other case, to the mock-heroic, in which, by a contrary process, the mean is rendered ridiculous by the magnificent trappings of rhetoric with which it is invested.

In these instances of artificial combination of the very great, and the very little, there can be no question as to the ludicrousness of the emotion which such piebald dignity excites; and there are circumstances which occur in nature, exactly of the same kind, and productive, therefore, of the same emotion; the incongruities being not in mere thought and image, but in objects directly perceived. When any well-dressed person, walking along the street, falls into the mud of some splashy gutter, the situation, and the dirt, when combined with the character and appearance of the unfortunate stumbler, form a sort of natural burlesque or mock-heroic, in which there is a mixture of the noble and the mean, as much as in any of the works of art, to which those names are given. He who amuses us by his fall, is, in truth, for the moment, an unintentional buffoon, performing for us, unwillingly, what the buffoon, with his stately strut, and his paper crown, and other trappings of mock royalty, strives to imitate, with less effect, because there is wanting in him that additional contrast of the lofty state of mind, with the ridiculous situation which forms so important a part of the laughable whole in the accidental fall. It is the contrast of the state of mind with that which we feel that it would be, if the circumstances were known to him, that forms the principal ludicrousness of the situation of any one who has the misfortune of being in a crowded company, with his coat accidentally torn, or with any other imperfection of dress that attracts all eyes, perhaps, but his own. In the rude pastimes of the village, in like manner, it is because the swain is

> Mistrustless of his smutted face,
> That secret laughter titters round the place.
> *Goldsmith.*

A second class of relations, which are ludicrous, are those which derive their ludicrousness, not from the objects themselves, but from the mind of the hearer or reader, which has been previously led to expect something very different from what is presented to it. To take a very trite example of this sort: If the question be asked, what wine do you like best? One person, perhaps, answering Champagne, another Burgundy, a third says, the wine which I am not to pay for. We laugh, if we laugh at all, chiefly because we expected a very different answer; and the incongruity which is felt has relation, therefore, to our own state of mind more than to the question itself. It is this previous anticipation of an answer, with which the answer received by us is partially incongruous, that either forms the principal delight of many of the bons mots of conversation, or at least aids their effect most powerfully; and by the contrast which it produces, it adds, in a most mortifying manner, to the painful keenness of an unexpected sarcasm. Thus, to take an instance from a story which Dr. Arbuthnot tells us, "Sir William Temple, and the famous Lord Brouncker, being neighbours in the country, had frequently very sharp contentions; like other great men, one could not bear an equal, and the other would not admit of a superior. My Lord was a great admirer of curiosities, and had a very good collection, which Sir William used to undervalue upon all occasions, disparaging every thing of his neighbour's, and giving something of his own the preference. This, by no means pleased his

lordship, who took all opportunities of being revenged. One day, as they were discoursing together of their several rarities, my lord very seriously and gravely replied to him, 'Sir William, say no more of the matter, you must at length yield to me, I having lately got something which it is impossible for you to obtain; for, sir,' said his lordship smiling, 'my Welch steward has sent me a flock of geese, and those are what you can never have, since all your geese are swans.' "* In this case, there can be no doubt that the keenness of the sarcasm would be far more severely felt, in consequence of the previous anticipation of an answer of a very different kind.

The feeling of ludicrousness is the same, when our previous anticipation is disappointed by agreement, where we expected difference, as when it is disappointed by difference where we expected agreement. Such is the case in the game of cross purposes, where, in a series of questions and answers, the answers are paired with questions to which they were not given. In what are termed the cross readings of newspapers, where, without paying regard to the separation into columns, we read what is in the same line of the page, through the successive columns, as if continuous, there is little agreement of sense to be expected, and we smile accordingly at the strange congruities which such readings may sometimes discover. Many of you are probably acquainted with the ingenious fictions of this sort of coincidence that appeared originally in the Public Advertiser, with the happily appropriate signature of Papyrius Cursor; and which were well known to be the production of the late Mr. C. Whiteford. I quote a few specimens for the sake of those among you who may not be acquainted with them.

"The sword of state was carried ——
Before Sir John Fielding, and committed to Newgate.

Last night, the princess royal was baptized ——
Mary, *alias* Moll Hacket, *alias* Black Moll.

This morning the Right Honourable the Speaker ——
Was convicted of keeping a disorderly house.

A certain commoner will be created a peer.
*** No greater reward will be offered.

Yesterday the new Lord Mayor was sworn in,
Afterwards tossed and gored several persons.

When the honour of knighthood was conferred on him,
To the great joy of that noble family.

A fine turtle, weighing upwards of eighty pounds
Was carried before the sitting alderman.

Tis said the ministry is to be new modell'd;
The repairs of which will cost the public a large sum annually.

This has occasion'd a cabinet-council to be held
At Betty's fruit shop in St. James's street.

One of his Majesty's principal Secretaries of State
Fell off the shafts, being asleep, and the wheels went over him.

He was examined before the sitting alderman,
And no questions asked.

Genteel places in any of the public offices,
So much admired by the nobility and gentry.

This morning, will be married, the lord viscount,
And afterwards hung in chains, pursuant to his sentence."†

A third set of relations of this kind derive their ludicrousness from our consideration of the mind of the speaker, or writer, or performer of the action. When our mirth is excited at any awkward effort, for example, we laugh, because we are aware of that which the effort was intended to perform, and are struck with the contrast of the performance itself. We laugh, in short, at the awkward failure, not at the motion or attitude itself, considered simply, without relation to some higher end, as a mere motion or attitude; and we laugh at the failure, because we compare, as I have said, the awkward result with the grace which was intended, or which, at least, we imagine to have been intended.

It is as might be supposed, on a similar principle, that our mirth is excited by every appearance of mental awkwardness. We laugh, for example, when we discover in a work any very visible marks of constraint and difficulty on the part of an author, as in far-fetched thoughts, or stiff and quaint phraseology; and we laugh, not merely on account of the incongruity of the thoughts or phrases themselves, which are thus strangely brought into union, though this, perhaps, may form the chief element of the ludicrousness, but in some degree also, at the contrast of the labour which we discover, with the ease which the writer is supposed by us to assume and affect. That composition of every sort involves difficulty on the part of the composer, we know well; but we still require that the difficulty should be kept from our sight. We must not see him biting his nails, and torturing himself to give us satisfaction. His great aim accordingly is to present to us what is excellent, but to present it, so free from any marks of the toil which it has cost, as to seem almost to have risen in the mind by the unrestrained course of spontaneous suggestion. Any appearance of constraint, therefore, presents to us a sort of incongruity, almost as striking as when the noble and the mean are blended together. Even when we think, in reading any of the extravagant conceits that abound so much in the works of our older writers, that we are smiling merely at the images which are brought together, and which nature seems to have intended never to meet, we are, in truth, smiling in

* Miscellanies, 2d edit. vol. i. p. 113.

† Preserved in one of the volumes of the "New Foundling Hospital for Wit."

part at the very feelings of the writer, when he was so laboriously and painfully absurd. If the feelings that succeed each other, in the mind even of the sublimest poet, in the weary hour of composition, could, by any process, be made distinctly visible to us, there is no small reason to apprehend, that, with all our reverence for his noble art, and for his own individual excellence in that art, our emotions would be of the ludicrous kind, or at least that some portion of the ludicrous would mingle with our admiration. There can be no question that he would seem to have performed more labour, if we could be thus conscious of his feelings, before his labour was half accomplished, than if we were only to have exhibited to us the beautiful results of the whole long-continued exercise of his thought. This labour, which a skilful writer knows so well how to conceal from us, a writer who is fond of astonishing us with extravagant conceits, forces constantly upon our view; and there is hence scarcely any image which he presents to us so ludicrous as that picture which he indirectly gives us of himself.

Another set of examples, in which the consideration of the mind of the speaker forms an essential part of the ludicrousness, are those which are commonly termed bulls or blunders; in which there is no ludicrousness unless we are able to distinguish what the speaker meant, and thus to discover some strange agreement of his real meaning, with that opposite or contradictory meaning which the words seem to convey. A bull must, therefore, be genuine, or for the moment supposed to be genuine, before it can divert with its incongruity. As mere nonsense, it would be as little amusing as any other nonsense. We must have before us, in conception at least, the speaker himself, and contrast the well-meaning seriousness of his affirmation with the verbal absurdity which he utters, of which we are at the same time able to discover the unsuspected tie.

Such I conceive to be the chief varieties of mixed congruity and incongruity which operate in producing this emotion. But, though I have considered these varieties separately, you are not on that account to suppose, that the varieties themselves are not frequently combined in different proportions; thus heightening what would be ludicrous in one respect, by ludicrousness of another species. The images themselves, the mind of the speaker or writer who presents them, the disappointed expectation of the hearer or reader, may all present to us a strange mixture of discrepancy and agreement, and afford elements, therefore, that are to be jointly taken into account in explaining the one complex emotion, which is the equal result of all.

It is not then, every newly-discovered relation of objects that excites in us emotions of the ludicrous class, but only certain relations, which present to us peculiar incongruities. In all these, however, the unexpectedness is an important element; since, when we have become completely familiar with the relation, we cease to have the emotion which it before instantly excited. We still, however, call the objects or images ludicrous, though they excite no emotion of this sort in our mind any more perhaps than the gravest reasoning; but we retain the name, because we speak of them, or think of them, in reference to other minds, in which we know that they will excite the same emotion that was originally excited by them in ourselves. In thinking of the laughter which may thus be produced in others, we are not unfrequently affected with the emotion as before; but it is an emotion of sympathy, not of mere ludicrousness; or, if there be any thing directly ludicrous, it is in this very consideration of incongruity in the minds of others, when we think of their expectation while they read, as contrasted with the surprise that is to follow. To know the relation, in short, as far as the relation consists in the mere images themselves, is to feel, that the object of which we know the relations will be ludicrous to others, not to feel it ludicrous to ourselves.

LECTURE LIX.

I. IMMEDIATE EMOTIONS, NOT INVOLVING NECESSARILY ANY MORAL FEELING.—USES OF LUDICROUSNESS.—GENERAL REMARKS ON CLOSING THE FIRST SUBDIVISION OF OUR EMOTIONS.—SUBDIVISION II. IMMEDIATE EMOTIONS IN WHICH MORAL FEELING IS NECESSARILY INVOLVED—1. FEELINGS DISTINCTIVE OF VOICE AND VIRTUE.—2. EMOTIONS OF LOVE AND HATE.

My last Lecture, Gentlemen, was devoted to the consideration of the phenomena of our emotions, of that species of which the objects are distinguished by the name of ludicrous; emotions which we found to originate always in some mixture of congruity and incongruity, suddenly and unexpectedly perceived. In establishing this general law, I stated, at the same time, some apparent exceptions to the rise of the mirthful emotion in such cases, of the discovery of unsuspected agreement, and endeavoured, I hope successfully, to show that all these seeming anomalies are such as might naturally have been anticipated, as consequences of the operation of other well-known laws of the mind.

The varieties of such mixtures of congruity and incongruity, as constitute what is termed ludicrousness, were considered by us

in order; first, in the mere arbitrary signs of language, and next in the relations of thoughts and existing things,—whether in the discrepancy of the images themselves, as noble and mean,—in the disappointed anticipations of the hearer or reader, or in the difference of the obvious meaning of the expression of the speaker or writer, or performer of some action, compared with that real meaning which we know him, in his awkward blunder, to have intended.

The emotion is not a simple feeling, but the analysis of it does not seem very difficult. The necessary unexpectedness of the congruity or incongruity that is remarked, seems of itself to point out one element, in the astonishment which may naturally be supposed to arise in such a case; and the other element, which nature has made as quick to arise on the perception of the ludicrous object, as astonishment itself, is a vivid feeling of delight, one of the forms of that joy or gladness which I comprehended in my enumeration of the few primary constituents of our emotions. Astonishment, combined with this particular delight, is the mirthful emotion that has been the subject of our inquiry; and Akenside, therefore, in giving it the name of "gay surprise,"* seems to have expressed, with the analytic accuracy of a philosopher, the complex feelings which he was poetically describing.

In considering the delight that is combined with astonishment in the mirthful emotion, we are apt to consider it as more different from other species of gladness than it truly is, because we think of more than what is strictly mental. The laughter is a phenomenon of so particular a kind, and so impressive to our senses, that we think of it as much as of the feelings which it indicates; but the laughter, it should be remembered, is a bodily convulsion, which might or might not be combined with the internal merriment, without altering the nature of the inward emotion itself. This spasmodic muscular action, therefore, however remarkable it may be as a concomitant bodily effect, and even the oppressive feeling of fatigue to which that muscular action, when long continued, gives rise, we should leave out in our analysis of the mere emotion,—that is all with which the physiologist of mind is concerned,—and leaving out what is bodily in the external signs of merriment, we discover only the two internal elements which I have mentioned; that may, in certain cases, be more complicated by a mixture of contempt, but to which, as mere mirth, that third occasional element is far from being essential.

The advantages which we derive from our susceptibility of this species of emotion, are, in their immediate influence on the cheerfulness, and therefore on the general happiness of society, sufficiently obvious. How many hours would pass wearily along, but for these pleasantries of wit, or of easier and less pretending gaiety, which enliven what would have been dull, and throw many bright colours on what would have been gloomy. We are not to estimate these accessions of pleasure lightly, because they relate to objects that may seem trifling, when considered together with those more serious concerns, by which our ambition is occupied, and in relation to which, in the success or failure of our various projects, we look back on the past months or years of our life, as fortunate or unfortunate. If these serious concerns alone were to be regarded, we might often have been very fortunate and very unhappy, as in other circumstances we might often have had much happiness in the hours and days of years, which terminated at last in the disappointment of some favourite scheme. It is good to travel with pure and balmy airs and cheerful sunshine, though we should not find, at the end of our journey, the friend whom we wished to see; and the gaieties of social converse, though they are not, in our journey of life, what we travel to obtain, are, during the continuance of our journey at once a freshness which we breathe, and a light that gives every object to sparkle to our eye with a radiance that is not its own.

Such are the immediate and obvious influences of this emotion. But it is not of slight value in influences that are less direct; though capable of being sometimes abused, and far from being always so exactly coincident with moral impropriety, as to furnish a criterion of rectitude, it must be allowed to be, in its ordinary circumstances, favourable to virtue, presenting often a check to improprieties, on which, but for such a restraint, the heedless would rush without scruple,—a check, too, which is, by its very nature, peculiarly suited to those who despise the more serious restraints of moral principle, and the opinion of the virtuous. The world's dread laugh, which even the firm philosopher is said to be scarcely able to scorn, cannot be scorned by those to whom the approbation of the world is what conscience is to the wise and virtuous; and though that laugh is certainly not so unerring as the voice of moral judgment within the breast, it is still, as I have said, in far the greater number of cases, in accordance with it; and when it differs, differs far more frequently in the degree of its censure or its praise, than in actual censure of what is praiseworthy, or praise of what is wholly censurable. It is often, too, of importance, that we should regulate our

* The expression in the original seems to be "gay contempt." See Pleasures of Imagination, B. iii. v. 200,—and second form of the poem, B. ii. v. 521.

conduct with regard to relations, which all mankind cannot have leisure for analyzing, and which very few, even of those who have leisure, have patience to examine. The vivid feeling of ridicule, in such cases, as more instant in its operations, may hence be considered as a glorious warning from that benignant Power, who,

> conscious what a scanty pause
> From labours and from care, the wider lot
> Of humble life affords for studious thought,
> To scan the maze of nature, therefore stamp'd
> The glaring scenes, with characters of *scorn*,
> As broad, as obvious, to the passing clown,
> As to the letter'd sage's curious eye.*

Having now then finished my remarks on the phenomena of beauty, sublimity, and wit, I close with them my view of the emotions that are the object of the species of judgment, which is denominated taste. I have already stated my reasons for dividing and arranging the phenomena of taste, under two distinct heads, as they are either emotions or feelings of the aptitudes of certain images or combinations of images for producing those emotions. To feel the emotion, which a beautiful, or sublime, or ludicrous object excites, is one state of mind; to have a knowledge of the aptitude of different means of exciting these emotions, so as to discern accurately what will tend to produce them, and what will have no tendency of this sort, is another state or function of the mind, to which the former indeed is necessary, but which is itself far from being implied, in the mere susceptibility of the pleasing emotion. That power by which, from the inductions of former observations of the mechanic powers, we predict the effects of certain combinations of wheels and pullies in machinery, of certain mixtures in the chemical arts, and, in legislation or general politics, of certain motives, that are to operate on the minds of a people, is not supposed by us to be a different power, merely because the relations which it discerns are different. In all, and in all alike, it is termed judgment, reason, discernment, or whatever other name may be used, for expressing the same discriminating function. The knowledge necessary for the predictions in mechanics, chemistry, and politics, is indeed different; but the power which avails itself of this knowledge is in kind the same. In like manner, the knowledge which the discriminating function of taste supposes, is very different from that which is necessary in mechanics, chemistry, politics, though not more different from them, than these various species of knowledge are relatively different. But in taste, as in those sciences when the knowledge is once acquired, it is the same capacity of feeling the relation of means and ends, which avails itself of this knowledge of the past, in determining the various aptitudes of objects for a desired effect, whether for producing or retarding motion, as in mechanics; for forming compositions or decompositions, as in chemistry; for augmenting and securing the happiness of nations, as in politics; or for inducing various delightful emotions, as in taste. If we do not give different names in all these cases to the capacity of feeling the relation of means and ends, when the means and ends are in different cases different, why should we suppose a new faculty to be exercised, and invent a new name in one alone? The politician, who judges of the reception which the multitude will give to certain laws, and the critic, who judges of the reception they will give to certain works of art, have, for their subject, the same mind; and both determine the aptitude of certain feelings of the mind, for inducing certain other feelings. The general power by which we discover the relation of means and ends, of states of mind or circumstances which are prior, and states of mind or circumstances which are consequent to these, is that which is exercised in both; the function to which I have given the name of relative suggestion, from which we derive our feeling of this as of every other relation. Without the emotions of beauty and sublimity, there would, of course, be no taste to discern the aptitude of certain means for producing these emotions, because there would not be that series of feelings, of which the relative antecedence and consequence are felt. On the other hand, without the judgment which discerns this order, in the relation of means and ends, there might, indeed, still be the emotions rising precariously, as nature presented to us certain objects that excite them, but no voluntary adaptation of the great stores of forms, and sounds, and colours for producing them; none of those fine arts, —the results of our knowledge of the relations which certain feelings bear to certain other feelings,—arts which give as much happiness as embellishment to life, and which form so essential a part of our notion of civilization, that a nation of philosophers, if incapable of any of the conceptions and resulting emotions of this kind, would stand some chance of being counted by us, only a better order of reasoning savages.

In no part of our nature is the pure benevolence of Heaven more strikingly conspicuous than in our susceptibility of the emotions of this class. The pleasure which they afford is a pleasure that has no immediate connexion with the means of preservation of our animal existence; and which shows, therefore, though all other proof were absent, that the Deity, who superadded these means of delight, must have had some other object in view, in forming us as we are, than the mere continuance of a race of beings who

* Pleasures of Imagination, book ii. v. 271—277.

were to save the earth from becoming a wilderness. In consequence of these emotions, which have made all nature "beauty to our eye, and music to our ear," it is scarcely possible for us to look around, without feeling either some happiness or some consolation. Sensual pleasures soon pall even upon the profligate, who seeks them in vain in the means which were accustomed to produce them; weary, almost to disgust, of the very pleasures which he seeks, and yet astonished that he does not find them. The labours of severer intellect, if long continued, exhaust the energy which they employ; and we cease, for a time, to be capable of thinking accurately, from the very intentness and accuracy of our thought. The pleasures of taste, however, by their variety of easy delight, are safe from the languor which attends any monotonous or severe occupation, and instead of palling on the mind, they produce in it, with the very delight which is present, a quicker sensibility to future pleasure. Enjoyment springs from enjoyment; and, if we have not some deep wretchedness within, it is scarcely possible for us, with the delightful resources which nature and art present to us, not to be happy as often as we will to be happy. In the beautiful language of a poet, of whose powerful verse I have already frequently availed myself, in illustration of the subjects that have engaged us, nature endows us with all her treasures, if we only will deign to use them.

> Oh blest of Heaven, whom not the languid songs
> Of Luxury the syren, nor the bribes
> Of sordid Wealth, nor all the gaudy spoils
> Of pageant Honour, can seduce to leave
> Those ever-blooming sweets, which, from the store
> Of nature, fair Imagination culls
> To charm the enliven'd soul!—What though not all
> Of mortal offspring can attain the heights
> Of envied life,—though only few possess
> Patrician treasures, or imperial state,
> Yet Nature's care, to all her children just,
> With richer treasures, and an ampler state
> Endows, at large, whatever happy man
> Will deign to use them. *His* the city's pomp,
> The rural honours *his*.—Whate'er adorns
> The princely dome,—the column and the arch,
> The breathing marble, and the sculptured gold,
> Beyond the proud possessor's narrow claim
> His tuneful breast enjoys.—For him the Spring
> Distils her dews, and from the silken gem
> Its lucid leaves unfolds:—for him the hand
> Of Autumn tinges, every fertile branch
> With blooming gold, and blushes like the morn.
> Each passing hour sheds tribute from her wings,
> And still new beauties meet his lonely walks,
> And loves unfelt attract him. Not a breeze
> Flies o'er the meadow,—not a cloud imbibes
> The setting sun's effulgence—not a strain
> From all the tenants of the warbling shade
> Ascends,—but whence his bosom can partake
> Fresh pleasure, unreproved.*

Such is that universal possession of nature which the susceptibility of the emotions of taste conveys to us,—a possession, extending to an infinity of objects, which no earthly power can appropriate, and which enjoys even objects that have been so appropriated, with a possession more delightful than that which they afford, in many cases, to the listless eyes of their proud but discontented master.

After these remarks on that order of our immediate emotions, which do not involve necessarily any moral feeling, I proceed to that other order of the same class, in which some moral feeling is necessarily involved.

The first of these, according to the arrangement formerly submitted to you, are those emotions which constitute, as I conceive, the feelings distinctive of vice and virtue,—emotions that arise on the contemplation of certain actions observed or conceived.

It is not my intention, however, in this part of my course, to enter on the discussion of the great questions connected with the doctrine of obligation, as either presupposed or involved in our consideration of such actions. The moral affections which I consider at present, I consider rather physiologically than ethically, as parts of our mental constitution, not as involving the fulfilment or violation of duties.

In this point of view, even the boldest sceptic, who denies all the grounds of moral obligation, must still allow the existence of the feelings which we are considering, as states or affections of the mind indicative of certain susceptibilities in the mind, of being so affected. Whether we have reason to approve and disapprove, or have no reason whatever, in the nature of their actions, to regard with a different eye those whom, by some strange illusion, but by an illusion only, we now feel ourselves almost necessitated to love or abhor; though it be an error of logic to consider the parricide, who, in preparing to plunge his dagger, could hold his lamp unmoved, and with no other apprehension than of the too early waking of his victim, look fixedly on the pale and gentle features of him, whose very sleep was, at the moment, perhaps, made happy by some dream of happiness to his murderer, as less worthy, even in the slightest respect of our esteem, than the son who rushes to inevitable death in defence of the grey hairs which he honours; though it be not less an error of logic to extend our moral distinctions, and the love or hate which accompanies them, to those who make not a few individuals only, but whole millions wretched or happy; to consider the usurping despot, who dares to be a tyrant, in the land on which he was born a freeman, as a less glorious object of our admiration, than the last assertor of rights which seemed still to exist, while he existed to assert them; who, in that cause which allows no fear of peril, could see nothing in guilty power which a brave man could dread, but every thing which it would be a crime

* Pleasures of Imagination, book iii. v. 568—598.

to obey, and who ennobled with his blood the scaffold from which he rose to liberty and heaven, making it an altar of the richest and most gratifying sacrifice which man can offer, to the great Being whom he serves; even though we should be unfortunate enough to look on the tyrant with the same envy as on his victim, and could see no reason for those distinctive terms of vice and virtue, in the two cases, the force of which we should feel equally, though we had not a word to express the meaning that is constantly in our heart; still the fact of the general approbation and disapprobation, we must admit, even in reserving for ourselves the privilege of indifference. They are phenomena of the mind, to be ranked with the general mental phenomena, as much as our sensations or remembrances,—illusions to be classed with our other illusions,—or truths to be classed with our most important truths.

This distinctive reference would be equally necessary, though our emotions of this kind did not arise immediately from our contemplation of actions, in the very moment in which we contemplate them simply as actions, but from processes of reasoning, and regard to general rules of propriety, formed gradually by attention to the circumstances in which man is placed, and all the good which, in such circumstances, he is capable of feeling or occasioning to others. The vivid distinctive regard, at whatever stage it began, would not the less be an affection of the mind, referable to certain laws, that guide its susceptibilities of emotion; but the truth is, that the moral feeling arises without any consideration, except that of the action itself and its circumstances. The general rules of propriety may, indeed, seem to confirm our suffrage, but the suffrage itself is given before their sanction. The rules themselves are ultimately founded, as Dr. Smith very justly remarks, on these particular emotions: "We do not originally approve or condemn particular actions," to use his words, "because, upon examination, they appear to be agreeable or inconsistent with a certain general rule. The general rule, on the contrary, is formed, by finding, from experience, that all actions of a certain kind, or circumstanced in a certain manner, are approved or disapproved of. To the man who first saw an inhuman murder, committed from avarice, envy, or unjust resentment; and upon one, too, who loved and trusted the murderer, who beheld the last agonies of the dying person, who heard him, with his expiring breath, complain more of the perfidy and ingratitude of his false friend, than of the violence which had been done to him,—there could be no occasion, in order to conceive how horrible such an action was, that he should reflect that one of the most sacred rules of conduct was what prohibited the taking away the life of an innocent person, that this was a plain violation of that rule, and consequently a very blameable action. His detestation of this crime, it is evident, would arise instantaneously and antecedent to his having formed to himself any such general rule. The general rule, on the contrary, which he might afterwards form, would be founded upon the detestation which he felt, necessarily arising in his own breast, at the thought of this, and every other particular action of the same kind."*

Of the universality of these moral emotions, which attend our mere perception of certain actions, or our reasonings on the beneficial or injurious tendency of actions, what more convincing proof can be imagined, than the very permanence of these feelings, in the breast of those whose course of life they are every moment reproaching; who, even when they are false to virtue, are not false to their love of virtue, and whose secret heart, if it could be laid open to those whom they are endeavouring to seduce, and who can listen only to the voice of the lips, would proclaim to them the charms of that innocence which the lips are affecting to deride, and the slavery of that licentiousness which the lips are proclaiming to be the glorious privilege of the free?

"What law of any state," says an eloquent Roman moralist, "has ever ordered the child to love his parents, the parents to love their child, each individual to love himself? It would be not more idle to order us to love virtue, which by its own nature has so many charms, that it is impossible for the wicked to withhold from it their approbation. Who is there that, living amid crimes, and in the practice of every injury which he can inflict on society, does not still wish to obtain some praise of goodness, and cover his very atrocities, if they can by any means be covered, with some veil, however slight, of honourable semblance? No one has so completely shaken off the very character of man, as to wish to be wicked for the mere sake of wickedness. The very robber, who lives by rapine, and who does not hesitate to strike his dagger into the breast of the passenger who has any plunder to repay the stroke, would still rather find what he takes by violence, only because he cannot hope to find it. The most abandoned of human beings, if he could enjoy the wages of guilt without the guilt itself, would not prefer to be guilty. It is no small obligation," he continues, "which we owe to nature, that Virtue reveals her glorious light, not to a few only, but to all mankind. Even those who do not follow her, still see the splendid track along which

* Theory of Moral Sentiments, Part iii. c. 4.

she moves." "Placet suapte natura: adeoque gratiosa virtus est, ut insitum sit etiam malis, probare meliora. Quis est, qui non beneficus videri velit,—qui non, inter scelera et injurias, opinionem bonitatis affectet,—qui non ipsis quae impotentissime fecit, speciem aliquam induat recti? Quod non facerent, nisi illos honesti, et per se expetendi, amor cogeret, moribus suis opinionem contrariam quaerere, et nequitiam abdere, cujus fructus concupiscitur, ipsa vero odio pudoreque est. —Maximum hoc habemus naturae meritum, quod virtus in omnium animos lumen suum permittit: etiam qui non sequuntur, illam vident."*

And it is well, surely, even the most sceptical will admit, that nature, if we are deceived by this delightful vision, does permit us to be deceived by it. Though virtue were only a dream, and all which we admire as fallacious as the imaginary colours which shine upon our slumber in the darkness of the night, who could wish the slumber to be broken, if, instead of the groves of Paradise, and the pure and happy forms that people them, we were to awake in a world in which the moral sunshine was extinguished, and every thing on which we vainly turned our eye were to be only one equal gloom? Though the libertine should have hardihood enough to shake, or at least to try to shake, from his own mind, every feeling of moral admiration or abhorrence, he still could not wish, that others, among whom he is to live, should be as free as himself. For his own profit he would wish all others to be virtuous, himself the single exception; and what would profit each individually, must profit all. If he were rich, he could not wish the multitude that surrounded him to approve of the rapine which would strip him of all the sources of his few miserable enjoyments, and to approve, too, perhaps, of murder, as the shortest mode of separating him from his possessions; if he were in want, he could not wish those, whose charity he was forced to solicit, to see in charity nothing but a foolish mode of voluntarily abridging their own means of selfish luxury; if he were condemned for some offence to the prison or the gibbet, he would not wish mercy to be regarded as a word without meaning. What noble and irresistible evidence is this of the excellence of virtue, even in its worldly and temporary advantages, that, if all men were, what all individually would wish them to be, there would not be a single crime to pollute the earth!

When we reflect how many temptations there are to the multitudes who live together in social society,—temptations that, wherever they look around them, would lead them, if they had not been rendered capable of moral affections, as much as of their sentient enjoyments and passions, to seek the attainment of the objects within their view, and almost within their reach, and to seek it as readily by force or by falsehood, as by that patient industry which could not fail to seem to them more tedious, and therefore less worthy of their prudent choice; when we think of all the temptations of all these objects, and the facilities of attaining them by violence or deceit, and yet observe the security with which man in society spreads out his enjoyments, as it were to the view of others, and delights in the number of the gazers and enviers that are attracted by them, it is truly as beautiful as it is astonishing, to think of the simple means on which so much security depends. The laws which men have found it expedient, for their common interest, to make and to enforce, are, indeed, the obvious pieces of machinery by which this great result is brought about. But how much of its motion depends on springs that are scarcely regarded by those who look only to the exterior wheels, as they perform their rotation in beautiful regularity! The grosser measures of fraud or force may be prevented by enactments, that attach to those measures of fraud or force a punishment, the risk of which would render the attempt too perilous to obtain for it the approbation even of selfish prudence. But what innumerable actions are there, over which the laws, that cannot extend to the secret thoughts of man, or to half the possibilities of human action, must have as little control as it is in our power physically to exercise over the unseen and unsuspected elements of future storms, which, long before the whirlwind has begun, are preparing that desolation which it is afterwards to produce. The force of open violence the laws may check; but they cannot check the still more powerful force of seduction,—the frauds of mere persuasion, which are never to be known to be frauds but by the conscience of the deceiver, and which may be said to steal the very assent of the unsuspecting mind, as they afterwards steal the wealth, or the worldly honours, or voluptuous enjoyments, for which that assent was necessary. It is in these circumstances that He who formed and protects us, has provided a check for that injustice which is beyond the restraining power of man, and has produced, what the whole united strength of nations could not produce,—by a few simple feelings,—a check and control as mighty as it is silent and invisible,—which he has placed within the mind of the very criminal himself, where it would most be needed; or rather in the mind of him who, but for these feelings, would have been a criminal, and who, with them, is virtuous and happy. The voice

* Seneca de Beneficiis, lib. iv. c. 17.

within, which approves or disapproves,—long before action, and before even the very wish, that would lead to action, can be said to be fully formed,—has in it a restraining force more powerful than a thousand gibbets; and it is accompanied with the certainty, that, in every breast around, there is a similar voice, that would join its dreadful award to that which would be for ever felt within. The feelings of moral approbation and disapprobation are thus at once the security of virtue and its avengers; its security in the happiness that is felt, and the happiness that is promised to every future year and hour of virtuous remembrance; its avengers in that long period of earthly punishment when its guilty injurer is to read in every eye that gazes on him, the reproach which is to be for ever sounding on his heart.

I have already said, however, that it is merely as a part of our mental constitution that I at present speak of our distinctive feelings of the moral differences of actions; as states or affections, or phenomena of the mind, and nothing more. The further illustration of them, in their most important light, as principles of conduct, I reserve for our future discussions of the nature and obligation of virtue.

The moral emotions, to which I next proceed, are those of love and hate,—words which, as general terms, comprehend a great variety of affections, that have different names, according to their own intensity, and the notion which they involve of the qualities on which the love is founded, as when we speak of love or affection simply, or of regard, esteem, respect, veneration, and which have different names also, according to the objects to which they are directed, as love, friendship, patriotism, devotion, to which, or at least to far the greater part of which, there are corresponding terms of the varieties of the opposite emotion of hatred, which I need not waste your time with attempting to enumerate. Indeed, if we were to compare the two vocabularies of love and hate, I fear that we should find rather a mortifying proof of our disposition to discover imperfections, more readily than the better qualities, since we are still richer in terms of contempt and dislike than in terms of admiration and reverence.

The analysis of love, as a complex feeling, presents to us always at least two elements,—a vivid delight in the contemplation of the object, and a desire of good to that object. To love, then, it is essential that there should be some quality in the object which is capable of giving pleasure, since love, which is the consequence of this, is itself a pleasurable emotion. There is a feeling of beauty, external, moral, or intellectual, which affords the primary delight of loving, and continues to mingle with the kind desire which it has produced. In this sense, indeed, but in this sense only, the most disinterested love is selfish, though it is a sense in which selfishness may be said to be as little sordid as the most generous sacrifices which virtue can make. It loves, not because delight is to be felt in loving, but because it has been impressed with qualities which nature has rendered it impossible to view without delight. It must therefore have felt that delight which arises from the contemplation of objects worthy of being loved; yet the delight thus felt has not been valued for itself, but as indicative, like some sweet voice of nature, of those qualities to which affection may be safely given. Though we cannot, then, when there is no interfering passion, think of the virtues of others without pleasure, and must, therefore, in loving virtue, love what is by its own nature pleasing, the love of the virtue which cannot exist without the pleasure, is surely an affection very different from the love of the mere pleasure existing, if it had been possible for it to exist, without the virtue,—a pleasure that accompanies the virtue only as the soft or brilliant colouring of nature flows from the great orb above,—a gentle radiance, that is delightful to our eyes, indeed, and to our heart, but which leads our eye upward to the splendid source from which it flows, and our heart, still higher, to that Being by whom the sun was made.

The distinction of the love of that which is pleasing, but which is loved only for those intrinsic qualities which the pleasure accompanies, and of the love of mere pleasure, without any regard to the qualities which excite it, is surely a very obvious one; and it is not more obvious, as thus defined, than in the heart of the virtuous,—in the generous friendships which he feels, and the generous sacrifices to which he readily submits. If, as is sometimes strangely contended, the love that animates such a heart be selfishness, it must be allowed, at least, that it is a selfishness which, for the sake of others, can often prefer penury to wealth,—which can hang, for many sleepless nights, unwearied and unconscious of any personal fear, over the bed of contagion,—which can enter the dungeon, a voluntary prisoner, without the power even of giving any other comfort than that of the mere presence of an object beloved, or fling itself before the dagger which would pierce another breast, and rejoice in receiving the stroke. It is the selfishness which thinks not of itself—the selfishness of all that is generous and heroic in man—I would almost say, the selfishness which is most divine in God.

Obvious as the distinction is, however, it has not been made by many philosophers, or, at least, by many writers who assume that honourable name; the superficial but dazzl-

ing lovers of paradox, who prefer to truths that seem too simple to stand in need of defence, any errors, if only they be errors, that can be defended with ingenuity; though, in the present case, even this small praise of ingenuity scarcely can be allowed; and the errors which would seduce men into the belief of general selfishness, from which their nature shrinks, are fortunately as revolting to our understanding as they are to our heart. The fuller discussion of these, however, I defer, till that part of the course which treats of virtue as a system of conduct. At present, I merely point out to you the fallacy which has arisen ftom the pleasing nature of the emotions in which love consists, or which precede love, as if the pleasure in which love is necessarily presupposed were itself all to which the love owes its rise, and for the direct sake of which the love itself is felt.

I may remark, however, even now, the unfortunate effect of the poverty of our language in aiding the illusion. The word selfishness, or at least, self-love, has various meanings, some of which imply nothing that is reprehensible, while, in other senses, it is highly so. It may mean either the satisfaction which we feel in our own enjoyment, which, when there is no duty violated, is far from being, even in the slightest degree, unworthy of the purest mind; or it means that exclusive regard to our own pleasures, at the expense of the happiness of others, which is as degrading to the individual as it is pernicious to society. All men, it may indeed be allowed, are selfish, in the first of these meanings of the term; but this is only one meaning of a word, which has also a very different sense. The difference, however, is afterwards forgotten by us, because the same term is used; and we ascribe to self-love in the one sense what is true of it only in the other.

Much of the obscurity and confusion of the moral system of Pope, in his Essay on Man, arises from this occasional transition from one of the senses of the term to the other, without perceiving that a transition has been made. It is impossible to read some of the most beautiful passages of that poem, without feeling the wish that we had some term to express the first of these senses, without any possibility of the suggestion of the other. It is not self-love, for example, which gives us to make our neighbour's blessing ours; it scarcely even can be called self-love which first stirs the peaceful mind —it is simply pleasure; and the enjoyment may or must accompany all the delightful progress of our moral affections; it is not any self-love, reflecting on the enjoyments that are thus to be obtained.

Self-love but serves the virtuous mind to wake,
As the small pebble stirs the peaceful lake;
The centre moved, a circle straight succeeds;
Another still, and still another spreads:
Friend, parent, neighbour, first it will embrace,
His country next, and next all human race.
Wide and more wide—the o'erflowings of the mind
Take every creature in of every kind.
Earth smiles around, with boundless bounty blest,
And Heaven beholds its image in his breast.*

In all these cases there is a diffusion of love indeed, but not of self-love,—a pleasure attending in every stage the progressive benevolence, but attending it only, not producing it; and without which, if it were possible for benevolence to exist without delight, it would still, as before, be the directing spirit of every generous breast.

LECTURE LX.

I. IMMEDIATE EMOTIONS, IN WHICH SOME MORAL FEELING IS NECESSARILY INVOLVED. —2. LOVE, HATE, CONTINUED.—RELATIONS WHICH THEY BEAR TO THE HAPPINESS OF MAN, AND TO THE BENEVOLENCE OF GOD.

In my last Lecture, Gentlemen, I began the consideration of that order of our emotions in which some moral relation is involved; and considered, in the first place, those vivid feelings which arise in the mind on the contemplation of virtuous or vicious actions, and which, as we shall afterwards find, are truly all that distinguish these actions to our moral regard, as vice or virtue. At present, however, they are not considered by us ethically, in their relation to conduct,—for in this light they are to be reviewed by us afterwards,—but merely as mental phenomena—feelings or affections indicative of certain susceptibilities in the mind of being thus affected.

Next to these, in our arrangement, are the emotions of love and hatred; to the consideration of which, therefore, I proceeded. The remarks which I made were chiefly illustrative of a distinction which is of great importance in the theory of morals, with respect to the pleasure excited by the objects of our regard, —a pleasure which is indeed inseparable from the regard, and without which therefore, of course, no regard can be felt, but which is not itself the cause or object of the affection. My wish, in these remarks, was to guard you against the sophistry of many philosophers, who seem to think that they have shown man to be necessarily selfish, merely by showing that it is delightful for him to love those whom it is virtue to love, and whom it would have been impossible for him not to love, even though no happiness had attended the affection; as it is impossible for him not to

* Ep. iv. v. 363—372.

despise or dislike the mean and the profligate, though no pleasure attends the contemplation. A little attention to this opposite class of feelings, which are not more essential to our nature than the others, might have been sufficient to show that the delight of loving is not the cause of love. We despise, without any pleasure in despising, certainly, at least, not on account of any pleasure that can be imagined to be felt in despising. We love, in like manner, not for the pleasure of loving, but on account of the qualities which it is at once delightful for us to love, and impossible for us not to love. We cannot feel the pleasure of loving, unless we have previously begun to love; and it is surely as absurd an error, in this as in any other branch of physics, to ascribe to that which is second in a progressive scale, the production of that very primary cause of which itself is the result.

The pleasure which accompanies the benevolent affections, that has been thus most strangely converted into the cause of those very benevolent affections which it necessarily presupposes, is a convincing proof how much the happiness of his creatures must have been in the contemplation of him who thus adapted their nature as much to the production of good as to the enjoyment of it. We are formed to be malevolent in certain circumstances, as in other circumstances we are formed to be benevolent; but we are not formed to have equal enjoyment in both. The benevolent affections, of course, lead to the actions by which happiness is directly diffused; there is no moment at which they may not operate with advantage to society; and the more constant their operation and the more widely spread, the greater, consequently, is the result of social good. The Deity, therefore, has not merely rendered us susceptible of these affections; he has made the continuance of them delightful, that we may not not merely indulge them, but dwell in the indulgence.

> Thus hath God,
> Still looking to his own high purpose, fix'd
> The virtues of his creatures; thus he rules
> The parent's fondness and the patriot's zeal,
> Thus the warm sense of honour and of shame,
> The vows of gratitude, the faith of love,
> The joy of human life, the earthly Heaven.
> *Akenside.*

The moral affections which lead to the infliction of evil, are occasionally as necessary as the benevolent affections. If vice exist, it must be loathed by us, or we may learn to imitate it. If an individual have injured another individual, there must be indignation to feel the wrong which has been done, and a zeal to avenge it. The malevolent affections, then, are evidently a part of virtue as long as vice exists; but they are necessary only for the occasional purposes of nature, not for her general and permanent interest in our welfare. If all men were uniformly benevolent, the earth, indeed, might exhibit an appearance, on the contemplation of which it would be delightful to dwell. But a world of beings universally and permanently hating and hated, is a world that fortunately could not exist long; and that, while it existed, could be only a place of torture, in which crimes were every moment punished and every moment renewed; or rather, in which crimes, and the mental punishment of crimes, were mingled in one dreadful confusion.

In such circumstances, what is it which we may conceive to be the plan of Divine Goodness? It is that very plan which we see at present executed in our moral constitution. We are made capable of a malevolence that may be said to be virtuous when it operates; for the terror of injustice, that otherwise would walk, not in darkness, through the world, but in open light, perpetrating its iniquities without shame or remorse, and perpetrating them with impunity. But, that even this virtuous malevolence may not outlast the necessity for it, it is made painful for us to be malevolent even in this best sense. We require to warm our mind with the repeated image of every thing which has been suffered by the good, or of every thing which the good would suffer in consequence of the impunity of the wicked, before we can bring ourselves to feel delight in the punishment even of the most wicked, at least when the insolence of power and impunity is gone, and the offender is trembling at the feet of those whom he had injured. There are gentle feelings of mercy that continually rise upon the heart in such a case, feelings that check even the pure and sacred resentment of indignation itself, and make rigid justice an effort, and perhaps one of the most painful efforts, of virtue.

"To love, is to enjoy," it has been said; "to hate, is to suffer;" and, in conformity with this remark, the same writer observes, that "though it may not be always unjust, it must be always absurd to hate for any length of time, since it is to give him whom we hate the advantage of occupying us with a painful feeling. Of two enemies, therefore, which is the more unhappy? He, we may always answer, whose hatred is the greater. The mere remembrance of his enemy is an incessant uneasiness and agitation; and he endures, in his long enmity, far more pain than he wishes to inflict."

The annexation of pain to the emotions that would lead to the infliction of pain is, as I have said, a very striking proof, that he who formed man did not intend him for purposes of malignity,—as the delight, attached to all our benevolent emotions, may be considered as a positive proof that it was for purposes of benevolence that man was formed,—purposes which make every generous

exertion more delightful to the active mind itself than to the individual whose happiness it might have seemed exclusively to promote. By this double influence of every tender affection, as it flows from breast to breast, there is, even in the simplest offices of regard, a continual multiplication of pleasure, when the sole result is joy; and, even when the social kindnesses of life do lead to sorrow, they lead to a sorrow which is so tempered with a gentle delight, that the whole mingled emotion has a tenderness which the heart would be unwilling to relinquish, if it were absolute indifference that was to be given in exchange.

> Who that bears
> A human bosom, hath not often felt
> How dear are all those ties, which bind our race
> In gentleness together, and how sweet
> Their force, let Fortune's wayward hand the while
> Be kind or cruel? Ask the faithful youth,
> Why the cold urn of her whom long he lov'd,
> So often fills his arms, so often draws
> His lonely footsteps, silent and unseen,
> To pay the mournful tribute of his tears?
> O! he will tell thee, that the wealth of worlds
> Should ne'er seduce his bosom to forego
> Those sacred hours, when, stealing from the noise
> Of care and envy, sweet remembrance soothes,
> With virtue's kindest looks, his aching breast,
> And turns his tears to rapture.*

Such, then, are the comparative influences on our happiness and misery, of the emotions of love and hatred; and it cannot, after such a comparison, seem wonderful, that we should cling to the one of these orders of emotions, almost with the avidity with which we cling to life. It is affection in some of its forms which, if I may use so bold a phrase, animates even life itself, that, without it, scarcely could be worthy of the name. He who is without affection may exist, indeed, in a populous city, with crowds around him wherever he may chance to turn; but even there, he lives in a desert, or he lives only among statues that move and speak, but are incapable of saying any thing to his heart. How pathetically, and almost how sublimely, does one of the female saints of the Romish Church express the importance of affection to happiness, when, in speaking of the great enemy of mankind, whose situation might seem to present so many other conceptions of misery, she singles out this one circumstance, and she says, "How sad is the state of that being condemned to love nothing!" "If we had been destined to live abandoned to ourselves, on Mount Caucasus, or in the deserts of Africa," says Barthelemi, "perhaps nature would have denied us a feeling heart; but, if she had given us one, rather than love nothing that heart would have tamed tygers end animated rocks."† This, indeed, I may remark, strong as the expression of Barthelami may seem, is no more than what man truly does. So susceptible is he of kind affection, that he does animate with his regard the very rocks, if only they are rocks that have been long familiar to him. The single survivor of a shipwreck, who has spent many dreary years on some island, of which he has been the only human inhabitant, will, in the rapture of deliverance, when he ascends the vessel that is to restore him to society and his country, feel, perhaps, no grief mingling with a joy so overwhelming. But, when the overwhelming emotion has in part subsided, and when he sees the island dimly fading from his view, there will be a feeling of grief, that will overcome, for the moment, even the tumultuous joy. The thought that he is never to see again that cave which was so long his home, and that shore which he has so often trod, will rise so sadly to his mind, that it will be to him, before reflection, almost like a momentary wish that he were again in that very loneliness, from which to be freed, seemed to him before, like resurrection from the tomb. He has not tamed tygers, indeed, but he will find, in his waking remembrances, and in his dreams, that he has animated rocks, that his heart has not been idle, even when it had no kindred object to occupy it, and that his cave has not been a mere place of shelter, but a friend.

"If," says the author of Anacharsis, "we were told, that two strangers, cast by chance on a desert island, had formed a union of regard, the charms of which were a full compensation to them for all the rest of the universe which they had lost; if we were told, that there existed anywhere a single family, occupied solely in strengthening the ties of blood with the ties of friendship; if we were told, that there existed in any corner of the earth, a people who knew no other law than that of loving each other, no other crime than that of not loving each other sufficiently, who is there among us that could dare to pity the fate of the two strangers, that would not wish to belong to the family of friends, that would not fly to the climate of that happy people? O mortals, ignorant and unworthy of your destiny," he continues, "it is not necessary for you to cross the seas to discover the happiness. It may exist in every condition, in every time, in every place, in you, around you, wherever benevolence is felt."‡

After these remarks, on the emotions of love and hatred in general, it will not be necessary to prosecute the investigation of them with any minuteness, at least through all their varieties. The emotions, indeed, though classed together under the general name of love, are of many varieties; but the

* Pleasures of Imagination, second form of the poem, book ii. v. 609—624.

† Voyage de Jeune Anacharsis, chap. lxxviii.

‡ Voyage du Jeune Anacharsis, chap. lxxviii.

difference is a difference of feeling too simple to be made the subject of descriptive definition. I have already, in my general analysis of the emotion, stated its two great elements, —a vivid pleasure in the contemplation of the object of regard, and a desire of the happiness of that object; and in the contemplation of various objects, the pleasure may be as different in quality as the corresponding desire is different in degree. The love which we feel for a near relation, may not then, in our maturer years, be exactly the same emotion as that which we feel for a friend; the love which we feel for one relation or friend of one character, not exactly the same as the love which we feel for another relation perhaps of the same degree of propinquity, or for another friend of a different character; yet, if we were to attempt to state these differences in words, we might make them a little more obscure, but we could not make them more intelligible.

I shall not attempt, therefore, to define what is really indefinable. The love which we feel for our parents, our friends, our country, is known better by these mere phrases, than by any description of the variety of the feelings themselves; as the difference of what we mean by the sweetness of honey and the sweetness of sugar is known better by these mere names of the particular substances which excite the feelings, than by any description of the difference of the sweetnesses; or rather, in the one way it is capable of being made known to those who have ever tasted the two substances; in the other way, no words which human art could employ, if the substances themselves are not named, would be able to make known the distinctive shades. Who is there who could describe to another the sensations of smell which he receives from a rose, a violet, a sprig of jessamine, or of honeysuckle, though, in using these names, I have already conveyed to your mind a complete notion of this very difference?

It is not my intention, then, to give you any description of the varieties of emotion, comprehended under the general terms of love and hate, or, to speak more accurately, it is not in my power. To your own mind, the greater number of these must already be sufficiently familiar. A few very brief remarks on the general guardianship of affection, under which man is placed, and on the happiness of which it is productive, are all which I shall attempt to offer to you.

The helplessness of man at birth, and for the first years of life, is what must have powerfully impressed every one, however unapt to moralize on the contrasts of the present, and the past, and the future; those contrasts which nature is incessantly exhibiting, not more strikingly, in what we term the accidents of individual fortune, or the dreadful revolutions of nations, which occur only at distant intervals, than in the phenomena which form the regular display of her power in every generation of mankind, and every individual of every generation. That glorious animal who is to rule all other animals, to invade their deepest recesses, to drive the most ferocious from their dens, and to make the strength of the strongest only an instrument of more complete subjection, what is he at his birth? A creature that seems incapable of any thing but of tears and cries, as Pliny so forcibly pictures him in a few words, "*Flens animal caeteris imperaturum.*"* If we were to consider him, as abandoned to himself, we might indeed say, to use a still stronger phrase of Cicero, that man is born not of a mother, but of a stepmother. "Hominem, non ut a matre sed a noverca natum, corpore *rudi*, fragili et infirmo, animo autem anxio ad molestias, in quo tamen inesset obrutus quidam divinus ignis." Is the divine spark, which seems scarcely to gleam through that feeble frame, to be quenched in it for ever? It is feebleness, indeed, which we behold: but the creator of that which seems so feeble, was the Omnipotent. That Power, which is omnipotent to bless, has thrown no helpless outcast on the world. Before it brought him into existence, it provided what was to be strength, and more than strength, to the weakness which was to be intrusted to the ready protection. There are beings, who love him, before their eyes have seen what they love, who expect, with all the affection of long intimacy, or rather with an affection, to which that of the most cordial friendship is indifference and coldness, that unsuspecting object of their regard, who is to receive their cares, without knowing of whom they are the cares; but who is to reward every labour and anxiety, by the mere smile, that almost unconsciously answers their smile, or the unintentional caress, to which their love is to affix so tender a meaning. How beautiful is the arrangement, which has thus adapted to each other, the feebleness of the weak, and the fondness of the strong, in which the happiness of those who require protection, and of those who are able to give protection, is equally secured; and man, deriving from his early wants the social affections, which afterwards bind him to his race, is made the most powerful of earthly beings, by that very imbecility, which seemed to mark him as born only to suffer and to perish!

The suddenness of the change which at this interesting period takes place, in many instances, in the whole character and mode of conduct of the mother, is as remarkable as the force of the fondness itself. The affec-

* Lib. vii. proœm.

tion which the child requires, is not an affection of a passive sort; it is one which must watch and endure fatigues, and the privation of many accustomed pleasures. But nature, who, in adaptation to the wants of the new animated being, has provided for it the food best suited for its little frame, by a change in the very bodily functions of the mother, has provided equally for that corresponding change which is necessary in the maternal mind. "How common is it," says Dr. Reid, "to see a young woman, in the gayest period of life, who has spent her days in mirth, and her nights in profound sleep, without solicitude or care, all at once transformed into the careful, the solicitous, the watchful nurse of her dear infant; doing nothing by day but gazing upon it, and serving it in the meanest offices; by night, depriving herself of sound sleep for months, that it may lie safe in her arms. Forgetful of herself, her whole care is centred in this little object. Such a sudden transformation of her whole habits, and occupation, and turn of mind, if we did not see it every day, would appear a more wonderful metamorphosis than any that Ovid has described."*

Such is that species of love which constitutes parental affection,—an affection, however, that is not to fade with the wants to which it was so necessary; but is to extend its regard, with delightful reciprocities of kindness, over the whole life of its object; or rather, is not to terminate with this mortal life, but only to begin then a new series of wishes, that extend themselves through immortality. Affection is not a task that finishes, when the work which it was to accomplish is done. The dead body of their child, over which the parents bend in anguish, is not to them a release from cares imposed on them. It awakes in them, love not less, but more vivid. It speaks to them of him who still exists to their remembrances, and their hopes of future meeting, as he existed before, to all the happiness of mutual presence. On their own bed of death, if he is the survivor, they have still some anxieties, even of this earth, for him. They look with devout confidence to that God, who is the happiness of those who are admitted, after the toils of life, to his divine presence; but they look to him also, as the happiness of those, whose earthly career is not yet accomplished; the averter of perils, to which they can no longer be exposed; the source of consolation in griefs, which they can no longer feel. The heaven of which they think, is not the heaven that is at the moment at which they ascend to it, but the heaven which is to be, when at least one other inhabitant is added to it.

These are the delightful emotions of parental regard, which far more than repay every parental anxiety. But does the child enjoy their protecting influence without any return of love? His little heart,—the heart of him who is perhaps afterwards to have the same parental feelings, is not so cold and insensible. His love, indeed, has not the intensity of interest, far less the reasoning foresight, which distinguishes the zealous fondness of that unwearied guardianship on which he depends. But it is a reflection from the same blessed sunshine to his own delighted bosom. It is this which, in childhood, makes even obedience,—the most powerful, perhaps, of all things, when the reason of the command is not known,—almost as delightful as the freedom which is restrained; and which, in maturer life, continues a reverence, which the proud mind of man refuses to every other created being. It is to the feeling of this sacred and paramount regard, that we are to trace the peculiar horror attached in every nation to parricide. Murder, indeed, in every form, is horrible to our conception; but the murder of a parent is a crime, of which we mark the occurrence with the same astonishment with which we mark and record some fearful prodigy of nature.

The fraternal affection is, in truth, in its origin, only another form of that general susceptibility of friendship with which nature has endowed us. We cannot live long with any one, in the constant interchange of social offices, without forming an attachment, which is altogether independent of the expectation of the benefits that may arise from a continuance of the intercourse; and what we feel for every other playmate, with whom we meet only occasionally, must surely be felt still more for those who have partaken almost of every pleasure which we have enjoyed since we entered into life, and who, in all the little adventures, of years that have relatively, as many, or even more important incidents, than the years which are occupied only with a few great projects, have been the companions of our toils, and perils, and successes. In the case of fraternal friendship, too, there is the strong additional circumstance, that, in loving a brother, we love one who is dear to those to whom our liveliest affections have been already given. We cannot love a friend without taking some interest in whatever may befall the friends of our friends; and we cannot love our parents, therefore, without feeling some additional sympathy with those whose happiness we know would be happiness to them, and whose distresses misery. This reflection from our filial fondness, however, is but a circumstance in addition; the great source of the fraternal regard, as I have already said, is in that general susceptibility of our nature, to which we owe all our friendships; that susceptibi-

* On the Active Powers, Essay iii. c. 4.

lity which has made brothers of mankind, at least of all the nobler individuals of mankind, though their common passions might seem to oppose them in endless rivalries. The same affection which, in the nursery, attracted its two little inhabitants, to look on the same objects, to mix in the same sports, to form the same plans,—not indeed for the next year or month, but for the next hour or minute, is that which, in a different period of life, augments, and perpetuates, and extends to others, the same feelings of social regard,—a regard which,

> Push'd to social, to divine,
> Gives thee to make thy neighbour's blessing thine.
> Is this too little for thy boundless heart?
> Extend it—let thy enemies have part.
> Grasp the whole worlds of reason, life, and sense,
> In one close system of benevolence:—
> Happier as kinder, in whate'er degree,
> And height of *bliss*, but height of charity.*

Such is man, the parent, the child, the brother, the citizen, the member of the great community of all who live. There is still another aspect, however, in which our susceptibilities of the emotions of love may be considered; and that which has, in common language, almost absorbed the name,—the affection which the sexes bear to each other,—an affection on which, in its mere physical relation to the preservation of the species, all our other emotions may be said indirectly to depend, and of which the moral relations that alone are to be considered by us, are as powerful in their influence on the conduct, as they are general in their empire, and not more productive of hope or misery, than they are of virtue or of vice.

In considering the influences of this relation on human happiness, we are not to have regard merely to those emotions which are excited in the individuals who feel that exclusive delight in each other's society, and that reciprocal admiration and confidence, the charm of which constitutes the moral part of what is called love. These feelings, indeed, are truly valuable in themselves, as a part of the happiness of the world, and would still be most valuable, even though no other beneficial influence were to flow from them. But, precious as they are in this respect, we are not to regard them as extending only to the individuals themselves, and beginning and ceasing with their enjoyments. The chief value of this relation is diffused over all mankind. It is to be traced in that character of refinement which it has given to society, and with which love extends its delightful and humanizing influence, even to those who may pass through life, without feeling its more direct and immediate charms. It is, in this respect, like that sunshine, which even the blind enjoy, in the warmth which it produces, though they are incapable of distinguishing the light from which it flows.

The system of gentler manners once produced in this way, may diffuse the influence in a great degree without a renewal of the cause which gave rise to it; and yet, even at present, when men live long together without much intercourse with the gentler sex, we are soon able to discover some proof of the absence of that influence which is not necessary only for raising man from savage life, but for saving him from relapsing into it.

That the female character, however, may have its just influence, it is necessary that the female character should be respected. When woman is valued only as subservient to the animal pleasures of man, or to the multiplication of his race, there may be as much fondness as is involved in sensual profligacy, there might be a dreadful mixture of momentary tenderness with habitual tyranny and servility; but this is not love, and therefore not the moral influence of love—not that equal and reciprocal communication of sentiments and wishes,

> When thought meets thought, ere from the lips it start,
> And each warm wish springs mutual from the heart.
> *Pope.*

"The empire of women," says an eloquent foreigner, "is not theirs because men have willed it, but because it is the will of nature. Miserable must be the age in which this empire is lost, and in which the judgments of women are counted as nothing by man. Every people in the ancient world that can be said to have had morals has respected the sex—Sparta, Germany, Rome. At Rome, the exploits of the victorious generals were honoured by the grateful voices of the women; on every general calamity their tears were a public offering to the gods. In either case, their vows and their sorrows were thus consecrated as the most solemn judgments of the state. It is to them that all the great revolutions of the republic are to be traced. By a woman Rome acquired liberty; by a woman the Plebeians acquired the consulate; by a woman, finished the decemviral tyranny; by women, when the city was trembling with a vindictive exile at its gates, it was saved from that destruction which no other influence could avert. To our eyes, indeed, accustomed to find in every thing some cause or pretence for mockery, a procession of this sort might seem to present only a subject of derision; and, in the altered state of manners of our capitals, some cause of such a feeling might perhaps truly be found in the different aspect of the procession itself. But compose it of Roman women, and you will have the eyes of every Volscian, and the heart of Coriolanus."†

* Essay on Man, Ep. iv. v. 353—360.

† Rousseau.

In the whole progress of life in its permanent connexions, and even in the casual intercourse of society, so much of conduct must have relation to the other sex, and be regulated in a great measure by the views which we have been led to form with respect to them, that there is scarcely a subject on which just views seem to me of so much importance to a young and ingenuous mind. In such a mind, a respect for the excellencies of woman is, in its practical consequences, almost another form of respect for virtue itself.

In estimating the character of the other sex, we are too apt to measure ourselves with them only in those respects in which we arrogate an indisputable superiority, and to forget the circumstances from which chiefly that superiority is derived, if even there be as great a superiority as we suppose, in the respects in which we may, perhaps falsely, lay claim to it. We think, in such an estimate, not so much of the peculiar merits which they possess, as of peculiar merits which we flatter ourselves with the belief of possessing. We forget those tender virtues, which are so lovely in themselves, and to which we owe half the virtue of which we boast. We forget the compassion, which is so ready to sooth our sorrows, and without which, perhaps, to awaken and direct our pity to others, we should scarcely have known that the relief of misery was one of our duties, or rather one of the noblest privileges of our nature. We forget the patience, which bears so well every grief but those which ourselves occasion, and which feels these deepest sorrows with intenser suffering, only from that value, above all other possessions, which is attached to our regard. We forget those intellectual graces, which are the chief embellishment of our life, and which, shedding over it at once a gaiety and a tenderness, which nothing else could diffuse, soften down the asperities of our harsher intellect. But, forgetting all these excellencies which are the excellencies of others, we are far from forgetting the scholastic acquisitions of languages or science, which seem to us doubly important, because they are our own,—acquisitions, that, in some distinguished instances, indeed, may confer glory on the nature that is capable of them, but that, in many cases, leave no other effect on the mind than a pride of sex, which the inadequacy of these supposed means of paramount distinction, should rather have converted into respect for those who, almost without study, or at least with far humbler opportunities, have learned from their own hearts what is virtuous, and from their own genius whatever is most important to be known.

Even with respect to those studies, which we have reserved almost as an exclusive privilege of our sex, we should remember, that the privation, on the part of woman, is a sacrifice that is made to a system of general manners, which, whether truly essential or not, we have at least chosen to regard as essential to our happiness. We impose on them duties that are, perhaps, incompatible with severe study; we require of them the highest excellence in many elegant arts, to excel in which, if we too were to attempt it, would be the labour of half our life; we require of them even the charm of a sort of delicate ignorance, as if ignorance itself were a grace; and then, with most inconsistent severity, we affect to regard them with contempt, because they have fulfilled the very duties imposed on them, and have charmed us with all the excellencies, and perhaps, too, with some of the defects, which we required. If they err, in being as ignorant of the choral prosody of the Greeks, and of the fluxionary calculus of the moderns, as the greater number even of the well-educated of our own sex, let us at least allow them the privilege of speaking of anapests and infinitesimals, without forfeiting our regard,—before we smile at ignorance which ourselves have produced, and which, if we could remove with a wish, there are few, perhaps, even of those who affect to despise it, who would not tremble at the comparative light in which they would themselves have to appear.

In the course of your life, you must often mingle with the frivolous of our own sex, who, knowing little more, know at least, and can repeat, as their only literature, some of the trite traditionary sarcasms which have been tediously repeated against women,—though they have had no difficulty in forgetting the far more numerous sarcasms which even men have pointed against the vices of men. But, though minds, which women would despise and blush to resemble, may speak contemptuously of excellence which they cannot hope to equal,—it is only from the contemptible, in such a case, that you will hear the expression of contempt; and the real or affected disdain of such minds is, perhaps, not less glorious to the character of the sex which they deride, than the respect which that character never fails to obtain, from those who are alone qualified to appreciate it, and whose admiration alone is honour.

To the dissolute, indeed, who are fond of associating with the lowest of the sex, and who, in their conception of female excellence, can form no brighter pictures in their mind, than of the inmates of a brothel, or of those whom a brothel might admit as its inmates,—woman may seem a being like themselves, and be a subject of insulting mockery in the coarse laughter and drunkenness of the feast; but the mockery, in such a case, is descrip-

tive of the life and habits of the deriders, more than of the derided. It is not so much the expression of contempt as the confession of vice.

The respect which he feels for the virtues of woman, may thus be considered almost as a test of the virtues of man. He is, and must be, in a great measure, what he wishes the companions of his domestic hours to be —noble, if he wish them to be dignified— frivolous, if he wish them to be triflers— and far more abject than the victims of his capricious favour, if, with the power of enjoying their free and lasting affection, he would yet sacrifice whatever love has most delightful, and condemn them to a slavery of the dismal and dreary influence, of which he is himself to be the slave.

LECTURE LXI.

1. IMMEDIATE EMOTIONS, INVOLVING NECESSARILY SOME MORAL FEELING.—2. LOVE AND HATE, CONCLUDED.—3. SYMPATHY WITH THE HAPPINESS AND SORROW OF OTHERS.

In my last Lecture, Gentlemen, I considered the various affections comprehended under the general names of love and hatred, both with respect to their nature as emotions, and to the relations which they bear to the happiness of man, and consequently to the provident benevolence of that mighty being who has created us to be happy,—who, in rendering us susceptible of these opposite emotions, has not merely blessed us, but protected also the very blessings which he gave, bestowing on us the kind affections, as the source of our enjoyment, and the affections of hatred, as our security against aggression.

Of the benevolent affections, in the first place, we saw how largely they contribute to happiness, by the pleasure which they directly yield, and, still more, by the pleasure which they diffuse over every other enjoyment, or with which they temper even affliction itself, till it almost cease to be an evil. The most sensual, who despise the pleasures of the understanding, and those delights, which have been so truly called "the luxury of doing good," must still, in their petty luxuries, have an affection of some sort, or at least the semblance of affection, to diffuse over their indulgences, the chief part of the little pleasure which they seem to yield. To give a taste to their costly food, they must collect smiles around the table, even though there be at the heart a sad conviction, that the smiles are only the mimicry of kindness. So essential, however, is kindness to happiness, that even this very mimicry of it is more than can be abandoned; and, if all the gay faces of the guests around the festive board could, in an instant, be converted into statues, in that very instant, the delight of him who spread the magnificence for the eyes of others, and caught a sort of shadowy gaiety from that cheerfulness, which had at least the appearance of social regard, would cease, as if he too had lost even the commo- sensibilities of life. He would still see, on every side, attendants ready to obey a word, or a very look,—the same luxurious delicacies would be before him, but there would no longer be the same appetite, that could feel them to be luxuries; and the enjoyment received, if any enjoyment were received, would be far less than that of the labourer, in his coarser meal, when there is only simple fare upon the board, but affection in every heart that is round it, and social gladness in every eye.

So consolatory is regard, and so tranquillizing, in all the agitations of life, except the very horrors of guilty passion, and the remorse by which these are pursued, that he who has one heart to share his affliction, though he may still have feelings to which we must continue to give the name of sorrow, cannot be miserable; while he who has no heart that would care whether he were suffering or enjoying, alive or dead, and who has himself no regard to the suffering or enjoyment, even of a single individual, may be rich, indeed, in the external means of happiness, but he cannot be rich in happiness, which external things may promote, but are as little capable of producing as the incense on the altar of giving out its aromatic odours, where there is no warmth to kindle it into fragrance. The blind possessor of some ample inheritance, who is led through groves and over lawns where he sees no part of that loveliness which every other eye is so quick to perceive, and who, as he walks in darkness amid the brightest colours of nature, has merely the pleasure of thinking that whatever his foot has pressed is his own,—enjoys his splendid domains with a gratification very nearly similar to that of the haughty lord of possessions perhaps still more ample, who, without any mere visual infirmity, is able to walk unled amid his own groves and lawns, which he measures with a cold and selfish eye; but who walks among them unloving and unloved, blind to all that sunshine of the heart which is for ever diffusing, even on earth, a celestial loveliness,—a loveliness to which there are hearts and spirits as insensible as there are eyes that are incapable of distinguishing the common radiance of heaven. "Poor is the friendless master of a world," it has been truly said; and there is, perhaps, no curse so dreadful as that which would render man wholly insensible of affec-

tion, even though it were to leave him all the cumbrous wealth of a thousand empires:—

Vivat Pacuvius, quaeso, vel Nestora totum:
Possideat quantum rapuit Nero: montibus aurum
Exaequet; nec amet quemquam, nec ametur ab ullo!*

It is a bold, but a happy expression of St. Bernard, illustrative of the power of affection, that the soul, or the principle of life within us, may be more truly said to exist when it loves, than when it merely animates. "Anima magis est ubi amat, quam ubi animat." The benevolent affections expand and multiply our being; they make us live with as many souls as there are living objects of our love, and, in this diffusion of more than wishes, confer upon a single individual the happiness of the world. If there be any one, whose high station, and honour, and power, appear to us covetable, ambition will tell us to labour, and to watch, and to think neither of the happiness nor unhappiness of others; or at least to think of them only as instruments of our exaltation, till we arrive at last at equal or superior dignity. This it will tell us loudly; and to some minds it will whisper, that there are means of speedier advancement; that they have only to sacrifice a few virtues, or assume a few vices, to deceive, and defame, and betray; or that, if they cannot rise themselves by these means, they can at least bring down to their own level, or beneath it, the merit that is odious to them. The dignity which we thus covet, and for the attainment of which Ambition would urge us to so many anxieties and struggles, and perhaps too, to so much guilt, nature confers on us by a much simpler process, and a process which, far from leading into vice, is itself the exercise of virtue. She has only to give us a sincere and lively friendship for him who possesses it, and all his enjoyments are ours. Our soul, to use St. Bernard's phrase, exists when it loves; and it exists in all the enjoyments of him whom it loves.

If the benevolent affections be so important, as sources of happiness, the malevolent affections, we found, were not less important parts of our mental constitution, as the defence of happiness against the injustice which otherwise would every moment be invading it; the emotions of the individual injured being to the injurer a certainty that his crime will not be without one interested in avenging it; and the united emotions of mankind, as concurring with this individual interest of retribution, being almost the certainty of vengeance itself. If vice can perform these ravages in the moral world which we see at present, what would have been the desolation, if there had been no motives of terror to restrain the guilty arm; if frauds and oppressions, which now work in secret, could have come boldly forth into the great community of mankind, secure of approbation in every eye, or at least of no look of abhorrence, or shuddering at their very approach. It is because man is rendered capable of hatred, that crimes, which escape the law and the judge, have their punishment in the terror of the guilty. "Fortune," it has been truly said, "frees many from vengeance, but it cannot free them from fear. It cannot free them from the knowledge of that general disgust and scorn which nature has so deeply fixed in all mankind, for the crimes which they have perpetrated. Amid the security of a thousand concealments, they cannot think themselves sufficiently concealed from that hatred which is ever ready to burst upon them; for conscience is still with them, like a treacherous informer, pointing them out to themselves."—"Multos fortuna poena liberat, metu neminem. Quare? quia infixa nobis ejus rei aversatio est, quam natura damnavit. Ideo nunquam fides latendi fit, etiam latentibus, quia coarguit illos conscientia, et ipsos sibi ostendit."†

The emotions to which I am next to direct your attention, are those by which, instantly, as if by a sort of contagion, we become partakers of the vivid feelings of others, whether pleasing or painful. They are general affections of sympathy; a term which expresses this participation of both species of feelings, though, in common language, it is usually applied more particularly to the interest which we take in sorrow. By some philosophers, indeed, we have been said to be incapable of this participation, except of feelings of that sadder kind; though the denial of this sympathy with happiness,—a denial so unfavourable and so false to the social nature of man,—is surely the result only of narrow views and imperfect analysis. Nor is it difficult to discover the circumstances which may have tended to mislead them. The state of happiness is a state which we are so desirous of feeling, and so readily affect to feel, even when we truly feel it not, that our participation of it becomes less remarkable, being expressed merely in the same way as the common courtesies of society require us to express ourselves, even when we are feeling no peculiar satisfaction. If the face must, at any rate, be dressed in smiles at meeting, and retain a certain number of these smiles, with an occasional smile more or less, according to the turn of the conversation, during the whole of a long interview, the real complacency which is felt in the pleasures of others is not marked, be-

* Juvenal, Sat. xii. v. 128—130.

† Seneca, Epist. 97.

cause the air of complacency had been assumed before. All this is so well understood, in that state of strange simulation and dissimulation which constitutes artificial politeness, that a smile of welcome is as little considered to be a certain evidence of gratification at heart, as the common forms of humility, which close a letter of business, are understood to signify truly, that the writer is the very humble and most obedient servant of him to whom the letter is addressed. Joy, then,—that is to say, the appearance of joy,—may be regarded as the common dress of society, and real complacency is thus as little remarkable as a well-fashioned coat in a drawing-room. Let us conceive a single ragged coat to appear in the brilliant circle, and all eyes will be instantly fixed on it. Even Beauty itself, till the buzz of astonishment is over, will for the moment scarcely attract a single gaze, or Wit a single listener. Such, with respect to the general dress of the social mind, is grief. It is something, for the very appearance of which we are not prepared. A face of smiles is what we meet constantly; a face of sorrow, the fixed and serious look, the low or faultering tone, the very silence, the tear, are foreign, as it were, to the outward scene of things in which we exist. We see evidence, in this case, that something has happened to change the general aspect; while the look, and the voice of gaiety, as they are the look and the voice of every hour, indicate to us only the presence of the individual, and not any peculiar affection of his mind. It is not wonderful, therefore, that the appearance of grief, as the more unusual of the two, should absorb to itself, in common language, a name which may have been originally significant alike of the participation of grief and joy. It must be remembered, too, that joy, though delighting in sympathy, does not stand in need of this sympathy so much as sorrow. In diffusing cheerfulness, we seem rather to give to others than to receive; while, in the sympathy of grief which we excite, we feel every look and tone of kindred sorrow as so much given to us. It is as if we were lightened of a part of our burden; and we cannot feel the relief without feeling gratitude to the compassionate heart that has lessened our affliction, by dividing it with us. It is not merely, therefore, because the appearance of grief is more unusual, that we have affixed to this appearance a peculiar language, or at least apply to it more readily the terms that are significant also of other appearances; but in some degree also because the sympathy of those who sorrow with us, is of far more value than the sympathy of those who merely share our rejoicing, and therefore dwells more readily and lastingly in our remembrance.

It is not more true, however, that we weep with those who weep, than that we rejoice with those who rejoice. There is a charm in general gladness, that steals upon us without our perceiving it; and if we have no cause of sorrow, it is sufficient for our momentary happiness that we be in the company of the happy. Who is there, of such fixed melancholy, as not to have felt innumerable times this delight, that arises, without any cause but the delight which has preceded it; when we are happy for hours, and, on looking back on these hours of happiness, can discover nothing but our own happiness, and the happiness of others, which have been reflected back, and again, from each to each? So strong is this sympathetic tendency, that we not merely share the gaiety of the gay, but rejoice also with inanimate things, to which we have given a cheerfulness that does not and cannot belong to them. There are, in the changeful aspects of nature, so many analogies to the emotions of living beings, that in animating poetically what exhibits to us these analogies, we scarcely feel, till we reflect, that we are using metaphors; and that the clear and sunny sky, for example, is as little cheerful as that atmosphere of fogs and darkness through which the sun shines only enough to show us how thick the gloom must be which has resisted all the penetrating splendours of his beams. When nature is thus once animated by us, it is not wonderful, if we sympathize with the living, that we should, for the moment, sympathize with it too as with some living thing. It is this sympathy, with a cheerfulness which we have ourselves created, that constitutes a great part of that "moral delight and joy," which is so well described, as "able to drive all sadness but despair." In the poem of the Seasons, accordingly, the influence of spring is, with not less truth than poetic beauty, supposed to be felt chiefly by those whose moral sympathies are the most lively.

When Heaven and Earth, as if contending, vie
To raise his being, and serene his soul,
Can *Man* forbear to join the general smile
Of Nature?—Can fierce passions vex his breast,
When every gale is peace, and every grove
Is melody?—Hence from the bounteous walks
Of flowing Spring, ye sordid sons of earth,
Hard, and unfeeling of another's woe,
Or only lavish to yourselves;—away!—
But come, ye generous minds, in whose wide thought,
Of all his works, creative Bounty burns
With warmest beam; and on your open front,
And liberal eye, sits,—from his dark retreat,
Inviting modest Want.—Nor, till invoked,
Can restless Goodness wait; your active search
Leaves no cold wintry corner unexplored;
Like silent-working Heaven, surprising oft
The lonely heart with unexpected good.
For you the roving spirit of the wind
Blows spring abroad; for you the teeming clouds
Descend in gladsome plenty o'er the world;—
And the Sun sheds his kindest rays for you,
Ye flower of human race! In these green days,
Reviving sickness lifts her languid head,
Life flows afresh, and young-eyed Health exalts
The whole creation round. Contentment walks
The sunny glade, and feels an inward bliss
Spring o'er his mind, beyond the power of kings

To purchase. Pure serenity apace
Induces thought, and contemplation still.
By swift degrees, the love of Nature works
And warms the bosom; till, at last, sublimed
To rapture, and enthusiastic heat,
We feel the present Deity, and taste
The joy of God, to see a happy world.*

In the very pleasing Ode to May, which forms one of the few relics of the genius of West, there is a thought, in accordance with this general sympathy of nature, which expresses, with great force, that animating influence of which I speak. After invoking the tardy May to resume her reign,

With balmy breath and flowery tread,
Rise from thy soft ambrosial bed,
Where, in Elysian slumber bound,
Embowering myrtles veil thee round,

he describes the impatience of all nature for her accustomed presence, and concludes with an image, which his friend Gray justly termed "bold, but not too bold,"

Come then, with Pleasure at thy side,
Diffuse thy vernal spirit wide;
Create, where'er thou turn'st thine eye,
Peace, plenty, love, and harmony;—
Till every being share its part,
Till heaven and earth be glad at heart.†

In a fine morning of that delightful season, amid sunshine and fragrance, and the thousand voices of joy that make the air one universal song of rapture, who is there that does not feel as if heaven and earth were truly glad at heart, and who does not sympathize with nature, as if with some living being diffusing happiness, and rejoicing in the happiness which it diffuses?

We sympathize, then, even with the imaginary cheerfulness, which ourselves create in things that are as incapable of cheerfulness as of sorrow; and still more do we sympathize with living gladness, when it does not arise from a cause so disproportioned to the violence of the emotion, as to force us to pause and measure the absurdity. I have already said that we seem to sympathize less with the pleasures of others than we truly do; because the real sympathy is lost in that constant air of cheerfulness which it is a part of good manners to assume. If the laws of politeness required of us to assume, in society, an appearance of sadness, as they now require from us an appearance of some slight degree of gaiety, or at least of a disposition to be gay, it is probable that we should then remark any sympathy with gladness, as we now remark particularly any sympathy with sorrow; and we should certainly, then, use the general name, to express the former of these, as the more extraordinary, in the same way as we now use it particularly to express the feelings of commiseration.

Whatever may be the comparative tendencies of our nature, however, to the participation of the gay and sad emotions of those around us, there can be no doubt as to the double tendency. We rejoice with those who rejoice, merely because they are rejoicing; and, without any misfortune of our own, we feel a sadness at the very aspect of affliction in those around us, and skrink and shudder on the application to them of any cause of pain which we know cannot reach ourselves.

Many of the phenomena of sympathy, I have little doubt, are referable to the same laws to which we have traced the common phenomena of suggestion or association. It may be considered as a necessary consequence of these very laws, that the sight of any of the common symbols of internal feeling should recall to us the feeling itself, in the same way as a portrait, or rather as the alphabetic name of our friends recalls to us the conception of our friend himself. Some faint and shadowy sadness we undoubtedly should feel, therefore, when the external signs of sadness were before us, some greater cheerfulness on the appearance of cheerfulness in others, even though we had no peculiar susceptibility of smypathizing emotion, distinct from the mere general tendencies of suggestion. To these general tendencies I am inclined, particularly, to refer the external involuntary signs of our sympathy; the shrinking of our own limbs, for example, when we see the knife in any surgical operation about to be applied to the limb of another; the contortions of body with which the mob regard the feats of a rope-dancer, when they throw themselves into the postures that would be necessary for counteracting their own tendency to fall, if they were in the situation observed by them. Whatever state of mind, in the direction of our muscular movements, may be necessary for producing these instant postures, is associated with the feeling of peril which the mind would have in the situation observed; and this feeling is suggested by the attitude in others, that may be considered as an external sign of the feeling. That the mere conception is sufficient for producing these muscular movements, without the actual presence of any one with whose movements our own may be thought to accord, by some mysterious harmony, is shown by cases, in which ethereal communications, and vibrations, and every foreign cause of sympathy that can be imagined by the most extravagant lover of hypothesis, must be allowed to be absent, because there is no foreign object of sympathy whatever; in which we may be said, almost without absurdity, to sympathize with ourselves; when we shudder, indeed, as if sympathizing, but shudder at a mere thought. Thus, in looking down from a precipice, we shrink back as

* V. 866—900.

† Stanza ii. v. 3 – 6, and stanza v. preserved in letter v. of sect. iii. of Memoirs of Gray.—*Matthias's edition.*

we gaze on the dreadful abyss which would receive us if we were to make a single false step, or if the crumbling soil on which we tread were to betray our footing. The notion of our fall is readily suggested by the aspect of the abyss, and of the narrow spot which separates us from it; this notion of our fall, of course, suggests the feelings which would arise at such a dreadful moment; and these again produce, in the same manner, that consecutive state of mind, whatever it may be, on which the bodily movements of shrinking depend. We first have the simple conception of the fall; we then have, in some degree, the feelings that would attend the beginning fall; we then, having this lively image of peril, shrink back to save ourselves from that which seems to us more real, because, in harmony with the whole scene of terror before us, which presents to us the same aspect that would be present to us, if what we merely imagine were actually at that very moment taking place. Such is the series of phenomena that produce one of the most uneasy states in which the mind can exist; a state which I may suppose you all have experienced in some degree, before the frequent repetition of these giddy views, with impunity, has counteracted the giddiness itself, by rendering the feeling of security so habitual, as to rise instantly, and be a constant part of the whole complex state of mind.

But, though I conceive that a great part of what is called smypathy, is truly referable to the common laws of suggestion, that, by producing certain conceptions, produce also, indirectly, the emotions that are consequent on these; and, though it is possible that not the chief part only, but the whole may flow from these simple laws, I am far from asserting that all its phenomena depend on these alone. On the contrary, I am inclined to think that there is a peculiar susceptibility of this reflex emotion in certain minds, by which, even when the laws of suggestion, and the consequent images which rise to the mind, are similar, the sympathy, as a subsequent emotion, is more or less vivid; since there is no particular law of suggestion, unless we form one for this particular case, the force of which, in any greater degree, seems to accompany with equal and corresponding proportion the more lively compassion; but our sympathies are stronger and weaker, with all possible varieties of suggestion, in every other respect. It would be vain, however, if there truly be such a peculiar susceptibility, to attempt any nicer inquiry, in the hope of discovering original elements, which are obviously beyond the power of our analysis, or of fixing the precise point at which the influence of ordinary suggestion ceases, and the influence of what is peculiar in the tendency to sympathy, if there be any peculiar influence, begins.

One most important distinction, however, it is necessary to make, to save you from an error into which the use of a single term for two successive feelings, and, I may add, the general imperfect analysis of philosophers might otherwise lead you.

What is commonly termed pity, or compassion, or sympathy, even when the circumstances which merely lead to the sympathy are deducted from the emotion itself, is not one simple state, but two successive states of the mind; the feeling of the sorrow of others, and the desire of relieving it. The former of these is that which leads me to rank pity as an immediate emotion; the latter, which is a separate affection of the mind, subsequent to the other, and easily distinguished from it, we should rank, if it were to be considered alone, with our other desires, which, in like manner, arise from some view of good to be attained, or of evil to be removed.

After this analysis of the emotion of pity into its constituent elements, a lively feeling participant of the sorrow of others, and the desire of relief to that sorrow, a desire which, in the same circumstances, may be greater or less, as the mind is more benevolent, it can scarcely fail to occur to you, that the first of these elements is, as mere grief, an emotion of the same species with the primary grief with which we are said to sympathize, or with any other grief which we are capable of feeling,—a form, in short, of that general sadness which has been already considered by us. And, as a mere state or affection of the mind, considered without regard to the circumstances which produce it, or the circumstances which follow it, I confess that there does not seem to me any thing peculiar in the grief itself of pity, when separated, by such an analysis, from all thought of the primary sufferer, whose sorrow we feel to have been reflected on us, and from the consequent desire of affording him aid. But, though the elementary feeling itself may be similar, the circumstances in which it arises, and the circumstances which accompany it, when, without any direct cause of pain, we yet catch pain, as it were, by a a sort of contagious sensibility, from the mere violence of another's anguish, are of so very peculiar a kind, that I have not hesitated to give to this susceptibility of sympathetic feeling a distinct place in our arrangement; for the same reason, as in our systems of physics, we refer to different physical powers; and, therefore, to different parts of our system, the same apparent motions of bodies, when these motions, though in themselves apparently the same which might be produced by other causes, are the results of causes that are in their own nature strikingly different. Pity, however complex the state of mind may be

which it expresses, is one of the most interesting of all the states in which the mind can exist, and affords itself an example of the advantage of treating our emotions as complex rather than elementary,—an advantage which led me to form that particular arrangement of our emotions, in the order of which they have been submitted to your consideration; when, if the mere elements had been all that were submitted to you, you would perhaps have been little able to distinguish in them the familiar complex states of mind, which alone you have been accustomed to distinguish as emotions.

Even that primary feeling of sympathy, which is a mere participation of the sufferings of another, it may perhaps be thought, is only a form of the affection of love before considered by us, since there can be no love without a participation of the sorrows and joys of the object beloved. But these sympathies are emotions arising from love, not the mere regard itself. We must not forget that the word love is often employed very vaguely to signify, not the mere affections of mind which constitute the vivid feelings of regard, but every affection of mind that has any reference to the object of this regard. We give the name of love, in this way, to the whole successive states of mind of the lover, as if love were something diffused in them all; but this, though a convenient expression, is still a very vague one; and the emotions are not the less different in themselves, for being comprehended in a single word. The emotion of sympathy is still different from the simple feeling of affection, even when the object of our sympathy is truly the object of our love. It may have arisen from it, indeed, but it is not the same as that feeling of warm regard from which, in such a case, it arose.

So different is the mere sympathy from simple love, that it takes place when there is no actual love whatever, but, on the contrary, positive dislike or abhorrence. Let us imagine, not one atrocious crime only, but many crimes the most atrocious, to have been committed by any individual; and let us then suppose him stretched upon the rack, every limb torn, and every fibre quivering. Let us imagine, that we hear the heavy fall of that instrument, by which bone after bone is slowly broken, dividing, with dreadful intervals, the groans of the victim, that cease at the moment at which the new stroke is expected, and afterwards rise again instantly in more dreadful anguish, to cease only when another more agonizing stroke is again on the point of falling, or when the milder agony of death overwhelms at once the suffering and the sufferer. Does our hatred of the criminal save us even from the slightest uneasiness at what we see and hear? Do we feel no cold shuddering at the sound of the worse than deadly blow? no terror, increasing into agony at the moment when it pauses, as we expected it to fall again? It is enough for us that there is agony before our eyes. Without loving the sufferer,—for though the feelings that oppress us may not allow us to think of his atrocities at the moment, they certainly do not invest him with any amiable qualities, except that of being miserable,—we feel for him what it is impossible for us not to feel for any living thing that is in equal anguish. We should feel this,—if the anguish be of a kind that forces itself upon our senses in all its dreadful reality,—though his crimes were whispered to us every moment; and, when he lies mangled and groaning before us, if we were forced to inflict another stroke with our own hands, that was to break the last unbroken limb, or to receive the blow ourselves, it is not easy to say from which alternative we should shrink with a more frightful and sickly loathing.

In all this, Nature has consulted well. If our sympathy had been made to depend on our moral approbation, it would rise in many cases too late to be of profit. We are men; and nothing which man can feel is foreign to us. The friend of the Self-tormenter in Terence's comedy, when he uttered these memorable words which have been so often quoted, "Homo sum; humani nihil a me alienum puto,"* expressed only what the Author of our being has fixed, in some degree, in every heart, and which is as much a part of the mental constitution of the virtuous, as their powers of memory and reason.

If compassion were to arise only after we had ascertained the moral character of the sufferer, and weighed all the consequences of good and evil which might result to society from the relief which it is in our power to offer, who would rush to the preservation of the drowning mariner, to the succour of the wounded, to the aid of him who calls for help against the ruffians who are assailing him? Our powers of giving assistance have been better accommodated to the necessities which may be relieved by them. By the principle of compassion within us, we are benefactors almost without willing it; we have already done the deed, when, if deliberation had been necessary as a previous step, we should not have proceeded far in the calculation which was to determine by a due equipoise of opposite circumstances, the propriety of the relief.

Even in the case of our happier feelings, it is not a slight advantage, that nature has made the sight of joy productive of joy to him who merely beholds it. Men are to mingle in society; and they bring into socie-

* Actus i. Scena 1, v. 25.

ty affections of mind that are almost infinitely various,—hopes and fears, joy and sadness, projects and passions, far more contrasted than their mere external varieties of form and colour. If these internal diversities of feeling were to continue as they are, what delight could society afford? The opposition would render the company of each a burthen to the other. The gay would fly from the sullen gloom of the melancholy; the melancholy would shrink from the mirth which they could not partake, and which would throw them back upon their own sorrows with a deeper intensity of grief. Such is the confusion which society of itself would present. But the same Power which formed this beautiful system of the universe out of chaos, reduces to equal regularity and beauty this and every other confusion of the moral world. By the mere principle of sympathy, all the discord in the social feelings becomes accordant. The sad unconsciously become gay; the gay are softened into a joy, that has less perhaps of mirth, but not less of delight; and though there is still a diversity of cheerfulness, all is cheerfulness; as in a concert of many instruments, in which, though we are still able to distinguish each instrument from the others, and though the simple tones of each may be various, there is still one universal harmony that seems to animate the whole, like the presence, and the voice or inspiration of the celestial power of Music herself.

But if the bounty of our Creator be shown, in the provision which he has made for diffusing to many the joy which is felt by one, how much more admirable is the providence of his bounty, in that instant diffusion to others of the grief which is felt only by one, that makes the relief of this suffering not a duty merely, which we coldly perform, but a want, which is almost like the necessity of some moral appetite! Every individual has thus the aid of all the powers of every other individual. When some wretch is found lying bleeding on the common street, all who see him run to his assistance, as if their own immediate ease depended on their speed. The aged, the infirm, mix in the mob, with an interest as eager as if they were able to join in the common aid; the very child stops as he passes, and cannot resume his sport, till he has followed with the crowd the half-insensible object of so many cares to a place where surer relief may be procured. When, in a storm, some human being is seen, in the distant surf, clinging to a plank, that is sometimes driven nearer the shore, and sometimes carried farther off, sometimes buried in the surge, and then rising again, as if itself struggling, like the half-hopeless wretch whom it supports, that looks sadly to the shore as he rises from every wave,—has nature abandoned the sufferer without aid? Is he to find no one who will make at least one effort to save a human being that is on the point of perishing? He is not so abandoned. Nature has provided a deliverance for him in the bosom of every spectator. There are courageous hearts and strong hands, that, in the very peril of an equal fate, will rush to his succour, and that, in laying him in safety on that soil which he despaired of treading again, will feel only the joy of having delivered a human being, whose name and whose very existence were unknown to them before.

LECTURE LXII.

I. IMMEDIATE EMOTIONS, NECESSARILY INVOLVING SOME MORAL FEELING.—3. SYMPATHY CONCLUDED.—4. PRIDE AND HUMILITY.

Gentlemen, my last Lecture was employed in considering that principle of our nature,—whether original, or the result of other principles,—by which without any accession of advantage to ourselves, or any misfortune that can affect our own immediate interest, we enter into the happiness or the sorrows of others as if they were our own.

The reality of this species of ever-changing transmigration, by which, not after death merely, but during every successive hour of our waking existence, we pass, as it were, from one form of being to another, as the joys or sorrows of different individuals present themselves to our view, I traced and illustrated with various examples.

Of the gladdening influence of sympathy, we found sufficient proof in the cheerfulness which the society of the cheerful naturally diffuses on all who come within the circle of their gaiety; an enchantment as powerful as that by which the magician was supposed to change, at his will, the passions of all those who entered within the circle to which his influence extended. Even the melancholy, who began at first by striving, perhaps painfully, to assume an appearance, not of the mirth, indeed, which was before them, but at least of a serenity which might not be absolutely discordant with it, at last yield unconsciously to the fascination; and, when a sigh sometimes comes upon them, and forces them to pause, are astonished to look back, and to find that they have been happy.

Of the saddening influence of sympathy, the whole phenomena of pity furnish abundant evidence,—when the mere sight of grief, far from leading us to fly from a disagreeable object, leads us to form with it for the time the closest union. Our sympathy

identifies us with the sufferer with an influence so irresistible, that it would be impossible for us to feel even rapture itself, if, amid all possible objects of delight, there were only a single being in agony, that turned his eye on ours, even though it were without a groan, as he sank beneath the lash, or writhed upon the wheel.

The advantages that arise from this constitution of our nature, we found to be not unimportant in the diffusion and participation even of our gayer feelings; since those who mingle in society are thus brought nearer to one general temper, and enjoy, consequently, an intercourse, which could afford little delight if each retained his own particular emotions, that might be in absolute opposition to the emotions of those around. But it was chiefly in the other class of feelings that we found its inestimable benefits, in that instant participation of grief, and consequent eagerness to relieve it, which procures for the sufferer assistance in situations in which he is incapable even of imploring aid; which makes friendlessness itself a claim to more general friendship; and which, in any accident that befals the obscurest individual, interests in his fate whole multitudes, to whom, before the accident, he was unknown, or an object of indifference. If, at midnight, in a crowded city, a house were observed to be in flames, and at some high window, beyond the reach of any succour which could be given, were seen, by glimpses, through the darkness and the gloomy light that flashed across it, some unfortunate being, irresolute whether to leap down the dreadful height,—seeming at one moment on the point of making the attempt, and then, after repeated trials, shrinking back at last into the flames that burst over him; with what lively emotions of interest would he be viewed by the whole crowd, in which there would not be an eye that would not be fixed upon him! What agitation of hopes and fears, and what shrieks of many voices at the last dreadful moment! It would truly seem, in such a case, as if, in the peril of a single human being, the whole multitude that gazed on him were threatened with destruction, from which his escape, if escape were possible, was to be the pledge, and the only pledge of safety to all.

The emotions next to be considered by us, are those of pride and humility—the vivid feelings of joy or sadness, which attend the contemplation of ourselves, when we regard our superiority or inferiority, in any qualities of mind or body, or in the external circumstances in which we may be placed.

Pride and humility, therefore, always imply some comparison. We can as little be proud, without the consideration of an inferior, as we can be taller in stature, without some one who is shorter; unless when by a sort of indirect comparison, we measure ourselves with ourselves, in the present and the past, and feel a delightful emotion, as we look back on the progress which we have made.

When I define pride to be that emotion which attends the contemplation of our excellence, I must be understood, as limiting the phrase to the single emotion that immediately follows the contemplation. The feeling of our excellence may give rise directly or indirectly to various other affections of the mind. It may lead us to impress others as much as possible with our superiority, which we may do in two ways, by presenting to them, at every moment, some proofs of our advantages, mental, bodily, or in the gifts of fortune; or by bringing to their mind directly, their inferiority, by the scorn with which we treat them. The former of these modes of conduct, in which we studiously bring forward any real or supposed advantages which we possess, is what is commonly termed vanity; the latter, in which we wish to make more directly felt, the real or supposed comparative meanness of others, is what is commonly termed haughtiness; but both, though they may arise from our mere comparison of ourselves and others, and our consequent feeling of superiority, are the results of pride, not the pride itself. We may have the internal emotion, which is all that is truly pride, together with too much sense to seek the gratification of our vanity, by any childish display of excellencies, substantial or frivolous; since, however desirous we may be, that these advantages should be known, we may have the certainty that they could not be made known by ourselves, without the risk of our appearing ridiculous. In like manner, we may be internally very full of our own importance, and yet too desirous of the good opinion, even of our inferiors, to treat them with the scorn which we feel, or, to make a more pleasing supposition, too humanely considerate of their uneasiness, to shock them, by forcing on them the painful feeling of their inferiority, however gratifying our felt superiority may be to ourselves. Vanity, then, and haughtiness, are not to be confounded with the simple pride, which leads to them, in some minds, but which may exist, and exists as readily without them as with them.

The mere pleasure of excellence attained, thus separated from the vanity or haughtiness that would lead to any ridiculous or cruel display of it, involves nothing which is actually worthy of censure, if the superiority be not in circumstances that are frivolous, still less in circumstances that, although sanctioned by the fashion of the times, imply demerit rather than merit. In the circumstances in which it is truly praiseworthy to

desire to excel, it must be truly noble to have excelled. It is impossible to be desirous of excelling, without a pleasure in having excelled; and where it would be culpable to feel pleasure in the attainments that have made us nobler than we were before, it must, of course, have been culpable to desire such excellence.

It is not in pride, therefore, or the pleasure of excellence, as a mere direct emotion, that moral error consists, but in those ill-ordered affections which may have led us to the pursuit of excellence that is unworthy of our desire, and that cannot, therefore, shed any glory on our attainment of it. If our desires are fixed only on excellence in what is good, it is impossible for us to feel too lively a pleasure in the gratification of these desires. We may, indeed, become ridiculous by our vanity in displaying our attainments; and, which is far worse, we may exercise a sort of cruelty in reminding others by our scorn, how inferior we consider them to ourselves; but what is morally improper, in these cases, is in the vanity and the haughtiness, not in the vivid delight which we feel in the acquisition of excellence, the attainment of which is the great end, and the glorious labour of virtue,—an excellence that renders us more useful to mankind, and a nobler image of the Power which created us.

What renders the feeling of delight in excellence attained, not excusable merely, but praise-worthy, is then a right estimate of those objects in which we are desirous of excelling. I need not say, that to be proud of being preeminent in vice, implies the deepest degradation of our moral and even of our intellectual nature,—a degradation far more complete and hopeless than the commission of the same guilt, with the consciousness of imperfection. But on this species of pride I surely need not dwell. To be proud, however, of eminence in what is frivolous only, not absolutely profligate, itself implies no slight degree of moral degradation; because it implies a blindness to those better qualities that confer the only distinctions which virtue can covet and God approve.

These distinctions are the distinctions of the understanding and of the heart; of the heart, in the noble desires of which it may be conscious; of the understanding, in that knowledge, by the acquisition of which we are able to open a wider field to our generous desires, and to promote more effectually their honourable purposes. In this preparatory scene we are placed to enjoy as much happiness as is consistent with the preparation for a nobler world, to diffuse to others all the happiness which it is in our power to communicate to them, and to offer to him who made us that best adoration, which consists in love of his goodness, and an unremitting zeal to execute the honourable charge which he has consigned to us, of furthering those great views of good, which men, indeed, may thus instrumentally promote, but which only the divine mind could have originally conceived. In this glorious delegation, all earthly, and, I may say, all eternal excellence consists. With whatever illusion human pride may delight to flatter itself, he is truly the noblest in the sight of wisdom and of Heaven, however small his share may be of that adventitious grandeur, which, in those who are morally great, is nothing, and less than nothing, in those who are morally vile; he is the noblest who applies his faculties most sedulously to the most generous purposes, with the warmest impression of that divine goodness which has formed the heart to be susceptible of wishes so divine. If we be proud of any thing which does not confer dignity on the intellectual, or moral or religious nature of man, we may be certain that we are proud of that, which if considered without relation to objects that may be indirectly promoted by it, is in itself more worthy of contempt than of our pride. The peace and good order, and consequently the happiness of society, require, indeed, that forms of respect should be paid to mere station, and to the accidental possession of wealth and hereditary honours; but they do not require that the possessor of these should conceive himself truly raised above others, in that only real dignity, which is more than a trapping or form of courteous salutation, in the gaudy pageantries of the day. "If the great," says Massillon, "have no other glory than that of their ancestors; if their titles are their only virtues; if we must recall past ages to find in them something that is worthy of our homage, their birth dishonours them even in the estimation of the world. Their name is opposed by us to their person; we read the histories that record the great deeds of their ancestors, and we demand of their unworthy successors the virtues which formerly conferred so much glory on their country. The weight of honour which they inherit is to them but a burthen that sinks them still lower to the ground. Yet how visible on every brow is the pride of their origin. They count the degrees of their grandeur by ages which are no more; by dignities which they no longer possess; by actions which they have not performed; by ancestors of whom a little indistinguishable dust is all that remains; by monuments which the passing injuries of season after season have effaced; and they think themselves superior to the rest of mankind, because they have more domestic ruins to mark the desolation of time, and can thus produce more proofs than other men of the vanity of all earthly things." High birth, it will be readily allowed, is an illustrious pre-

rogative, to which the consent of nations, in every period of the world, has attached peculiar distinctions of honour. Yet it is a title only, not a virtue; an engagement to glory, and a domestic lesson of the means by which it may be obtained; not that which either constitutes glory or confers it. The succession of honour which it seems to convey to us perishes, and becomes extinct in us, if we inherit only the name, without inheriting also the virtues that rendered it illustrious. We sink then into the general mass of mankind, and begin, as it were, a new race. Our nobility belongs to our name only, and our person, in every thing which is truly our own, has as little ancestry as the meanest of the crowd.

Tota licet veteres exornent undique ceræ
Atria, nobilitas sola est atque unica Virtus.
Paulus, vel Cossus, vel Drusus, moribus esto:
Hos ante effigies majorum pone tuorum:
Præcedant ipsas illi, te consule, virgas.
Prima mihi debes animi bona: sanctus haberi,
Justitiæque tenax, factis dictisque mereris?
Agnosco procerem.*

These remarks, in application to the pride of rank, are equally applicable to every species of pride that is not founded on intrinsic excellence of the mental character. If it be absurd for man to feel as if he truly shared the glory of actions which were not his own, —of actions with which his own conduct, perhaps, in almost every instance, might be contrasted with far more complete opposition, than the conduct of his illustrious ancestors themselves might have been contrasted with that of the mean and ignoble of their own time, when this mere contrast with vices like those of their offspring was that which conferred on themselves distinction,—

Si coram Lepidis male vivitur, effigies quo
Tot bellatorum? si luditur alea pernox
Ante Numantinos? si dormire incipis ortu
Luciferi, quo signa duces et castra movebant?†

if even this self-illusion which usurps or claims the praise of virtue in the midst of vice, be, as it most truly is, an illusion, it must at the same time be remembered, that it is one with which the general sentiment more readily accords than with any other illusion of which the mind of man is susceptible; that though, in many unfortunate cases, it may be as degrading to the individual who proudly receives the homage, as to the individuals who servilely offer it, in other cases its influence, even on the individual himself, is animating and truly ennobling by the domestic lessons and incitements which it presents; and that even in its political influence, the veneration thus attached to hereditary distinctions has, upon the whole, by the social tranquillity which it has produced, and the counteracting powers which it has opposed to the aggressions of individual despotism, been productive of more advantage to society than many of the sublimest abstractions of political wisdom,—advantages of which those who gave, and those who received the homage, were indeed alike unconscious, and would probably have been regardless even if they had known them, but which did not the less enter into the contemplation of him who formed mankind, to feel this almost universal sentiment, for nobler purposes than the mere gratification of the arrogance of a few, and the meanness of the many. If, then, a pride which has still at least some relation to virtue, or to what was counted virtue, however distant, involve absurdity, what are we to think of those species of pride which have no relation to virtue of any kind, which are founded on every frivolity, or perhaps on every vice, as if it were the highest title to the applause of mankind to be of the least possible service to their interests? What shall we think of the mind of that man, who, endowed with a capacity of serving God by benefiting the world, in which he is placed to represent him, can derive dignity from the thought of having placed a button where a button never had been placed before, whose face glows with a noble pride as he walks the streets with this new dignity, and who derives from the consciousness of this button, I will not say as much happiness, for I will not prostitute the noble word, but at least as much self-complacency as is felt in the hour of his glorious mortality, by the expiring combatant for freedom, or the martyr?

So pleased are we with distinction, that there is nothing, however contemptible, from which it is not in our power to derive some additional vanity, when we consider it as our own; a book, a withered flower, a dead insect, a bit of hard earth, confer on us a distinction which we think that every one must envy. If the book be the only known copy of the most worthless edition, the flower, the insect, the stone, the only specimens of their kind in the country which has the honour of possessing them, we are of as rare merit in our own eyes as the worthless things themselves. Man occupies, indeed, but little room in nature, but he has the secret of spreading himself out over every thing belonging to him; our house, our gardens, our horses, our dogs, are parts of our own being. To praise them is to praise us; and, if we be very modest, and the praise very profuse, we almost blush at the panegyric, of which we are afraid of appearing vain.

The squire is proud to see his courser strain,
And well-breath'd beagles sweep along the plain.
Say, dear Hippolitus, (whose drink is ale,
Whose erudition is a Christmas tale,
Whose mistress is saluted with a smack,
And friend received with thumps upon the back,)

* Juvenal, Sat. viii. v. 19—26.
† Juvenal, Sat. viii. v. 9—12.

When thy sleek gelding nimbly leaps the mound,
And Ringwood opens on the tainted ground,
Is that thy praise? Let Ringwood's praise* alone;
Just Ringwood leaves each animal his own,
Nor envies when a gipsy you commit,
And shake the clumsy bench with country wit,—
When you the dullest of dull things have said,
And then ask pardon for the jest you made.†

In all these cases, it is easy to see by how ready an identification of ourselves with every thing that belongs to us, we assume a praise that belongs as little to us as to any other human being. We are, with respect to our possessions, like that soul of the world, of which ancient poets and ancient philosophers speak, that was supposed to be diffused in it everywhere, and to animate the whole. We exist, in like manner, in every thing which is ours, with a sort of omnipresent vanity; and by the transfer to others of the mere trappings of our external state, we should not merely sink in general estimation, but we should truly feel ourselves in our mortified pride, as if we had lost half or more than half of our little virtues and perfections.

To common minds, that are unsusceptible of higher pleasure, this pride of external things is at least a source of consolation; and restores in some measure that equilibrium which might seem too violently broken by the existing differences of intellectual capacity. Those who are absolutely incapable of feeling the beauties of a work of genius, are perfectly capable of deriving all the pleasure that can be derived from the possession of a volume printed by an illustrious printer, and bound by the first binder of the age. Those who cannot feel the beauty of the universe, as the manifestation of that transcendent excellence which created it, may be capable of feeling all the excellence of a tulip or carnation, that differs from other tulips or carnations by some slight stain which attracts no eye but that of a florist, but which instantly attracts a florist's eye, and fills him with rapture, if he be the fortunate possessor, and with envy and despair, if it be the property of another, of a rival perhaps, whom he had before the glory of vanquishing in a contest of hyacinths, but who is now to enjoy the revenge of a triumph so much more glorious.

To ordinary minds, these little rivalries and victories, and all the pride which is elevated by them, or depressed, may be considered as forming only a sort of feeble compensation for those greater objects of excellence which their microscopic eyes, that see the little as if it were great, but which cannot see the great itself, are incapable of appreciating, because, in truth, they are incapable of perceiving them. How much more do they strike us, however, when they exist in minds that are unquestionably capable of higher attainments, and that, after enlightening the world, or regulating its political destinies, can stoop to be the friend of a boxer, or the rival, and, perhaps, in this rivalry, the inferior of their own coachman or groom.

Who would not praise Patricio's high desert,
His hand unstained, his uncorrupted heart,
His comprehensive head, all interests weigh'd,
All Europe saved, yet Britain not betrayed?
He thanks you not, his pride is in picquette,
Newmarket fame, and judgment in a bet.‡

That such misplaced pride, in which the merit of real excellence is scarcely felt, in the vanity of some trifling accomplishment, or of feats which scarcely deserve the name even of accomplishments, however trifling, exists, not in the satirical pictures of poetry only, but in real life, you must know too well from the biography of many distinguished characters, to require any proofs or exemplifications of it; and though at first, perhaps, the pride may seem a very singular anomaly, in minds in which the general power of discrimination is manifestly of a high order, it is not very difficult, I think, to detect at least the chief circumstance which tends to produce and favour it.

The pleasure of success, in any case, you must be aware, is not to be estimated only by the real value of that which is attained, but by this value combined with the doubtfulness of the attainment, when it was regarded by us merely as an object of our desire. To gain what we considered ourselves sure of gaining, is scarcely a source of any very high satisfaction; to gain what we wished to gain, but what we had little thought of gaining, is a source of lively delight. He who has long led a cabinet of statesmen, by his transcendent political wisdom, and who is sure of leading them, so as to obtain a ready sanction of every measure that may be proposed by him for the government of a nation, and thus, indirectly perhaps, for the regulation of the fortune of the world, is not, on account of his mere political wisdom, to be held as a better jockey, or speedier calculator of odds at a gaming table. With his profound knowledge of the sources of finance, and of the relations of kingdoms, he is not as sure, therefore, of Newmarket fame and judgment in a bet, as he is of saving Europe without betraying the interest of his own land; and though he may be far more skilful in making armies march and navies appear where navies most are wanted, he may not be able to bring down more birds of a covey, or have a much greater chance of being in at the death of a fox, than the stupidest of those human animals who spend their days in galloping after one. There is a more

* Fame in the original.
† Young's Love of Fame, Sat. i.

‡ Pope's Moral Essays, Ep. i. v. 81—86.

anxious suspense, therefore, in these insignificant, or worse than insignificant attempts, than in the important councils which his judgment and eloquence have been accustomed to sway; and consequently a livelier pleasure when the suspense has terminated favourably. The superiority which he was to show in greater matters excited no astonishment, because it was anticipated by all; but to be first when he was not expected to be first, is a delightful victory over opinion; and it is not very wonderful, therefore, that he should be induced to repeat what is peculiarly delightful, and to be flattered by each renewal of success. It is only the contrast of his high powers of mind, which renders his exultation, in the petty triumph, so astonishing to us; and yet it is perhaps only because his judgment and eloquence are so transcendent, as to leave no suspense whatever with respect to that political dominion which he is sure to exercise, that he is thus gratified, in so high a degree, by the petty triumphs, which are less certain, and therefore leave him the excitement of anxiety, and the pleasure of success. Had his intellectual powers been of a less high order, and less sure of their great objects, he would probably have been regardless of the little objects, which are relatively great to him, only because, from their absolute littleness, they admit of wider competition.

In defining pride, as a mere emotion, to be that feeling of vivid pleasure which attends the consciousness of our excellence, I have already remarked that the emotion, far from being blamable, where the excellence is in things that are noble, is a proof only of that desire of excelling in noble things, which is a great part of virtue; and without which it is scarcely possible to conceive even the existence of virtue, since he surely cannot be virtuous who would willingly leave unattempted the attainment of a single possible moral excellence, in addition to those already attained; or who would not feel mortified if he had suffered an opportunity of generous exertion to pass away in idleness. The habit of virtue is indeed nothing more than the regular conformity of our actions to this desire of generous excellence; and to desire the excellence, without feeling delight in each step of the glorious progress to the attainment of it, is as little possible, as to feel the craving of hunger, and yet to feel no gratification in the relief of the appetite. It is only when the objects in which we have wished to excel have been unworthy of the desire of beings formed for those great hopes which ultimately await us, that the pleasure of the excellence, as we have seen in the species of ridiculous pride, to which I have alluded in the different illustrations offered to you, is itself unworthy of us.

When I say, however, that in pride, as an emotion attending the consciousness of excellence in noble pursuits, there is no moral impropriety, since it is only the name for that pleasure which the virtuous must feel, or cease to be virtuous, it may be necessary to caution you against a misconception into which you might very readily fall. The pride of which I speak is a name for the emotion itself, and is limited to the particular emotion that rises at any moment on the contemplation of some virtuous excellence attained; with which limitation it is as praiseworthy as the humility which is only the feeling arising from a sense of inferiority or failure in the same great pursuit. But it is only as limited to the particular emotion, that the praise which I allow to pride is justly referable to it. In the common vague use of the term, in which it is applied with a comprehensive variety of meaning, not so much to the particular emotion as to a prevalent disposition of the mind to discover superiority in itself where it truly does not exist, and to dwell on the contemplation of the superiority where it does exist, with an insulting disdain, perhaps, of those who are inferior;—pride is unquestionably a vice as degrading to the mind of the individual as it is offensive to that great being who has formed the superior and the inferior, for mutual offices of benevolence, and who often compensates, by excellencies that are unknown to the world, the more glaring disparity in qualities which the world is quicker in discerning.

The pride, then, or temporary feeling of pleasure, when we are conscious, at any moment, that we have acted as became us, is to be distinguished from pride, as significant of general character, of a character which is truly as unamiable, as the pleasure which is felt even by the most humble in some act of virtuous excellence, and which is felt, perhaps, by them still more delightfully than by others, is deserving of our approbation and our love. Strange and paradoxical, indeed, as it may seem, there can be little doubt, when we consider it, that pride, in this general sense, implies all that might be regarded as degrading in humility; and that humility of character, on the contrary, implies what is most ennobling, or rather, what is usually considered as most ennobling in the opposite character.

Pride and humility, as I have already remarked, are always relative terms; they imply a comparison of some sort, with an object higher or lower; and the same mind, with actual excellence exactly the same, and with the same comparative attainments in every one around, may thus be either proud or humble, as it looks above or looks beneath. In the great scale of society, there is a continued rise from one excellence to another

excellence, internal or external, intellectual or moral. Wherever we may fix, there is still some one whom we may find superior or inferior, and these relations are mutually convertible as we ascend or descend. The shrub is taller than the flower which grows in its shade; the tree than the shrub; the rock than the tree; the mountain than the single rock; and above all are the sun and the heavens. It is the same in the world of life. From that almighty being who is the source of all life, to the lowest of his creatures, what innumerable gradations may be traced, even in the ranks of excellence on our own earth; each being higher than that beneath, and lower than that above; and thus, all to all, objects at once of pride or humility, according as the comparison may be made with the greater or with the less.

Of two minds, then, possessing equal excellence, which is the more noble? that which however high the excellence attained by it, has still some nobler excellence in view, to which it feels its own inferiority,—or that which, having risen a few steps in the ascent of intellectual and moral glory thinks only of those beneath, and rejoices in an excellence which would appear to it of little value, if only it lifted a single glance to the perfection above? Yet this habitual tendency to look beneath, rather than above, is the character of mind which is denominated pride; while the tendency to look above, rather than below, and to feel an inferiority, therefore, which others perhaps do not perceive, is the character which is denominated humility. Is it false, then, or even extravagant, to say, that humility is truly the nobler; and that pride, which delights in the contemplation of abject objects beneath, is truly in itself more abject than that meekness of heart which is humble because it has greater objects, and which looks with reverence to the excellence that is above it, because it is formed with a capacity of feeling all the worth of that excellence which it reveres?

It has, accordingly, been the universal remark of all who make any remarks whatever, that it is not in great and permanent excellence that we expect to find the arrogant airs of superiority, but in the more petty or sudden distinctions of the little great. It is not the man of science who is proud, but he who knows inaccurately a few unconnected facts, which he dignifies with the name of science, and of which he forms, perhaps, what he is pleased to dignify, by a similar misnomer, with the name of a theory, to the astonishment and admiration of others, a very little more ignorant than himself. She whose personal charms are acknowledged by a whole metropolis, and the wit who delights the wise and the learned, may have no slight pride, indeed, but they are very likely to be surpassed in pride by the wit and beauty of a country town, as much as they truly surpass them in all the attractions on which the pride is founded.

"I have read," says Montesquieu, "in the relation of the voyage of one of our vessels of discovery, that some of the crew having landed on the coast of Guinea to purchase some sheep, were led to the presence of the sovereign, who was administering justice to his people under a tree. He was on his throne, that is to say, on a block of wood, on which he sat with all the dignity of the Mogul. He had three or four guards with wooden pikes, and a large umbrella served him for a canopy. His whole royal ornaments, and those of her majesty the queen, consisted in their black skin and a few rings. This prince, still more vain than miserable, asked the strangers if they spoke much about him in France. He thought that his name could not fail to be carried from one pole to the other; and unlike that conqueror of whom it was said, that he put all the earth to silence, he believed, for his part, that he set all the universe a talking.

"When the Khan of Tartary has dined, a herald cries out, that now all the sovereigns of the earth may go to dinner as soon as they please; and this barbarian, whose banquet is only a little milk, who has no house, and who exists but by plunder, looks upon all the kings of the world as his slaves, and insults them regularly twice a-day."

Such is the ignorance from which pride usually flows. The child, the savage, the illiterate, who in every stage of society are intellectually savages, have feelings of self-complacent exultation, which, ludicrous as they may seem to those who consider from a more elevated height the little attainments that may have given birth to those proud emotions, are the natural result of the very ignorance to which such proud emotions seem so very little suited. To him who has just quitted a goal, every step is an advance that is easily measured; but the more advanced the progress, the less relatively does every step appear. The child, at almost every new lesson which he receives, may be considered as nearly doubling his little stock of knowledge; and he is not the last himself to feel, that his knowledge is thus doubled, or, at least, that those who are but a little behind him have scarcely half as much wondrous wisdom as is heaped in his own little brain. What is true of the child in years is true of the child in science, whatever his years may be; and to increase knowledge, far from increasing the general pride of the individual, is often the surest mode of diminishing it. It is the same with all the arts and sciences, considered as one great stock of excellence. He whose whole attention has been devoted to any one of these will

run some risk of a haughty exultation, which is not felt by those, who with equal, or perhaps greater excellence in that one, are acquainted also with what is excellent in other sciences or other arts. The accomplished philosopher and man of letters, to whom the great names of all who have been eminent in ancient and modern times, in all the nations in which the race of man has risen to glory, are familiar, almost like the names of those with whom he is living in society,—who has thus constantly before his mind images of excellence of the highest order, and who, even in the hopes which he dares to form, feels how small a contribution it will be in his power to add to the great imperishable stock of human wisdom, may be proud indeed; but his pride will be of a sort that is tempered with humility, and will be humility itself, if compared with the pride of a pedant or sciolist, who thinks that in adding the result of some little discovery which he may have fortunately made, he is almost doubling that mass of knowledge, in which it is scarcely perceived as an element.

Pride, then, as a character of self-complacent exultation, is not the prevailing cast of mind of those who are formed for genuine excellence. He who is formed for genuine excellence, has before him an ideal perfection,—that semper melius aliquid,—which makes excellence itself, however admirable to those who measure it only with their weaker powers, seem to his own mind, as compared with what he has ever in his own mental vision, a sort of failure. He thinks less of what he has done than of what it seems possible to do; and he is not so much proud of merit attained, as desirous of a merit that has not yet been attained by him.

It is in this way, that the very religion which ennobles man, leads him not to pride, but to humility. It elevates him from the smoke and dust of earth; but it elevates him above the darkness, that he may see better the great heights that are above him. It shows him not the mere excellence of a few frail creatures, as fallible as himself, but excellence, the very conception of which is the highest effort that can be made by man; exhibiting thus constantly, what it will be the only honour worthy of his nature to imitate, however faintly, and checking his momentary pride, at every step of his glorious progress, by the brightness and the vastness of what is still before him.

May I not add to these remarks, that it is in this way we are to account for that humility which is so peculiarly a part of the Christian character, as contrasted with the general pride which other systems either recommend or allow? The Christian religion is, indeed, as has been often sarcastically said by those who revile it, the religion of the humble in heart; but it is the religion of the humble, only because it presents to our contemplation a higher excellence than was ever before exhibited to man. The proud look down upon the earth, and see nothing that creeps upon its surface more noble than themselves. The humble look upward to their God.

LECTURE LXIII.

II. RETROSPECTIVE EMOTIONS.—SUBDIVISION OF THEM, AS THEY RELATE TO OTHERS, OR TO OURSELVES.—1. ANGER.—GRATITUDE.

GENTLEMEN, my remarks on the emotions of pride and humility, those vivid feelings which attend the belief of our excellence or inferiority, in any circumstances, internal or external,—brought to a conclusion, in my last Lecture, the observations which I had to offer on one set of our emotions,—those which I have termed immediate, that arise from the consideration of objects as present, or not involving, at least, any necessary reference to time.

The emotions which, according to the general principles of our arrangement, we are next to consider, are those which relate to objects as past; the conception of some object of former pleasure or pain being essential to the complex feeling. To this set of emotions, acccordingly, I have given the name of retrospective.

These may be subdivided, as they relate to others and to ourselves.

Our retrospective emotions which relate to others are, anger for evil inflicted, and gratitude for good conferred; to which emotions, as complex feelings, in all their variety, the conception of evil, as past, or of good, as past, is, you will perceive, essential.

Those which relate to ourselves are either simple regret or satisfaction that arise from the consideration of any circumstances or events, which may have been productive of joy or sorrow, or may promise or threaten to be productive of them, or that moral regret or satisfaction which have reference to our own past conduct or desires; of the former of which, the regret that is felt by us when we look back on our moral delinquencies, remorse is the common appropriate name; while the latter, the satisfaction with which we review our past actions or wishes has no strict appropriate name corresponding with the opposite term remorse, but is sometimes called self-approbation, sometimes included in that familiar phrase of general and happy

comprehension, a good conscience. Whatever name we may give to it, however, it is easily understood, as that emotion which bears to our remembrance of our virtuous actions the relation which remorse bears to the remembrance of our actions of an opposite character.

I proceed, then, to the consideration of our retrospective emotions, in the order in which I have now mentioned them.

The first of these is anger. Anger is that emotion of instant displeasure, which arises from the feeling of injury done, or the discovery of injury intended; or, in many cases from the discovery of the mere omission of good offices to which we conceived ourselves entitled, though this very omission may itself be regarded as a species of injury. It is usually, or I may say universally,—certainly, at least, almost universally followed by another emotion, which constitutes the desire of inflicting evil of some sort in return; but this, though resulting from the feeling of instant displeasure, so immediately resulting from it, as to admit in ethics and in common discourse of being combined with it in one simple term,—is not to be confounded with it as the same in any analysis, at least in any minute philosophic analysis which we may make of our emotion. The evil felt,—the dislike,—the desire of retaliation, however rapidly they may succeed, and however closely and permanently they may continue afterwards to coexist, in one complex state of mind, are still originally distinct. The primary emotion of anger involves the instant displeasure merely with the notion of evil done or intended, and is strictly retrospective: the resentment or revenge, which is only a longer continued resentment, if we were to consider it without any regard to this primary displeasure which gives birth to it, would be referred by us to that other set of our emotions, which I have termed prospective. It is a desire as much as any other of our desires. But though in our minute philosophic analysis this distinction of the two successive states of mind is necessary, it is not necessary, in considering the feeling of resentment in its moral relations; and in the few remarks which I have to offer on it, I shall therefore consider the instant displeasure itself, and the desire of returning evil as one emotion. To estimate fully the importance of this principle of our constitution, we must consider man, not merely as he exists, in the midst of all the securities of artificial police, but as he has existed in the various stages which have marked his progress in civilization.

The existence of the race of men in society, wherever men are to be found, does not prove more powerfully the intention of our Creator, that we should form with each other a social communion, than the mere consideration of the faculties and affections of our mind,—of all which constitutes the strength of our manhood, when each individual has treasured, in his own mind, the acquisitions of many generations preceding,—and of all which constituted the weakness of our infancy, when, but for the shelter of the society in which we were born, we could not have existed for a single day.

But though man is formed for society, born in it, living in it, dying in it, the excellence of society itself is progressive. Even in its best state of legal refinement, when offences and the punishment of offences correspond with the nicest proportion which human discernment can be supposed to measure or devise, it is scarcely possible that the united strength of the community should be so exactly adapted to every possibility of injury, as to leave no crime without its corresponding punishment; and as the social system exists at present, and still more as it has existed for ages, the injuries for which legal redress is or can be received, bear but a very small proportion in number to the injuries which might be done, or even which are done, without any means of such adequate reparation. Nature, however, has not formed man for one stage of society only, she has formed him for all its stages,—from the rude and gloomy fellowships of the cave and the forest, to all the tranquillity and refinement of the most splendid city. It was necessary, therefore, that he should be provided with faculties and passions suitable to the necessities of every stage; that in periods, when there was no protection from without that could save him from aggressions, there might be at least some protection within, some principle which might give him additional vigour when assailed, and which, from the certainty of this additional vigour of resistance, might render attack formidable to the assailant; and thus save at once, from guilt, and from the consequences of guilt, the individual who otherwise might have dared to be unjust, and the individual who would have suffered from the unjust invasion.

What human wants required, that all-foreseeing Power, who is the guardian of our infirmities, has supplied to human weakness. There is a principle in our mind, which is to us like a constant protector, which may slumber, indeed, but which slumbers only at seasons when its vigilance would be useless, which awakes, therefore, at the first appearance of unjust intention, and which becomes more watchful and more vigorous, in proportion to the violence of the attack which it has to dread. What should we think of the providence of nature, if, when aggression was threatened against the weak and unarmed, at a distance from the aid of others,

there were instantly and uniformly, by the intervention of some wonder-working power, to rush into the hand of the defenceless a sword or other weapon of defence? And yet this would be but a feeble assistance, if compared with that which we receive from those simple emotions which Heaven has caused to rush, as it were, into our mind for repelling every attack. What would be a sword in the trembling hand of the infirm, of the aged, of him whose pusillanimous spirit shrinks at the very appearance, not of danger merely, but even of the arms, by the use of which danger might be averted, and to whom, consequently, the very sword, which he scarcely knew how to grasp, would be an additional cause of terror, not an instrument of defence and safety? The instant anger which arises, does more than many such weapons. It gives the spirit, which knows how to make a weapon of every thing, or which, of itself, does, without a weapon, what even a thunder-bolt would be powerless to do, in the shuddering grasp of the coward. When anger arises, fear is gone; there is no coward, for all are brave. Even bodily infirmity seems to yield to it, like the very infirmities of the mind. The old are, for the moment, young again; the weakest vigorous.

This effect the emotion of anger produces at the very time of aggression; and though no other effect were to arise from it, even this would be most salutary; but this transient effect is trifling compared with its permanent effects. If this momentary feeling were all, the contest would be a contest of mere degrees of force; and the weaker, whatever accession of power and courage he might receive from the emotion which animated him, if the additional strength which the anger gave to his arm and to his heart, did not raise him to an equality with his unjust assailant, though he might not sink till after a longer struggle, would still sink wholly and hopelessly. It is the long remaining resentment that outlasts, not the momentary violence of emotion only, but all the evil consequences of the injustice itself, which renders the anger even of the weakest formidable, because it enables them to avail themselves, even at the most distant period, of aid, before which all the strength of the strongest individual must shrink into nothing. There is a community, to the whole force of which the injured may appeal; and there is an emotion in his breast which will never leave him till that appeal be made. Time and space, which otherwise might have afforded impunity to the aggressor, are thus no shelter for his delinquency; because resentment is of every place and of every time, and the just resentment of a single individual may become the wrath and the vengeance of a nation. He who is attacked on some lonely plain, where no human eye is present with him, but that dreadful eye which looks only to threaten death, no arm but that dreadful arm which is lifting the dagger, has eyes and arms, which at the distance, perhaps, of many years, are to be present, as it were, at the very deed of that hour for his relief, or at least for his avengement. A crime perpetrated on the farthest spot of the globe that is subject to our sway, may have its retribution here, a retribution as dreadful as if all the multitude who assemble to witness it had been present at the very moment, on the very spot where the crime was committed; or had come, at a single call for help, with the omnipotence of a thousand arms, to the succour of the injured. It is necessary, therefore, for deterring unjust provocation that man should not feel anger merely, but should be capable of retaining the resentment till he can borrow that general aid of the community, to which, in the instant of any well-planned villany, it would, probably, be in vain to look. The wrath of a single individual, and of the weakest and most defenceless individual, may thus carry with it as much terror as the wrath of the strongest, or even of a whole army of the strong.

Such is anger as felt by the individual aggrieved. But when a crime is very atrocious, the anger is not confined to the individual directly aggrieved. There rises in the mind of others an emotion, not so vivid, perhaps, but of the same kind, involving the same instant dislike of the injurer, and followed by the same eager desire of punishment for the atrocious offence. In this case, indeed, we seldom think of applying to the emotion the term anger, which is reserved for the emotion of the injured individual. We term it rather indignation; but though the name be different, and though the accompanying notions of personal or foreign injury be also different, the emotion itself may be considered as similar. It certainly is not the mere feeling of moral disapprobation, but combined with this moral disapprobation, a vivid dislike, which all who have felt it may remember to have resembled the vivid dislike felt by them in cases in which they have themselves been injured, and a desire of vengeance on the offender as instant, and often as ardent, as when the injury was personal to themselves. The difference, as I before said, is in the accompanying conceptions, not in the mere emotion itself. In periods of revolutionary tumult, when the passions of a mob, and even, in many instances, their most virtuous passions, are the dreadful instruments of which the crafty avail themselves, how powerfully is this influence of indignation exemplified in the impetuosity of their vengeance! Indignation is then truly anger. The dema-

gogue has only to circulate some tale of oppression; and each rushes almost instantly, to the punishment of a crime, in which, though the injury had actually been committed, he had no personal interest, but which is felt by each as a crime against himself. If it was in our power to trace back our emotions through the whole long period of our life, to our boyhood and our infancy, we should find, probably, that our most vivid feelings of early resentment, if I may use that term in such a case, were not so much what is commonly termed anger, as what is more commonly termed indignation. Our deep and lasting wrath in our nursery, is not against any one who exists around us, but against the cruel tyrant, or the wicked fairy, or the robber, or the murderer, in some tale or ballad. Little generosity in after-life can be expected from him, who, on first hearing, as he leans on his mother's knee, the story of the Babes in the Wood, has felt no swell of anger, almost to bursting of the heart, against the "guardian uncle fierce," and who does not exult in the punishment which afterwards falls on that treacherous murderer, with a triumph more delightful than is felt by the most vindictive in the complete gratification of their own personal revenge.

How truly is this virtuous indignation of the youthful heart described by Beattie, in the glance of stern vindictive joy which brightened the tear of the future Minstrel when the beldame related to him that vengeance of heaven which forms the catastrophe of this tale "of woes:"—

A stifled smile of stern vindictive joy
Brighten'd, one moment, Edwin's starting tear.
But why should gold man's feeble mind decoy,
And Innocence thus die, by doom severe?
O Edwin! while thy heart is yet sincere,
Th' assaults of discontent and doubt repel.
Dark, even at noontide, is our mortal sphere;
But let us hope;—to doubt is to rebel;
Let us exult, in hope that all shall yet be well.
Nor be thy generous indignation check'd,
Nor check'd the tender tear to misery given;
From guilt's contagious power shall that protect,
This soften and refine the soul for heaven.*

It is by such generous indignation, indeed, that virtue is protected from the contagion of guilt, or rather, without such indignation, there is already no virtue to be protected.

If the little heart, in such a case, can pause and think, this injury was not done to me, it may, with equal temptation, in maturer years, unless saved by terror of punishment, be guilty of the very crime which, as the crime of another, excites in it so little emotion.

The indignation then of mankind may be considered as co-operating with the anger of the injured individual; but, unless in very atrocious cases, the general indignation is slight and faint, in comparison with the vividness of resentment in the individual. It is always sufficient, however, to sympathize with him; and this is sufficient for that just purpose which Nature had in view. She has provided one, whose quick and permanent resentment will lead him not to let injustice escape unpunished; and she has provided, in the community, feelings which readily accord with the direction of the united power of the state, against the injurer of a single individual. If there had been no such feelings of sympathetic anger, it may very easily be supposed that compassion for the criminal, who was afterwards to suffer for his offence, would in many cases obtain for him impunity; if, on the other hand, the indignation of the community were in every case equal to the original wrath of the individual directly injured, no opportunity could be afforded for the calm defence of innocence unjustly suspected. To have the punishment of guilt, it would be enough to have appeared to be guilty. In this universal frenzy of resentment, too, it is very evident that not even a single individual in a nation could enjoy tranquillity for a moment. His whole life must in that case be a life of rage and vexation. "Omnis illi per iracundiam moeroremque vita transibit. Quod enim momentum erit, quo non improbanda videat? Quoties processerit domo, per sceleratos illi, avarosque, et prodigos, et impudentes, et ob ista felices, incedendum erit. Nusquam oculi ejus flectentur, ut non quod indignentur inveniat."† The zeal of the Knight of La Mancha, who had many giants to vanquish, and many captive princesses to free, might leave him still some moments of peace; but if all the wrongs of all the injured were to be felt by us as our own, with the same ardent resentment and eagerness of revenge, our knight-errantry would be far more oppressive; and though we might kill a few moral giants, and free a few princesses, so many more would still remain, unslain and unfreed, that we should have little satisfaction, even in our few successes.

How admirably provident, then, is the Author of our nature, not merely in the emotions with the susceptibility of which he has endowed us, but in the very proportioning of these emotions, so as to produce the greatest good at the least expense even of momentary suffering. Some vivid feeling of resentment there must be, that the delays which may occur, in the infliction of vengeance, may not save the guilty from punishment; but this vivid feeling which must exist somewhere, nature, in ordinary cases, confines to the single breast of the sufferer. Some feelings of general sympathy with the resentment of the injured there must also be, that the strength of society may be readily

* Book i. stanza xlvii. and v. 1—4 of stanza xlviii.

† Seneca de Ira, lib. ii. cap. 7.

transferred to him for the punishment of the injurer; and these general feelings Nature has formed to be of such a kind as may be sufficient for the purpose which they are to answer, without being too vivid to distract the attention of the multitude from their own more important concerns. The good which Nature wills is attained; and is attained by means which are as simple as they are efficacious.

We have seen, then, the advantages which arise from that part of our mental constitution, by which individuals are capable of resentment, when personally injured, and of indignation when the injury has no direct relation to themselves. But resentment, admirable as it is, as a check even to that guilt which is not afraid of conscience or of God, may yet, in unfortunate dispositions, be a source of endless vexation to the individual who feels it, and to all those who live around him. It may arise too soon,—it may be disproportioned to the offence,—it may be transferred from the guilty to the innocent,—it may be too long protracted.

It may arise too soon; or rather, it may arise when a little reflection would have shown that it ought not to have arisen. In the intercourse of society it must often unavoidably happen that there may be apparent injury, without any real desire of injuring. We may consider that evil as intentional which was not intended; we may consider that as an insult which was said perhaps with a sincere desire of correcting, as gently as possible, some imperfection, which is not less an imperfection because we shrink from hearing of it. To distinguish what simply gives us pain, from that which was intended to give us unnecessary pain, is no easy task, in many cases, and in all cases requires some reflection. According as the emotion of anger, at least any displeasure more lasting than a single moment, precedes or follows this due reflection, it is to be viewed therefore in a very different light. The disposition which becomes instantly angry, without reflection, on the slightest semblance of injury, is in common language, as you know, termed passionate.

Another form of a passionate disposition, arising indeed from the same cause, is that which involves the next error which I have stated with respect to resentment, the disproportion of the anger and the offence. He who does not pause, even to weigh the circumstances, cannot be supposed to pause to measure the extent of injury. He feels that he is injured, and all his anger bursts out instantly on the offender. It is this disproportion, indeed, which is the chief evil of what is commonly termed passion. Some cause of slight displeasure there may be, even when anger, in its violence, would be immoral and absurd. Yet such is the infirmity of our nature, that it is often no slight triumph over our weakness to forgive a trifle with as much magnanimity as that with which we have forgiven greater injuries. He who has truly pardoned in heart, as well as in profession, the political rival who has displaced him, may yet be very angry with his steward or his groom; and it is no small panegyric of woman to be mistress of herself though China fall.

To what cause, or causes, are we to ascribe this quickness of anger, on small occasions, when, if the occasion had been greater, the resentment would have been less? This apparent anomaly in our emotion, seems to me to arise chiefly, or wholly, from three causes. In the first place, any great injury is felt by us immediately as an injury, as an important event in our life, an occasion on which we have to act a part; and, if we have any virtue whatever, our whole system of practical ethics comes before us. We remember that we ought to forgive, and we think of this duty, merely because the importance of the injury makes us feel that, on such an occasion, we are heroes of a little drama, and must walk majestically across the stage.

In the second place, I may remark, that great offences seldom occur without some little warning of suspicion, which puts us on our guard, and prevents, therefore, sudden exasperation. But what warning is there that a cup is to be broken, or a pair of spectacles mislaid?

Still more important than these, however, though perhaps less obvious, seems to me the cause which I have last to mention, that any great offence is of course a great evil, and that the magnitude of the evil, therefore, occupies us as much as our resentment, and thus lessens the vividness of the mere feeling of resentment, by dividing, as it were, its interest with that of other intermingled feelings. An injury which deprives us of half our estate, presents to us many objects of thought, as well as the mere image of the injurer. But when a servant, in his excessive love of order, has laid out of our way a volume which we expected to find on our table, or has negligently suffered the newspaper to catch fire, which he was drying for us, the evil is not sufficiently great to occupy or distract us; and we see, therefore, the whole unpardonable atrocity of the neglect itself, or of that over-diligence which is often as teasing in its consequences as neglect.

Any one of these causes, operating singly, might be sufficient perhaps to explain what seems at first, as I have said, so very strange an anomaly; and their influence, as may well be supposed, is far more powerful when they operate, as they usually operate, together. The little evils which fret us most, then, we may perhaps venture to conclude, produce this seemingly disproportionate effect, as be-

ing those in which we do not feel that we have any great part to act, which are so sudden as to have given us no warning, and in which there is not sufficient injury to divert our fretfulness from the immediate object, by the sorrow which might otherwise have mingled with our wrath.

A third error, with respect to this emotion, consists in transferring it from the guilty to the innocent. The species of disposition which has this character is what is commonly termed peevish or fretful. Some trifling circumstance, of disappointed hope or mortified vanity, has disturbed that serenity which was before all smiles; and for half a day, or perhaps for many days, if the provocation have been a very little more than nothing, no smile is again to be seen. He whose unfortunate speech or action produced this change may already be at the distance of many miles; but he is represented by every person, and every thing that meets the eye of the offended; and the wrath which he deserved, or did not deserve, is poured out perhaps in greater profusion than if he were actually present. It might then, indeed, have been a thunder-shower which falls heavily for a while, but leaves afterwards a clear sky. It is now a fog which lours, and chills, and which, in lasting long and dismally, seems only to threaten a still longer and more dismal darkness. To a disposition of this sort, no voice is soft, and no look is kind; the very effort to soothe it is an insult; every delightful domestic affection is suspended; the servants tremble; the very children scarcely venture to approach, or steal past in silence, with a beating heart, and rejoice in having escaped; the husband finds business to occupy him in his own apartment, the instant and urgent necessity of which he never discovered before; and all this consternation and misery have arisen perhaps from the negligence of a waiting-maid who has placed a flower, or a feather, or a bit of lace, a quarter of an inch higher or lower than it ought to have been.

> How soft is Silia! fearful to offend;
> The frail-one's advocate, the weak-one's friend.
> Sudden, she storms, she raves! You tip the wink,
> But spare your censure; Silia does not drink.
> All eyes may see from what the change arose;
> All eyes may see—a pimple on her nose.*

We have seen, then, the nature of that character of anger, which is usually termed passionate, in its two varieties. We have seen also the nature of that other kindred character, which is usually termed peevish or fretful. There yet remains to be considered by us one other form or character of excess in this emotion.

This fourth moral error, with respect to resentment, of which I spoke, is when it is too long protracted. The disposition, in that case, is said to be revengeful,—a disposition still more inconsistent with the moral excellence of man, than even that silly fretfulness of which I last spoke. The very reason of the peevish is, for the time, obscured, as much as their serenity; and, if this obscurity could be removed, so that they might see things as they are, they probably would cease to express, and even to feel, their petty displeasure. The revengeful have not, indeed, the folly of punishing the innocent for the offence of the guilty; but they punish the guilty, even when the guilt has been expiated with respect to them, by every atonement which the injurer could offer; or they punish as guilt what implied no malicious intention; and this they do, not unreflectingly and blindly, but with an understanding as quick to discern as it is vigorous to execute. Man is too frail in his wishes and actions, to measure the offences of others with a rigid hand. "Mali inter malos vivimus." The very revenge which he seeks is a condemnation of himself. When he looks into his own mind, is it possible for him to say, Let there be no forgiveness for offence, but let all who have violated what is right, suffer the punishment of the wrong, in the same proportion in which I now measure out punishment? Would no lurking remembrance of evil on his part check such a general wish as this? and, if he could not venture on the general wish, which must include his own punishment, how audacious must be that arm which, exposed alike to the cloud that hangs over all, would yet call down the thunderbolt to destroy whatever is beneath it! For man to be revengeful, is as if a criminal, confined with his accomplices, and speedily to be brought to judgment, should, in some petty malice against one of his fellow-captives, appeal to the speedier vengeance of those very laws which all had violated, and which, falling in vengeance on the head of one, must fall upon the head of all.

Nature, as I have already said, has formed man susceptible of resentment, that the wicked, who fear only man, may have something to fear; but she has formed man to be placable, because long continued resentment would be itself an evil more severe than that which it avenges. He, therefore, who knows not how to forgive,—whose gloomy heart preserves, even in age, the resentment of youth, unsoftened by the penitence of the offender, by his virtues, by his very misery, is to us like some dreadful being of another race, that walks the earth, cursing and accursed; we shun him as we would fly from some malignant spirit, who, by looking upon us, could transfuse into us the rancour which he feels; we have no sympathy for him; our only sympathies are with the object of his vengeance; with that very object on whom,

* Pope's Moral Essays, Ep. ii. v. 29, 30, and 33—36.

in other years, we could have delighted to see the vengeance fall.

Such, then, are the abuses of that emotion which, for the good of mankind, when not thus abused, Heaven has placed in every heart. The resentment, therefore, which Heaven allows only for the good that arises from it, is limited by the very nature of this good. It is, in the first place, a resentment which pauses till it have considered the circumstances in which the supposed injury has been done; in the second place, a resentment which, even when, on reflection, intentional injury is discovered, is still proportioned to the offence; in the third place, a resentment which limits its wrath to the guilty object; and, in the fourth place, a resentment which is easy to be appeased, which does not seek revenge when the good of society would not suffer by the forgiveness; and which sees in penitence, when the penitence is manifestly sincere, not an object of hatred, but an object of love.

Such is the infirmity of our nature, that there is far more reason to apprehend, in every case, that we may have erred in the excess of our resentment than in defect of it; and there can be no question which of these errors is the less dangerous to the tranquillity of the individual. He may be very happy whose resentment scarcely reaches that point to which the sympathy of those around would accompany him; but he cannot be happy whose habitual resentments go far beyond that point. It is of the utmost advantage, therefore, for our own peace, that we should learn, as much as possible, to regard the little vexations which we may, or rather must, often meet from the ill humour of others, or from the crossings and jarrings of interests opposite to our own, with the same patience with which we bear the occasional fogs of our changeful sky. The caprices of man are as little at our disposal as the varieties of the seasons. Not to lay our account with these human vexations, is a folly very similar to that of expecting in winter all the flowers and sunshine of spring, and of lamenting that the snows and sleet which have fallen everywhere else should have fallen on our little garden.

I will not affirm that man can ever arrive at the stoical magnanimity of being able to say, with respect to every unjust aggression to which he may be exposed, "No one can be guilty of a crime that is great enough to be worthy of my emotion." "Nullius tanta nequitia est, ut motu meo digna sit." But we may be sure of this at least, that the more nearly we approach to that magnanimity, the more do we save from disquietude our own happiness, and very probably too the happiness of all around us.

"It is impossible for you to be injured," says a French moralist, with a sententiousness worthy of Seneca, "it is impossible for you to be injured, but in your property, or in your self-love. If you are injured in your property, the laws defend you, and you may say of him who has injured you, This man is unjust; he will be weaker than I. If you are hurt in your self-love, the reproaches which are directed against you must be either well or ill founded. If they are well founded, why have resentment against a man, who makes you feel the necessity of being wiser or better than you were before? If the reproaches are not well founded, your conscience reassures you; and what vexation can arise in the mind of him who looks back only on virtues that delighted him when present, and delight him still in the remembrance? The reproaches are those either of a friend or of an enemy. If they are the reproaches of a friend, say to yourselves, he is my friend; he could not mean to offend me. If they are the reproaches of an enemy, say to yourselves, this is what I should have expected; and why then should it astonish me as if it were something new? Has your enemy carried his hatred against you so far as to be guilty of a crime? You are already too well avenged."*

The emotion opposite to that of resentment is gratitude, that delightful emotion of love to him who has conferred a kindness on us, the very feeling of which is itself no small part of the benefit conferred. It is this, indeed, which mingles in almost every other species of love, and diffuses in them all additional charms. The child does not love his parent merely as possessing virtues which others around him possess perhaps equally; he loves him as his constant benefactor, the prolonger of that existence which he gave, the provider against wants which are not to be felt till the gracious provider for them be himself probably no more. When a friend thinks of his friend, what a long period of reciprocal good offices does he seem to measure in a single moment with his eye, what happiness conferred, what misery soothed! It is as if the friendship itself expanded with the length of that bright tract of enjoyment, the retrospect of which is almost a repetition of the pleasure that seems diffused over every step. In the pure reciprocations of conjugal regard all this friendship exists, and exists still more intimately and closely. The emotion is not felt as gratitude, indeed; for every interest is so much united, that a kindness conferred and a kindness received are in such a case scarcely to be distinguished. There is happiness flowing from each to each; and the gratitude which each feels, is perhaps, if we consider it only as the emotion of the object that receives pleasure, due

* De St. Lambert, tom. ii.

as much from the heart which has conferred, as from the heart which has seemed more directly to receive it. But still the remembrance of this mutual interchange of tender wishes and enjoyments, of delights and consolations that were almost delights, is no small part of the general complex emotion which renders the love of those who have long loved as permanent as it is pure.

> The Seasons thus,
> As ceaseless round a jarring world they roll,
> Still find them happy, and consenting Spring
> Sheds her own rosy garland on their heads;
> Till evening comes at last, serene and mild,
> When, after the long vernal day of life,
> Enamour'd more, as more remembrance swells
> With many a proof of recollected love,
> Together down they sink in social sleep;
> Together freed, their gentle spirits fly
> To scenes where love and bliss immortal reign.*

With what happy influence has heaven thus led mankind to benevolence, by making kindness delightful both to him who is the object of it, and to him who confers it! If no pleasure had been attached to virtue, we might still indeed have been virtuous, but we should have felt as if walking at the command of some power whom it would be guilt to disobey, along a world of darkness. The pleasure that flows around us in acts of mutual kindness, is like the sunshine, that is light and gladness to our path; and if we owed no other gratitude to our Creator, we should owe it for this at least, that he has made gratitude itself so delightful.

LECTURE LXIV.

RETROSPECTIVE EMOTIONS, HAVING DIRECT REFERENCE TO OURSELVES.—1. SIMPLE REGRET AND GLADNESS, ARISING FROM EVENTS WHICH WE CANNOT CONTROL.—2. MORAL REGRET AND GLADNESS, ARISING FROM OUR OWN ACTIONS.

In my last Lecture, Gentlemen, I considered our emotions of anger and gratitude, those retrospective emotions which have direct reference to others. The affections of this order which are next to be considered by us, are those which relate more directly to ourselves; and, in the first place, those emotions of simple regret or gladness with which we look back on past events, as mere events of advantage or disadvantage to us, without including any notion of our own moral propriety or impropriety of conduct.

I have already, in treating of melancholy and cheerfulness, considered emotions very nearly akin to these; the great distinction being in the feeling of a particular object of the emotion, which is essential to the complex vivid feeling in one case, and which does not exist in the other case. We are melancholy, often without knowing why we are melancholy; cheerful, without knowing why we are more cheerful at one particular time than at another. But when we feel regret, we know what it is which we regret; when we feel a joyful satisfaction, we know what it is which gladdens us; and our emotions, as felt by us, have a direct reference to their causes, the conception of which coexists with them in one complex state of mind. Melancholy, indeed, is often the result of regret, as cheerfulness is of any extraordinary joy; that is to say, we are grieved at some event, and our mind afterwards, of itself, continues in a state of sadness, without any thought of its cause; we are gladdened by some particular event, and our mind afterwards, of itself, without the remembrance of the cause of joy, continues in a state in which happiness seems to be a part of its very essence; as if not to be happy and not to exist were nearly the same. The immediate and the retrospective emotions, however, which are distinguished by the peculiar names of melancholy and cheerfulness, in the one case, regret and gladness, in the other case, are sufficiently distinguished by that reference to the past, the retrospective feeling which does or does not attend them.

As a mere vivid feeling, indeed, the regret which affects us on any unfortunate occurrence, may, on a minute analysis, be found to be the same, or at least nearly the same, as the general melancholy or sadness which we feel, without thinking of its cause; the regret differing from the melancholy, not as a mere vivid feeling of emotion, but merely as a complex state of the mind, of which sadness is a part, differs from the simpler state, in which sadness is all that constitutes the momentary feeling. If this analysis be accurate, as I conceive it to be, the terms may be truly convertible; so that regret may be said to be only melancholy combined with the conception of a cause of the melancholy; and melancholy itself to be only regret, abstracted from the conception of its cause. A similar minute analysis, by separating, in every complex emotion, that part which may be considered as peculiarly constituting the vivid feeling which is marked by that name, from the conception of the object, which may or may not accompany it, and which may be various, when the emotion itself, as a mere emotion, is the same, might be made in other cases, so as to reduce, with sufficient philosophic precision, the vocabulary of our feelings of this class, as elementary feelings, to the very few which I enumerated, in entering on the consideration of our emotions. I have preferred, however, for the reasons repeatedly stated by me, the consi-

* Thomson's Seasons, Spring, v. 1163—1173.

deration of our emotions in that complex form in which they usually present themselves, since the consideration of them in this state of complexity in which they usually exist, has many advantages, and does not preclude the analysis which may be necessary for pointing out to you, in each complex emotion, the elementary feelings that seem to compose it. There are clear and definite lines of distinction which the emotions in their complex form present, that are themselves too striking to be neglected as principles of arrangement; and there are bearings on practical ethics, which it seemed to me still more important to point out to you,—relations which the systematic review of our emotions, together with the various objects of our emotions, that give them their common distinctive names, and that, if they do not alter the very nature of the vivid feelings themselves, at least diversify them in many important aspects, affords an easy opportunity of developing, but which would be lost in the more general consideration of them, if arranged as mere elementary feelings, without regard to their objects.

Though the regret, then, which we feel in thinking of any unfortunate event, and the gladness which we feel in thinking of any event that has been, or promises to be beneficial, may, as mere vivid feelings of emotion, be the same, or nearly the same, as the more permanent feelings of joy or sadness, which we term cheerfulness or melancholy, that continue, without any reference of the mind, to the past events which may have given occasion to them, still the retrospective reference is so important a part of the complex whole, that the emotion which involves this reference, may admit with advantage of separate consideration.

The emotions which we are now considering may be regarded, in their almost infinite relations, as the great diversifiers of the happiness of our days, very nearly as light and shade, that flow over every thing around us, are the diversifiers of that physical scene of things, on which we are placed. How few events can happen, that have any direct relation to ourselves, which may not be productive of some greater or less degree of gladness or regret; and, far from being thus confined to events which primarily relate to us, our emotions of this kind do not merely extend to every thing that can happen within the wide circle of our friendship or acquaintance, but seem to diffuse themselves over the most distant ages and climes, as if we had a direct and primary interest in the happiness or misery of the whole human race. If every thing at which we rejoice or grieve in the course of a single day, could be imagined to us at once, as we gather into one wide landscape the lake and the vales and the rocky summits which we have slowly traversed, it would be one of the most striking pictures that could be presented, of the social and sympathetic nature of man.

Even of the events by which our personal interest is more immediately affected, and in which our regret or gladness, therefore, might seem exclusively personal, how few are there, which have not some relation to others; or rather, how few are there of which others are not the immediate authors! What we term chance or fortune, in all those events of our life which we characterize as fortunate or unfortunate, is only a shorter term for expressing the actions of others in their unintended relation to us; and in the friendships and thousand rivalries of life, how much of intentional good or evil is to be added to what is casual! There is perhaps scarcely a single success, of which we give the praise to our own prudent conduct, that if others had acted differently, might not have been adverse to us, rather than prosperous.

Regret and gladness, as thus arising from events which are, in most instances, absolutely independent of our conduct, may seem at first to be themselves, in these instances, equally independent of any conduct on our part. But this is very far from being the case. Though the events may be independent, the feelings which they awake in us may depend, in a great measure, on our own former feelings. The same power of habit, which influences the particular suggestions of our trains of thought, influences also the particular emotions which arise in different individuals, from the consideration of the same events, because the train of thought itself cannot be different without a correspondent diversity of the emotions, that vary with the varying images. How few events are productive only of advantage or disadvantage! By far the greater number are productive of both, of advantage which, if it existed alone, would excite gladness, of disadvantage which, if it existed alone, would excite regret, and of which, as existing together, the resulting emotion is different, according to the preponderance of the opposing causes of regret or gladness, that is to say, according as more or fewer images of regret or gladness spontaneously arise to our mind, or according as we examine and analyze, more or less fully, the one or the other of these sources of mingled joy and sorrow. There are many advantages, of what is apparently evil, that cannot be known to us, unless we reflect on consequences which are not immediately apapparent; many evils of what is apparently profitable, that may be discovered, in like manner, but discovered only after reflection. We cannot change events, indeed, in many instances; but in all of these, the aspect of events, at least, may be changed as our at-

tention is more or less turned to the consequences that may result from them. To wish is, in this case, almost to produce what we wish. Our very desire of tracing the consequences that are favourable to our happiness, will be followed by the suggestion of these, rather than of others, in the same manner as our other desires are always followed by the suggestion of images accordant with them. Our mere intention of describing a beautiful landscape, for example, which is but a desire like any other of our desires, is followed by the images of rural beauty, that rise, in succession, to our choice, when, if our intention had been to describe the horrors of some scene of ruggedness and desolation, that principle of spontaneous suggestion, to which, in such a case of picturing, we give a peculiar name, as if it were a distinct power, and term it fancy, would have presented to us, indeed, as many images as in the gayer landscape, but images of a very different kind. With what varied conceptions was the mind of Milton filled, when, after describing Pandemonium and its guilty inhabitants, he seemed to breathe, as it were, a purer atmosphere of freshness and delight, in describing the groves of Paradise, and that almost celestial pair, whose majestic innocence seemed of itself to indicate the recent presence of the God from whom they came, and without whom, to enjoy at once, and to animate it, even Paradise itself would have been a desert! In this sudden change of conceptions that crowded on his imagination, the mind of Milton was still itself the same. The images, in all their variety, arose still according to the same simple laws of suggestion. They arose variously, only because a single wish of his mind was varied. He had resolved to describe the magnificent horrors of an infernal palace; he resolved afterwards to describe the delightful magnificence of nature, as it might seem to have shone in original beauty, when it still reflected that smile of its Creator which pronounced it to be good; and all which would have been necessary to reverse the whole store of imagery, to convert Paradise, in his mind, into the burning lake, and Pandemonium itself into the bowers of Eden, would have been the change of that single wish which seemed almost to have been creative. If our desire is thus capable of modifying the whole train of suggestion, in that process in which the mind is said to invent, it is not less capable of modifying it in cases in which we never think that we are inventive. In the whole train of our thought, our conceptions, and the attendant emotions which they induce, still correspond with our prevalent wishes. When an occurrence may be productive of good and evil, the good may arise to us, because our general frame of mind is accordant with wishes, and, therefore, with conceptions of good; or the evil only may arise to that gloomy spirit which does not find good, merely because it does not seek to find it. A different general character of thought, the associations, perhaps of a few years, a single prevailing notion, may in this way be sufficient, on the contemplation of the same event, to convert gladness into regret, regret itself into gladness.

Even when the same event is thus viewed by two different minds, and the same consequences, in every other respect, arise to both minds, how important a difference must there be in the general resulting emotion, according as the two minds are more or less accustomed to view all the events of nature, as a part of a great design, of which the Author is the benevolent willer of happiness, or of the means of happiness! The mere difference of the habit, in this respect, is to the individuals almost the same thing, as if the events themselves had been in their own absolute nature diversified.

The same events, therefore, in external circumstances exactly the same, may be productive to the mind of emotions that are very different, according to its constitutional diversities or acquired habits, or even according to slight accidents of the day or of the hour. We may rejoice, when others would grieve, or grieve when others would rejoice, according as circumstances arise to our reflection, different from those which would occur to them. Nor is the influence necessarily less powerful on our views of the future, than on our views of the past. We desire often, in like manner, what is evil for us upon the whole, by thinking of some attendant good; as we fear what is good, by thinking only of some attendant evil. The vanity of human wishes is, in this way, proverbial. We do not need those memorable instances which Juvenal has selected, to convince us, how destructive, in certain circumstances, may be the attainment of objects, that seem to us, when we wish for them, to comprehend all that is desirable. The gods, says that great moralist, have overwhelmed in ruin whole multitudes, merely by indulging them with every thing for which they prayed.

> Evertere domos totas optantibus ipsis
> Di faciles.*

What is shown, in such cases, only in the fatal result, to those whose scanty discrimination sees only what is or has been, and not what is to be, may in some respects be anticipated by more discerning minds, that would feel sadness, therefore, at events which might seem to others to be subjects only of congratulation. Sagacity, when it exists in any

* Sat. x. v. 7, 8.

high degree, is itself almost that second sight in which the superstitions of the wilder districts of this country put so much confidence. It looks far before, into the futurity that is closed to common eyes. It sees the gloom in which gaiety is to terminate, the happiness that is to dawn on affliction, as, by supposed supernatural revelation, the Seer's quick but gloomy eye views in the dance and merriment of evening the last struggles of him who is the next morning to perish in the waves, or when a whole family is weeping for the shipwrecked son or brother, beholds on a sudden, with a wild and mysterious delight that moment of joy when the well-known voice of him who is lamented with so many tears, is to be heard again, as he returns in safety to the cottage door.

It is not on the nature of the mere event, then, that the gladness or regret which it excites wholly depends, but in part also on the habits and discernment of the mind which considers it; and we are thus, in a great measure, creators of our own happiness, not in the actions merely which seem more strictly to depend on our will, but on those foreign events which might have seemed at first to be absolutely independent of us.

If even simple gladness and regret, however, depend in some measure on the peculiar tendencies of the mind, the emotions which we are next to consider depend on them still more.

These are the emotions which attend our moral retrospects of our past actions, the remorse which arises on the thought of our guilt, the opposite emotion of delight which attends the remembrances of what is commonly termed a good conscience.

I have already treated of the emotions which are distinctive to us of vice and virtue in general; but the emotions with which we regard the virtues and vices of others, are very different from those with which we regard the same vices and virtues as our own. There is the distinctive moral feeling, indeed, in both cases, whether the generous sacrifice, or the malignant atrocity which we consider, be the deed of another, or of our own heroic kindness or guilty passion; but in the one case there is something far more than mere approbation, however pleasing, or mere disapprobation, however disagreeable. There is the dreadful moral regret arising from the certainty that we have rendered ourselves unworthy of the love of man and of the approbation of our God; or the most delightful of all convictions, that but for our life the world would have been less virtuous and happy, and that we are not unworthy of that highest of privileges, the privilege of fearlessly adoring him, whom if we worship truly with that gratitude which looks beyond the moment of suffering, to the happiness of every world and of every age, it matters but little though the place of our adoration should be a dungeon or a scaffold.

When we look to some oppressor in the magnificence of his unjust power, surrounded with those inferior tyrants, that, while they execute their portion of delegated guilt, tremble at the very glance of him whose frown can make them nothing; with armies whom victory after victory has rendered as illustrious as slaves that carry slavery with them, and spread it wherever their arms prevail, can hope to be; when we enter the chambers of state in which he gives himself to public view, and see only the festival, and listen only to voices that are either happy, or seem to be happy, does all this splendour impose upon our heart, as it would half-seduce our senses into momentary admiration? Do we think that God has reserved all punishment for another world, and that wickedness has no feelings but those of triumph in the years of earthly sway which consummate its atrocities? There are hours in which the tyrant is not seen, the very remembrance of which, in the hours in which he is seen, darkens to his gloomy gaze that pomp which is splendour to every eye but his; and that, even on earth, avenge with awful retribution, the wrongs of the virtuous. The victim of his jealous dread, who, with a frame wasted by disease, and almost about to release his spirit to a liberty that is immortal, is slumbering and dreaming of heaven on the straw that scarcely covers the damp earth of his dungeon,—if he could know at that very hour what thoughts are present to the conscience of him who doomed him to this sepulchre, and who is lying sleepless on his bed of state, though for a moment the knowledge of the vengeance might be gratifying, would almost shrink the very moment after from the contemplation of horror so hopeless, and wish that the vengeance were less severe. "Think not," says Cicero, "that guilt requires the burning torches of the Furies to agitate and torment it. Their own frauds, their crimes, their remembrances of the past, their terrors of the future, these are the domestic furies that are ever present to the mind of the impious."—"Nolite enim putare, quemadmodum in fabulis saepenumero videtis, eos, qui aliquid impie scelerateque commiserint, agitari et perterreri Furiarum taedis ardentibus: sua quemque fraus et suus terror maxime vexat; suum quemque scelus agitat, amentiâque afficit; suae malae cogitationes conscientiaeque animi terrent. Hae sunt impiis assiduae domesticaeque Furiae."*

* Orat. pro Sex. Roscio Amerino, sect. 24, edit. Gruter. or 67 of others.

The instance which I have now chosen is that of a species of guilt with the conscious remembrance of which few of the great multitude of mankind can be agitated. But those who cannot oppress kingdoms may yet oppress families and individuals. There is a scale of iniquity that descends from the imperial tyrant to the meanest of the mob; and there are feelings of remorse that correspond, not with the extent of the power, but with the guilty wishes of the offender. In the obscurest hovel, on the most sordid bed, there are sleepless hours of the same sort of agony which is felt in his palace by him who has been the scourge perhaps of half the nations of the globe. There are visions around that pillow, which, in the drama or romance indeed, would form no brilliant picture, but which are not the less horrible to him whose means, but not whose wishes of iniquity, have been confined to the little frauds that have swallowed up the pittance of some widow, or seduced into the same career of guilt with himself the yielding gentleness of some innocent heart. To the remorse of such a mind, there are not even the same consolations, if I may apply the term of consolation to that dreadful relief which, in rendering horror less felt for the instant, truly aggravates its ultimate amount. The power of making armies march, though it be only to new desolation,—of altering in an instant the fate of kingdoms, though it be only to render kingdoms more wretched,—has yet something in it which, by its greatness, occupies the mind; and the tumult of war, and the glory of victory, and the very multitude of those who bow the knee and tremble as they solicit favour or deprecate wrath, afford at least a source of distraction to the mind, though they can afford no more. These sources of distraction the petty villain cannot share. His villanies present to him no other images than those of the insignificant profits which he has perhaps already squandered, and the miseries which he has made. There are no crowds of flatterers to aid the feeble efforts with which he strives to forget the past. He is left with nothing more than his conscience, and his power of doing still more evil; and he has recourse to this desperate expedient, which, desperate as it is, is still less dreadful than his horror of the past. He adds villany to villany, not so much for any new profit, as to have something which may occupy him, producing wretchedness after wretchedness around him, as far as his little sphere extends, till his sense of remorse is at last almost stupified; and he derives thus a sort of dreadful mitigation of suffering, from the very circumstances which are afterwards to be the aggravation of his misery.

In these cases of fraud and cruelty, the progress of guilt, in every stage of it, might have brought to the mind of the guilty the evil on which he was entering, or the evil which he was aggravating. But what deep remorse arises often to minds originally of better hopes, that, on entering on the very career which has plunged them in vice, saw no images but those of social pleasure; and that, after many years of heedless dissipation have elapsed, look back on the years which have been so strangely consumed, almost with the astonishment, though not with the comfort, of one who looks back on some frightful dream, and who scarcely knows whether he is awake.

> Soft as the gossamer, in summer shades,
> Extends its twinkling line from spray to spray,
> Gently as sleep the weary lids invades,
> So soft, so gently, Pleasure mines her way.*

At the very suggestions of fraud and cruelty, the heart shrinks instantly with a horror which saves from the guilt of injustice or oppression all those whose minds are not unworthy of better feelings; but the suggestions of pleasure present nothing to the mind, at least till indulgence have become excessive, with which any feelings of loathing and abhorrence can be associated. The corruption of the mind goes on silently, and gives no alarm, till the mind is already too corrupt to be capable of the vigorous effort which would be necessary for shaking off a power that shackles and debases it; but which seems still rather to seduce than to oppress, and which is scarcely hated by the unfortunate victim, even while it appears to him to have destroyed his happiness for ever.

> O treacherous Conscience! While she seems to sleep
> On rose and myrtle, lull'd with siren song;
> While she seems, nodding o'er her charge, to drop
> On headlong appetite, the slacken'd rein,
> And give us up to licence, unrecall'd,
> Unmark'd—See, from behind her secret stand,
> The sly informer minutes every fault,
> And her dread diary with horror fills,
> Not the gross act alone employs her pen;
> She reconnoitres Fancy's airy band,
> A watchful foe,—the formidable spy
> Listening, o'erhears the whispers of our camp,
> Our dawning purposes of heart explores,
> And steals our wishes of iniquity.†

It is not, however, only when health, and fortune, and dignity, and the affection of those whom we love, have been completely sacrificed, that conscience comes boldly forward, and proclaims a guilt of which we were little dreaming. There are thoughts of higher objects that rise to the mind, with an accusation which it is quick to feel, but which it hastens to forget, in a repetition of the idle and profitless, and worse than profitless enjoyment. At length the accusation, which cannot be suppressed, is heard with a

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* Mickle, canto i.
† Young's Night Thoughts, book ii. v. 256—269.

more painful impatience, but with an impatience which leads only to a wilder riot, in the hope of stilling murmurs which are not to be stilled.

> The low
> And sordid gravitation of his Powers
> To a vile clod, so draws him, with such force
> Resistless, from the centre he should seek,
> That he at last forgets it. All his hopes
> Tend downward; his ambition is to sink,—
> To reach a depth, profounder still, and still
> Profounder, in the fathomless abyss
> Of folly, plunging in pursuit of death.
> But ere he gain the comfortless repose
> He seeks, and acquiescence of his soul
> In Heaven renouncing exile, he endures—
> What does he not, from lusts opposed in vain
> And threatening* conscience—Riot is not loud
> Nor drunk enough to drown it. In the midst
> Of laughter, his compunctions are sincere,
> And he abhors the jest by which he shines.†

On the happiness which attends the remembrance of a life of virtue, it would surely be unnecessary to enlarge. It is a happiness of which even the guilty, though they may be incapable of conceiving all its delight, yet know sufficiently the value to look to it with wishes that do not covet it the less for coveting it hopelessly. Strange as it may seem in a world in which vice is so abundant, there yet can be little doubt that the only object of desire, which is truly universal, is the delight of a good conscience. The pleasures of power and splendour and indolent luxury, strong as their sway is over the greater number of minds, find yet some minds to which they are objects either of indifference or contempt. But who is there, who has ever said in his own soul, in forming plans of future life, let me live and die without the remembrance of a single good action? There are crimes, indeed, conceived and perpetrated with little regard to that virtue, which is for the time abandoned. But there is still some distant vision of repentance, and better thoughts, which are to be the happiness of old age at least, that is present to the most profligate, when he ventures to look forward to old age, and to that event by which age must at last be terminated. It is not because virtue is wholly despised that guilt exists; but the great misery is, that the uncertain duration of life allows the guilty to look forward to years that are perhaps never to arrive, and to postpone every better purpose till their heart has become incapable of shaking off the passions to which it is enslaved. Yet still repentance and virtue, at some period, are delightful objects, which they never wholly exclude from their prospects of the future; and if it were possible to be virtuous without the sacrifice of vice, they would not delay the happiness for a single instant.

The happiness of having something in past years, on which to look back with delight, is then a happiness which is the wish of all; and if it were a thing that could be plundered like mere wealth, or invaded and usurped like honour and dignities, it would probably be one of the first things on which the robber would lay his violent hands, and which even the most frivolous aspirer after the most frivolous trappings of courtly honour would wish to obtain as soon, at least almost as soon, as that wand or ribbon to which his ambition is obliged to be at present limited. This, however, though it is the only possession which is safe from violence or fraud, is still safe from these. The tyrant, with all his power, cannot divest of it the most helpless of those on whom his tyranny is exercised; he cannot purchase it, even for a single moment, with all the treasures which he has amassed, with all the lands which he has desolated, with all that power which, in his hands, far from facilitating the acquisition, only renders more hopeless the attainment of those delights of conscience, to which he would still vainly aspire.

> Magne pater divûm, saevos punire tyrannos
> Haud aliâ ratione velis, cum dira libido
> Moverit ingenium ferventi tincta veneno:
> Virtutem videant, intabescantque relictâ.
> Anne magis Siculi gemuerunt aera juvenci,
> Et magis auratis pendens laquearibus ensis
> Purpureas subter cervices terruit, Imus,
> Imus praecipites, quàm si sibi dicat, et intus
> Palleat infelix, quod proxima nesciat uxor?‡

And it is well for the world, that the only consolation of which the virtuous stand in need cannot be forced from virtue, and usurped by vice If the powerful could, by the promise of a reward like that which the Persian monarch offered, obtain the means of forming to themselves, or purchasing at the same cheap rate at which they purchase their other pleasures, that new pleasure of virtuous satisfaction, which nothing but virtue can give, vice would indeed have little to restrain it; and if he who can order the virtuous resister of oppression to the dungeon, or to distant exile; who can separate him—I will not say, from his home, and his domains, and external dignities, for the loss of these is comparatively insignificant, but from all those whom he loves and honours; from that conjugal, and filial, and parental, and friendly kindness, which would now be doubly valuable, when he might still have the comfort of seeing eyes, to which his own had often been turned in kindness, and of hearing voices, the very sound of which had often, in other griefs, been felt to be consolation, before the gentle meaning itself was uttered;—if the oppressor, who can strip his victim of all these present and external means of comfort, could

* Self-reproaching.—Orig.
† Cowper's Task, book v. v. 587—600, and 614—617.

‡ Persius, Sat. iii. v. 35—43.

strip him also of those remembrances, which allow him to look back on the past with satisfaction, and to the future with the confidence of one who knows, that whatever his path may be, he is to be received at the close of it, by that being whose majesty, awful as it is, is still only the majesty of a benevolence surpassing all earthly love;—if this could be done, then indeed might virtue in this world seem to be abandoned to the vengeance or the mercy of the guilty. But while these remain, what is there of which the glorious sufferer—I had almost said, if the words admitted combination, the happy sufferer—can be truly said to be bereaved? The friendships of those who are to meet again, and to meet for ever, are lost but for a moment; the dignities, the wealth, are not lost; all that is valuable in them, the remembrance of having used them as Heaven wishes them to be used, remains; there are years of happiness past, and an immortality of happiness, which is separated from the past only by a moment, and which will not be less sure, whether that moment be spent in fetters, with the pity, and gratitude, and veneration of the good, or with the same gratitude and veneration be spent, if a moment can be said to be spent, in liberty and opulence.

Man, indeed, is too frail not to yield occasionally to temptations; but he yields to temptations because he is stupified by passion, and forgets, at the moment, the differences of the state of the vicious and the virtuous, that in calmer hours are present to him, with an influence of which he delights to feel the power. If these differences, the mere contrast of the feeling with which the pure and the guilty look back on the years of their glorious or inglorious life, could be made constantly present to the mind, there is little reason to think that all the seductions of power and momentary pleasure could prevail over him who sees what the good are, even in those adversities which the world considers as most afflicting, and what the guilty are, even in the midst of their enjoyments, without taking into account what they must be when those short and palling enjoyments have ceased:—

> One self-approving hour whole years outweighs
> Of stupid starers, and of loud huzzas;
> And more true joy Marcellus exil'd feels,
> Than Cæsar with a senate at his heels.*

"The wicked man," says Rousseau, "fears and flies himself. He endeavours to be gay, by wandering out of himself. He turns around him his unquiet eyes, in search of an object of amusement that may make him forget what he is. Even then his only pleasure is a bitter raillery; without some contemptuous sarcasm, some insulting laughter, he would be for ever sad. On the contrary, the serenity of the virtuous man is internal. His smile is not a smile of malignity, but of joy; he bears the source of it within himself; he is as gay alone as in the midst of the gayest circle; he does not derive his delightful contentment from those who approach him; he communicates his own to them."

Such are the emotions which are excited in us when we consider the past, in reference to ourselves as moral agents; and, if we knew nothing more of virtue and vice than these feelings alone, and knew, at the same time, that in a future state of existence there was a happiness destined for those who felt emotions of one or the other kind, could we hesitate for a moment in determining in which class we were to look for those by whom the happiness was to be inherited? It would not require any abstract notions of what is morally good and what is morally evil. The emotions themselves would distinguish sufficiently all that required to be distinguished. We should see in the agitation of a bad conscience, in the terror that arose in it at the very conception of futurity, and of him who presides over the future as over the past, that the misery which was anticipated was already begun; as in the tranquillity of the good, and the delight which they felt in the very contemplation of the perfection of the Divinity, we should perceive the commencement of that happinesss which immortality was not to confer but to continue:—

> Heaven our reward, for heaven enjoyed below.

With these remarks, I conclude my view of our retrospective emotions. The remaining series of emotions which we have still to consider, are those which relate to the future, comprehending the important class of our desires and fears, as these are diversified by all the variety of the objects on which they can be fixed, and by all the variety of degrees of probability, with which the good which we desire can be expected, or the evil anticipated and feared. In this order of our affections, as in all the emotions already considered by us, we shall find abundant proof of the wisdom and goodness of that being who has given us our passions, as he has given us our intellectual faculties, for nobler purposes than those of individual gratification,—purposes which the virtuous delight in seeing and fulfilling, and which the wicked unconsciously promote, even while they are regardless of the wisdom and goodness which protect the world, and equally regardless of that social world which is under this sublime protection.

* Pope's Essay on Man, Ep. iv. v. 255—258.

LECTURE LXV.

III. PROSPECTIVE EMOTIONS, COMPREHENDING ALL OUR DESIRES AND FEARS.—DESIRE AND FEAR MAY ARISE FROM THE SAME OBJECT.—OUR DESIRES ALWAYS HAVE FOR THEIR OBJECT SOME GOOD, AND OUR FEARS SOME EVIL.—DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THAT GOOD WHICH CONSTITUTES DESIRABLENESS, AND MORAL, OR EVEN ABSOLUTE PHYSICAL GOOD.—CLASSIFICATION OF DESIRES.—WISH, HOPE, EXPECTATION, CONFIDENCE, DIFFERENT FORMS OF DESIRE.—1. DESIRE OF CONTINUED EXISTENCE.

GENTLEMEN,—in my original arrangement of our emotions, I divided them into three orders, according as their objects were regarded by us as present, past, or future—our immediate emotions, our retrospective emotions, our prospective emotions. In my last Lecture, I concluded my remarks on the second of these orders, which, from their reference to the past, I have termed retrospective. One order still remains to be considered by us, the emotions which I have denominated prospective, from their reference to objects as future.

This order is, in its immediate consequences, the most important of all our emotions, from its direct influence on action, which our other feelings of the same class, and indeed all our other feelings whatever, influence only indirectly through the medium of these. It comprehends all our desires, and all our fears,—our desires, which arise equally from the prospect of what is agreeable in itself, or from the prospect of relief from what is disagreeable in itself,—our fears, which arise equally from the prospect of what is disagreeable in itself, and from the prospect of the loss of what is in itself agreeable. The same external object, agreeable or disagreeable, may give rise to both emotions, according as the object is or is not in our possession, or is or is not producing any present uneasiness; or when it is equally remote in both cases, according as the probability of attainment of the agreeable object, or of freedom from the disagreeable object, is greater or less. Hope and fear do not necessarily relate to different objects. We fear to lose any source of pleasure possessed by us, which had long been an object of our hope; we wish to be free from a pain that afflicts us, which, before it attacked us, was an object of our fear. We hope that we shall attain to a situation of which we are ambitious; we fear that we shall not attain to it. We fear that some misfortune, which seems to threaten us, may reach us; we hope that we shall be able to escape. The hope and the fear, in these cases, opposite as the emotions truly are, arise, you perceive, from the same objects; the one or the other prevailing according to the greater or less probability on either side. But though they vary with different degrees of probability, they do not depend wholly on a mere comparison of probabilities. They arise, or do not arise, in some measure, also according to the magnitude of the object; our hope and our fear awaking more readily, as well as operating more permanently and strongly, when the object which we wish to attain, or of which we fear to be deprived, is very important to our happiness, though the probabilities on either side may be exactly the same as in cases of less importance, where desire and fear, if they arise at all, are comparatively feeble, and when often not the slightest emotion of either species arises:—

> Pauca licet portes argenti vascula puri,
> Nocte iter ingressus, gladium contumque timebis,
> Et motae ad lunam trepidabis arundinis umbram:
> Cantabit vacuus coram latrone viator.*
>
> The needy traveller, serene and gay,
> Walks the wild heath, and sings his toil away.
> Does envy bid thee crush the upbraiding joy?
> Increase his riches, and his peace destroy!
> Now fears in dire vicissitude invade,
> The rustling brake alarms, and quivering shade;
> Nor light nor darkness brings his pain relief:
> One shews the plunder, and one hides the thief.

There can be no question, that he who travels in the same carriage, with the same external appearances of every kind by which a robber could be tempted or terrified, will be in equal danger of attack, whether he carry with him little of which he can be plundered, or such a booty as would impoverish him if it were lost. But there can be no question also, that though the probabilities of danger be the same, the fear of attack would, in these two cases, be very different; that, in the one case, he would laugh at the ridiculous terror of any one who journeyed with him, and expressed much alarm at the approach of evening; and that, in the other case, his own eye would watch suspiciously every horseman who approached, and would feel a sort of relief when he observed him pass carelessly and quietly along at a considerable distance behind.

That the fear, as a mere emotion, should be more intense, according to the greatness of the object, might indeed be expected; and if this were all, there would be nothing wonderful in the state of mind which I have now described. But there is not merely a greater intensity of fear, there is, in spite of reflection, a greater belief of probability of attack. There is fear, in short, and fear to which we readily yield, when otherwise all fear would have seemed absurd. The reason of this it will perhaps not be difficult for

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* Juvenal, Sat. x. v. 19—22.

you to discover, if you remember the explanations formerly given by me, of some analogous phenomena. The loss of what is valuable in itself, is of course a great affliction. The slightest possibility of such an evil makes the evil itself occur to us, as an object of conception, though not at first, perhaps, as an object of what can be termed fear. Its very greatness however makes it, when thus conceived, dwell longer in the mind; and it cannot dwell long, even as a mere conception, without exciting, by the common influence of suggestion, the different states of mind, associated with the conception of any great evil; of which associate or resulting states, in such circumstances, fear is one of the most constant and prominent. The fear is thus readily excited as an associate feeling; and when the fear has once been excited, as a mere associate feeling, it continues to be still more readily suggested again, at every moment, by the objects that suggested it, and with the perception or conception of which it has recently coexisted. There is a remarkable analogy to this process, in the phenomena of giddiness, to which I have before more than once alluded. Whether the height on which we stand, be elevated only a few feet, or have beneath it a precipitous abyss of a thousand fathoms, our footing, if all other circumstances be the same, is in itself equally sure. Yet though we look down, without any fear, on the gentle slope, in the one case, we shrink back in the other case with painful dismay. The lively conception of the evil which we should suffer in a fall down the dreadful descent, which is very naturally suggested by the mere sight of the precipice, suggests and keeps before us the images of horror in such a fall, and thus indirectly the emotions of fear, that are the natural accompaniments of such images, and that but for those images never would have arisen. We know well, on reflection, that it is a footing of the firmest rock, perhaps, on which we stand, but in spite of reflection, we feel, at least at every other moment, as if this very rock itself were crumbling or sinking beneath us. In this case, as in the case of the traveller, the liveliness of the mere conception of evil that may be suffered, gives a sort of temporary probability to that which would seem to have little likelihood in itself, and which derives thus from mere imagination all the terror that is falsely embodied by the mind in things that exist around.

It is not, then, any simple ratio of probabilities which regulates the rise of our hopes and fears, but of these combined with the magnitude or insignificance of the objects. Yet, whatever may be this mixed proportion of probability and importance, the objects of desires and fears are not to be considered as essentially distinct; since these opposite emotions arise, as we have seen, from the same objects, considered in different relations to us. There is nothing which, if it be not absolutely indifferent to us, may not excite both hope and fear, as the circumstances of our relation to it vary. This contrast of the mere circumstances, in which the opposite emotions arise, may save us from much discussion. It would be superfluous to consider all our desires in a certain order, and then to consider all our fears in a certain order, since we could only repeat, as to the one set of feelings, the observations previously made on the feelings that are contrasted with them. The consideration of our desires will be sufficient, of itself, to illustrate both sets of emotions, with a few remarks that may occasionally suggest themselves on the emotions of the opposite kind.

What, then, are our desires, or rather, what are the objects which excite our desires? for, with the mere feelings themselves I may suppose you to be fully acquainted; and any attempt to define them, as feelings, must involve the use of some word exactly synonymous, or will convey no meaning whatever.

To desire, it is essential that the object appear to us good; or rather, to appear to us good, and to appear to us desirable, are truly the same thing; our only conception of what is good, as an immediate object of desire, being that it excites in us, when considered by us, this feeling of desire. If all things had been uniformly indifferent to all mankind, it is evident that they could not have formed any classes of things as good or evil. What we do not desire may be conceived by us to be good, relatively to others who desire it, but cannot seem to be good, relatively to us. It would be as absurd to say, that we think that good which we should be very sorry to possess, or even which we should be wholly indifferent whether we possessed or not, as it would be absurd to say, that we think that object beautiful, from the sight of which we shrink with an unpleasant feeling as often as we behold it, or which, when we turn on it our most observant gaze, excites in us no emotion whatever.

When I say that to appear to us good, and to appear to us desirable, are only synonymous phrases, you cannot need to be told, that the good of which I speak, as synonymous with desirableness,—as that, in short, which immediately influences our actions, through the medium of our desires, is not to be confounded with moral good, nor even with absolute physical good. What we desire, far from being always good, in the sense in which that word corresponds with the phrases virtuous or agreeable to the divine will, is often completely opposed to it. We may feel that we are desiring what is

inconsistent with moral rectitude, and yet continue to desire it:—

> Video meliora, proboque;
> Deteriora sequor.

This is not what Medea only could say. It is the melancholy feeling of many minds that are deserters from virtue, indeed, but that have still for the calmness and holiness of virtue, all that respect which does not imply absolute obedience; and that, in yielding to an influence, of which they feel all the seduction, are rather captivated by vice than blinded by it. Even with respect to mere physical good, without regard to moral excellence, we may desire what we know will be ultimately of injury to us, far greater than the temporary pleasure which it promises to yield; and, though it appear to us injurious upon the whole, and would be far from being desired by us, if it had no present charms, we may yet prefer it from the influence of those present charms, which are sufficient of themselves to constitute desirableness. The good, therefore, which is synonymous with desirableness, is not necessarily and uniformly, however generally it may be, consistent with our own greatest advantage, or with moral propriety in our choice. It can be defined in no other way than simply as that which appears to us desirable, the desire itself being the only test, as it is the only proof of tendency in objects to excite desire. That immediate good, then, of whatever kind it may be, which we term desirableness, because it is instantly followed by desire, absolute physical good, moral good, are three phrases which have very different meanings; yet, obvious as the distinction is, we are very apt to confound them, merely because we have applied to them the same term, or at least to distinguish them very loosely; and from this confusion has arisen much of the controversy with respect to the influence of motives, and of the controversy also with respect to the universal influence of self-love in our benevolent affections,—disputations that, in the mode in which they have generally been managed, seem to me to have thrown as little light on the theory of morals as they have contributed to the advancement of practical morality.

It is not, then, the highest absolute physical advantage, nor the most undoubted moral excellence, which, as soon as perceived, is instantly followed by our choice; that is to say, which forms necessarily the immediate good or desirableness of which I am at present treating; the tendency of objects to excite in us emotions of desire. They may coincide with it indeed, and they may produce it, but they do not constitute it. In many instances, they may render immediately desirable what otherwise would not have seemed to us good, or would even have seemed to us evil; pain, for example, and privations of various kinds; which, but for views of ultimate advantage, or of moral propriety, we should have feared rather than chosen: but though there are minds to which those greater motives can make pain and every form of present evil an object of choice, and, in some cases, of ardent desire, there are also minds to which the same views of advantage and of moral propriety will not render the pains or privations that are to produce the greatest ultimate good sufficiently desirable to influence their feeble will; minds, that consider objects chiefly as present or future, near or remote, to which a moment is more than a distant age, a distant age but a moment; and the pleasure of an hour, therefore, if it be the pleasure of the hour that is already smiling on them, far more precious than the happiness of immortality. Desire or choice itself, then, thus varying in different minds, is a proof only of the attraction of the object chosen; that attraction to which, of whatever kind it may be, I have given the name of immediate desirableness, in reference to the instant desire or choice which is its consequent. But though the choice is of course a proof of the attraction which has induced the choice, it is far from being a proof of that preponderance of ultimate gain, which it might be worldly prudence to prefer, or of that moral rectitude, which is the only object of virtuous preference. That mind is most prudent, in the common sense of the term, to which the greatest amount of ultimate probable advantage is that which uniformly renders objects most desirable; that mind is most virtuous, to which, in like manner, the moral propriety of certain preferences is that which uniformly confers on objects their prevailing attraction. But still, as I before remarked, we desire objects not merely as being morally worthy of our choice, or ultimately productive of the greatest amount of personal advantage to us, but for various other reasons, which constitute their immediate desirableness, as much, in many cases, or much more than any views of morality or calculations of selfish gain.

That we do not act always with a view to moral good, no one denies; for, of an assertion so proud, the conscience of every one would, in this case, be a sufficient confutation; and it is only a wretched sophistry which makes us less ready to admit that we act, in innumerable cases, with as little immediate view, at the very moment of our desire, to our selfish gain as to morality.

I shall not, however, at present enter fully on this discussion, which involves some of the most interesting inquiries in morals. But, with a view to the discussion, in which we may afterwards be engaged, I must re-

quest you to bear in mind the distinction of that good which is synonymous with desirableness, and of which the only test or proof is the resulting desire itself, from absolute physical good that admits of calculation, or from that moral good which conscience at once measures and approves. That which we desire must, indeed, always be desirable; for this is only to state, in other words, the fact of our desire. But, though we desire what seems to us for our advantage, on account of this advantage, it does not therefore follow that we desire only what seems to us advantageous; and that what is desirable must therefore imply, in the very moment of the incipient desire, some view of personal good. It implies, indeed, that satisfaction will be felt in the attainment of our desire, and uneasiness in the failure of it; but the satisfaction is the result of the attainment, not the motive to the desire itself, at the moment when the desire arose; as the uneasiness is the result of the failure, not a feeling preceding the desire, and prompting it. The desire, in short, must have existed primarily, before satisfaction could have been felt in the attainment of its object, or regret when the object was not attained. To say that we can desire only what is desirable, is then to say nothing in support of the theory, which would make our advantage the only motive of our desires; unless it could be shown by some other argument, founded on actual observation or analysis, that the feeling of our advantage, in some respects, precedes uniformly all our desires, so as to be, in truth, that which constitutes, in every case, the immediate and simple desirableness. If, on the contrary, it appear that we desire many things which, though they may contribute directly or indirectly to our advantage, are yet desired by us immediately, and without any view to this advantage, at the moment at which the desire arose, the argument, from the mere fact of the desire itself, must be absolutely nugatory. It either says nothing whatever, or by confounding the immediate desirableness with our own personal gain, it begs or it assumes the very point in question.

Desirableness, then, does not necessarily involve the consideration of any other species of good, it is the relation of certain objects to certain emotions, and nothing more; the tendency of certain objects, as contemplated by us to be followed by that particular feeling which we term desire.

I have said, that, with the feeling of desire as the mere emotion thus produced by certain objects, you must all be sufficiently acquainted. It is a feeling which is, of course, in some degree complex, as implying always, together with the vivid feeling that arises on the prospect of good, the conception of the object which seems desirable; but the vivid feeling combined with this conception, seems to me of a peculiar kind, or at least to be something more than can be reduced to any of those elementary feelings which have been considered by us. It is not mere approbation or love of an object, as capable of affording us a certain amount of enjoyment, but that which results from such love, as its effect. It is not the mere regret that is felt on the absence of a beloved object, but a prospective feeling, which may or may not attend that retrospective regret, and which, far from being painfully depressing, like regret, is, at least in many of its forms, one of the most delightful excitements of which our mind is susceptible, the embellisher of existence, and the creator of the greater portion of that happiness which it seems at the time only to present to our distant gaze. Love of an object, regret at the absence of that object, these feelings we may discover by analysis: but discovering these, we discover rather what gives birth to our wishes than what constitutes them; the sunbeams and the kindling incense from which the phœnix arises, rather than the vigorous bird itself, immortal in the very changes of its seeming mortality.

To enumerate the objects of our desire and fear, would be to enumerate almost every object which exists arround us on our earth, and almost every relation of these objects, without taking into account the variety of wishes more fantastic, which our wild imagination is capable of forming. A complete enumeration of all the possibilities of human wishes, is almost as little to be expected as a complete gratification of all the wishes of man, whose desires are as unlimited as his power is bounded. The most important, however, may be considered as comprehended in the following series: First, our desire of continued existence, without any immediate regard to the pleasure which it may yield; secondly, our desire of pleasure, considered directly as mere pleasure; thirdly, our desire of action; fourthly, our desire of society; fifthly, our desire of knowledge; sixthly, our desire of power, direct, as in ambition, or indirect, as in avarice; seventhly, our desire of the affection or esteem of those around us; eighthly, our desire of glory; ninthly, our desire of the happiness of others; and, tenthly, our desire of the unhappiness of those whom we hate. On these it is my intention to offer a few brief remarks, in the order in which I have now stated them.

I must observe, however, in the first place, that each of these desires may exist in different forms, according to the degree of probability of the attainment of its object. When there is little if any probability, it con-

stitutes what is termed a mere wish; when the probability is stronger, it becomes what is called hope; with still greater probability, expectation; and, with a probability that approaches certainty, confidence. This variation of the form of the desire, according to the degrees of probability, is of course not confined to any particular desire, but may run through all the desires which I have enumerated, and every other desire of which the mind is or may be supposed to be capable.

Hope, therefore, important as it is to our happiness, is not to be considered as a distinct emotion, but merely as one of the forms in which all our desires are capable of existing. It is not the less valuable on this account, however, but, on the contrary, the more truly precious, since it thus confers on us, not one delight only, but every thing, or almost every thing which it is in our power even to wish. What hour of our waking existence is there to which it has not given happiness or consolation?

I need not speak of the credulous alacrity of our wishes, in our early years, when we had only trifles indeed to desire, but trifles which were as important to us as the more splendid baubles that were probably to occupy, with a change of follies, our maturer ambition. "Gay hope is theirs," is one of the expressions, in reference to the happiness of boyhood, in Gray's well-known Ode; and there can be no question that even at that period, when we do not look very far forward, still a great part of the happiness that is felt, even when there is so much boisterous merriment of the present, is derived from a prospect of that little futurity which is never wholly absent from the view,—a futurity which may not, in this case, extend beyond the happy period of the next holidays, but which is still a field of hope, as much as that ampler field which is ever opening wider and wider on the gaze of manhood. In opening, indeed, thus wider and wider, it extends itself only to extend the empire of our wishes. There is, then, no happiness which hope cannot promise, no difficulty which it cannot surmount, no grief which it cannot mitigate. It is the wealth of the indigent, the health of the sick, the freedom of the captive. There are thoughts of future ease, which play with a delightful illusion around the heart of him who has been born in poverty, bred in poverty; who, since the very hour when his arms were first capable of as much labour as could earn one morsel of his scanty meal, has spent his life, not in labour merely, but in unremitting fatigue; to whom, since that very hour, a day of ease has been as much unknown as a day of empire, with the exception of that single day, which, in its weekly return, is a season of comfort at once to the body and to the mind; giving rest to him who has no other rest, and revealing to him, at the same time, that future world which is the world of those who have toiled on earth, at least as much as the world of those who have subsisted by the toils of others. On the bed of sickness, how ready is the victim of disease to form those flattering presages which others cannot form; to see, in the tranquil looks of those who assume a serenity which they do not feel, a confident expectation of recovery, which has long in their hearts given place to despair; and to form plans of many future years, perhaps in that very hour which is to be the last hour of earthly existence. If we could see all those wild visions of future deliverance, which rise, not to the dreams merely, but to the waking thought of the galley-slave who has been condemned to the oar for life, we should see, indeed, what might seem madness to every heart but his, to which these visions are in some measure like the momentary possession of the freedom of which he is for ever to be deprived; and, in this very madness of credulous expectation, so admirably adapted to a misery that admits of no earthly expectation which reason can justify, we should see at once the omnipotence of the principle of hope, and the benevolence of him who has fixed that principle in our minds, to be the comfort even of despair itself, or at least of miseries, in which all but the miserable themselves would despair.

Such is the influence of hope through all the years of our existence. As soon as we have learned what is agreeable, it delights us with the prospect of attaining it; as soon as we have lost it, it delights us with the prospect of its return. It is our flatterer and comforter in boyhood; it is our flatterer and comforter in years which need still more to be flattered and comforted. What it promises, indeed, is different in these different years; but the kindness and irresistible persuasion with which it makes the promise are still the same; and while we laugh in advanced age at the easy confidence of our youth, in wishes which seem incapable of deceiving us now, we are still, as to other objects of desire, the same credulous, confiding beings, whom it was then so easy to make happy. Nor is it only over terrestrial things that it diffuses its delightful radiance. The power which attends us with consolation, and with more than consolation, through the anxieties and labours of our life, does not desert us at the close of that life which it has blessed or consoled. It is present with us in our last moment. We look to scenes which are opening on us above, and we look to those around us, with an expectation still stronger than the strongest hope, that, in the world which we are about to enter, we shall not have only remembrances of what we loved and revered

on earth, but that the friendships from which it is so painful to part, even in parting to heaven, will be restored to us there, to unite us again in affection more ardent, because unmingled with the anxieties of other cares, and in still purer adoration of that great being, whose perfections, as far as they were then dimly seen by us, it was our delight to contemplate together on earth, when it was only on earth that we could trace them, but on that earth which seemed holier, and lovelier, and more divine, when thus joined in our thought with the excellence that made it.

Hope, then, which is thus universal in its promises, and unceasing in the influence which it exercises, is not to be considered as one emotion merely, but as all our desires, however various their objects may be. We wish, we hope, we expect, we confide; or, if there were other words which could express different degrees of the probability of our attainment of what we desire, we might employ them with propriety; since every additional degree of probability, or even any greater vividness of interest in the object itself, varies in some measure the nature of the desire which we feel. It is enough for you, however, to understand, with respect to these words which express the more remarkable shades of difference, that to wish, to hope, to expect, to trust, though expressive of feelings that must always be different, whether the objects of these feelings be different or the same, yet do not form classes of feelings essentially distinct from our general emotions of desire, but are merely those emotions themselves, in all their variety, according as we conceive that there is more or less likelihood of our obtaining the particular objects which we are desirous of obtaining. In a competition of any kind, in which there are many candidates, there is perhaps some one candidate who is aware that he has very little interest, and who has, therefore, scarcely more than a mere wish of success. He canvasses the electors, and he finds, to his surprise perhaps, that many votes are given to him. He no longer wishes merely, he hopes; and, with every new vote that is promised, his hope grows more vivid. A very few votes additional convert the hope into expectation; and when a decided majority is engaged to him by promise, even expectation is too weak a word to express the emotion which he feels; it is trust, confidence, reliance, or whatever other word we may choose to express that modification of desire which is not the joy of absolute certainty, like the actual attainment of an agreeable object, and yet scarcely can be said to differ from certainty. In this series of emotions, nothing has occurred to modify them but a mere increase of probability in the successive stages; and the same scale of probabilities, which admits of being thus accurately measured in an election that is numbered by votes, exists truly, though perhaps less distinctly, in every other case of desire in which we rise from a mere wish to the most undoubting confidence.

You will understand, then, without the necessity of any farther illustration, that hope and the various forms of our wishes and reliances, more or less vivid, are not a separate class of emotions, but are only names of all our desires, that vary according to the prospect of attainment which their objects seem to us to present. We may wish, hope, expect, or trust in our attainment of some rattle in childhood, as we wish, hope, expect, or trust that we are to attain the scarf, or garter, or gold, which is the amusement of our riper age. Even when we think of the noblest objects that can fill our mere earthly desires, of the happiness of nations, or of the whole animated world, when the patriot rises to shake some ferocious invader from that throne, to which he had risen by trampling on the bodies of those who had rushed boldly but unsuccessfully forward in the same heroic spirit of national freedom and deliverance, or when the philosopher looks, through many ages of futurity, to the years which, as he trusts, are to perfect the great plans of heaven, in the diffusion of happiness and virtue to mankind, he wishes, hopes, expects, confides, as the triflers around him are wishing and confiding; the only difference is, that the very wishes of the patriot and of the general philanthropist, are wishes which, though they should never be realized, it is dignity to feel even as wishes; and, that the vain and sensual objects which occupy the whole heart of the idle and the profligate, are objects which it is disgraceful to desire with passion, and still greater disgrace, and still greater misery, even for those who have been capable of thus passionately desiring them, to obtain.

There is one other preliminary remark which it may be necessary to make before entering on the consideration of our separate desires. In the arrangement of our emotions, you must have observed that no peculiar place has been set apart by me for the passions; the reason of which is, that our passions are truly no separate class, but merely a name for our desires, when very vivid, or very permanent. It is impossible to state in words at what degree of vividness or permanence we cease to speak of a desire, and term it a passion. This, it is probable, that different individuals would do very variously; but all, unquestionably, would use these different terms, when there is any very remarkable difference in these respects. A slight desire of higher station, which comes upon us at intervals, and is soon forgotten in the cares or in the delightful occupations of

domestic life, no one would think of calling a passion more than the individual himself; who smiles, perhaps, sometimes at his own little dreams of ambition, as if they were the idle musings of another mind, and, on awaking, looks at the tranquillity and happiness around him with a sort of gladness that his dream was only a dream. It is when the wish of worldly power and splendour is not the emotion of a single minute, but the exclusive or almost exclusive wish of the heart, when it allows other desires occasionally to intervene, but recurs still with additional force, as if to occupy again what is its own possession, and to feed on new wishes of advancement, or new projects of obtaining what it wished before; it is then when the desire is vivid and permanent that we term it a passion, and look perhaps with pity on him who is its victim.

After these remarks, which, I flatter myself, have pointed out to you some distinctions which it may be of importance for us to remember in our subsequent discussions, I proceed to the consideration of our desires in the order stated by me.

The first of these is our desire of our own continued existence. Strong and permanent as our wishes of delight may be, it is not happiness only which we desire, nor misery only which we dread; we have a wish to exist, even without regard at the moment of the wish to the happiness which might seem all that could render existence valuable; and annihilation itself, which implies the impossibility of uneasiness of any kind, is to our conception almost like a species of misery. Nor is it only when life presents to us the appearance of pleasure, wherever we look, and when our heart has an alacrity of enjoying it, wherever it is to be found, that the desire of a continuation of this earthly existence remains. It remains, and, in many instances, is perhaps still stronger in those years when death might seem to afford only the prospect of a ready passage to a better world.

Da spatium vitæ, multos da, Jupiter, annos:
Hoc recto vultu, solum hoc et pallidus optas.*

"O, my coevals!" says the author of the Night Thoughts, at a time when he was himself advanced in age,

O, my coevals! remnants of yourselves
Poor human ruins, tottering o'er the grave!
Shall we, shall aged men, like aged trees,
Strike deeper our vile root, and closer cling,
Still more enamour'd of this wretched soil! †

To explain the apparent inconsistency of the increased love of life that is so frequently observed in old age, when the means of enjoyment are diminished, we must remember, that, by the influence of the suggesting principle, life, as a mere object of conception to the old, retains still many charms which in reality it does not possess. The life, of which they think, is the life of which they have often thought; and that life was a life full of hopes and enjoyments. The feelings, therefore, which were before associated with the notion of the loss of life, are those which still occur, on the contemplation of its possible loss, with the addition of those enjoyments which a long series of years must have added to the complex conception, and the loss of which, as one great whole, seems to be involved in the very notion of the loss of that life of which the enjoyments formed a part. It must be remembered, too, that if life be regarded as in any degree a blessing, the mere circumstance of the increased probability of its speedy termination must confer on it no slight accession of interest. This is only one of many instances of the operation of a very general principle of our nature; the likelihood of loss being itself almost a species of endearment, or at least producing, in every case, a tenderness that is soon diffused over the object which we contemplate, that seems thus to be more lovely in itself, merely because, from its precariousness, we love it more.

Absurd, however, as the desire may seem in such cases, it is, as a general feeling of our nature, a most striking proof of the kindness of that being who, in giving to man duties which he has to continue for many years to discharge in a world which is preparatory to the nobler world that is afterwards to receive him, has not left him to feel the place in which he is to perform the duties allotted to him, as a place of barren and dreary exile. He has given us passions which throw a sort of enchantment on every thing which can reflect them to our heart, which add to the delight that is felt by us in the exercise of our duties,—a delight that arises from the scene itself on which they are exercised, from the society of those who inhabit it with us, from the offices which we have performed and continue to perform.

While these earthly mitigations of our temporary exile, if I may venture to speak of exile in relation to a world which we have not yet reached, are thus bounteously granted to us, there may indeed be a fear of death, more than is perhaps necessary for this benevolent purpose, in the breasts of those who are too abject in their sensual and sordid wishes to think of heaven, or too conscious of guilt to think of it with tranquillity. But to minds of nobler hopes, which, even in loving life and all which life presents, have not forgotten how small a part it is of that existence which it only opens to them, what objects are presented; I will not say, to reconcile them merely to the simple transition

* Juvenal, Sat. x. v. 188, 189.
† Night iv. v. 109—115.

in which death consists, but to make this very transition a change which, but for the tears of other eyes and the griefs of other hearts, they may smile tranquilly, or almost exult to see approaching! There are minds, indeed, which may truly exult at this parting moment, which can look back on the conflicts of this fading scene, like the victor of some well-fought field, who closes his eye in the hour of some triumph, that has been the triumph of freedom more than of war, amid the blessings of nations; and who, in the very praises and blessings that are the last sounds of life to his ear, hears rather the happiness which he has produced, than the glory which he has won.

> Death is victory;
> It binds in chains the raging ills of life:
> Lust and Ambition, Wrath and Avarice,
> Dragged at his chariot-wheel, applaud his power.
> That ills corrosive, cares importunate,
> Are not immortal too, O Death! is thine.
> And feel we, then, but dread from thought of thee?*
> Death, the great Counsellor, who man inspires
> With every nobler thought and fairer deed!
> Death, the deliverer, who rescues man!
> Death, the rewarder, who the rescued crowns![†]

How admirable is that goodness which knows so well how to adapt to each other feelings that are opposite, which gives to man a love of life enough to reconcile him, without an effort, to the earth which is to be the scene of his exertions; and which, at the same time, gives those purer and more glorious wishes which make him ready to part with the very life which he loved.

LECTURE LXVI.

III. PROSPECTIVE EMOTIONS.—1. CONSIDERATION OF THE DESIRE OF CONTINUED EXISTENCE, CONCLUDED.—2. DESIRE OF PLEASURE.

In my last Lecture, Gentlemen, I began the consideration of that order of our emotions which, from their relation to objects as future, I distinguished from our immediate and retrospective emotions, by the name of prospective,—an order which comprehends our desires and fears, the most important of all the affections of our mind, as the immediate directors of our conduct, which our other mental affections, of whatever species, influence only indirectly through the medium of our wishes.

With respect to this order in general, I endeavoured to explain to you how the same objects, agreeable or disagreeable, may, in different circumstances of our relation to these objects, as present or absent, give rise both to hope and to fear; and how different the feeling of the mere desirableness of an object, which is nothing more than the relation of certain objects perceived or conceived as antecedents to our desires as consequents, is from the feeling of the greater amount of personal advantage, or of the moral propriety of certain actions; both which considerations, indeed, may produce the tendency to desire, in some cases, but do not necessarily constitute it in all; the clearest perception of greater advantage from certain actions which it would be worldly prudence to prefer, and of moral propriety in certain actions which it would be virtue to prefer, being often insufficient to overcome other circumstances of momentary attraction, which thus obtain our momentary preference, even though felt to be in absolute opposition to our good upon the whole, and to that virtue, which is itself, indeed, a part, and the most important part of this general good.

Since the objects of desire, which are so various to different persons, that perhaps no two objects are regarded with the same interest and choice by any two individuals, are not limited even to the infinity of existing things, but comprehend whatever the wildest imagination can conceive, I stated to you the impossibility of any exact enumeration of these objects, such as might enable us to treat compendiously of the whole boundless variety of human wishes. All which I could venture to do, therefore, was to class the principal objects that seem in their nature to involve that species of attraction which, as immediately antecedent to all our wishes, I have termed desirableness; that is to say, the most important of those objects which cannot, in the ordinary circumstances of our nature, be contemplated by us without exciting the emotion of desire. Of these I enumerated the following:—Our desire of the mere continuation of our being; our desire of pleasure; our desire of action; our desire of society; our desire of knowledge; our desire of power, whether of direct power, as in what is commonly termed ambition, or of indirect power, as in avarice; our desire of the affection or esteem of those around us; our desire of glory; our desire of the happiness of others; our desire of the unhappiness of those whom we hate.

All these desires, however, I stated, may exist in various forms, according to the different degrees of probability of attainment; a simple wish, hope, expectation, confidence, being the most remarkable gradations in the scale; though there are various intervening shades of difference, to which no name is given. They are not species of desires essentially distinct, but modes of all our desires.

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* And feel I, Death! no joy from thought of thee?—in the original.

† Young's Night Thoughts, Night iii. v. 495—500, 511—515.

Our wishes, when they exist with little force and permanence, are termed simply desires; when they rise more vividly, and occupy the mind more exclusively, they are termed passions. The vividness, and permanence, therefore, are the only circumstances which distinguish our passions; not any essential difference in the particular nature of the desires themselves. The slightest wish, which we scarcely feel as a very vivid emotion, becomes a passion when it affects us strongly and lastingly. The most ardent passion, which may have occupied our whole soul for half our life, if it were to rise only slightly and faintly, would be termed a mere desire.

After these general preliminary distinctions, I proceeded to the consideration of our particular desires; and, in my last Lecture, offered some remarks on the first of these, in my order of enumeration. Of the great fact of that desire of life which you must see operating universally around you, you could not need to be informed; and my observations, therefore, were chiefly illustrative of that beautiful adaptation of our nature to the scene on which we have to discharge the various duties of men, that is effected by this principle of our constitution,—a principle which renders the scene of those duties itself delightful, as the scene of our continued being,—of that life which we love in itself, and which is associated, in our conception, with the scene on which every moment of our life has passed.

Instead, therefore, of viewing, in our love of life, a principle disgraceful to our nature, we may see in it far more truly a principle which does honour to our nature, because it answers admirable purposes in our moral constitution. What happiness would it be to those who were to be confined in the most gloomy prison for a series of years, if, during all this long period of confinement, the very prison itself were to seem to them a delightful habitation, and when the hour of deliverance came, we had only to open the gate and lead the prisoner forth to sunshine and the balmy breeze, which were not to be the less delightful, then, on account of the captivity in which his former years were spent! I need not point out to you how exactly the case now imagined corresponds in every circumstance, except in the gloom and narrowness of the prisoner's dismal abode, with that which truly constitutes our situation as temporary inhabitants of this delightful earth.

It is not the mere love of life which is disgraceful in itself; but the cowardly love of it, which does not yield to nobler desires. Every wish which we can feel for objects that are apt to affect ourselves, has of course relation to the future, and therefore to some protraction of our existence, the wish of which must consequently be involved in every other personal wish, the most honourable which the mind can form. To desire the continuation of life, is to fear the loss of it; and to fear the loss of it, is to fear every thing which may bring it into danger. Even the brave man, then, will avoid danger, where no virtue would lead to the exposure; but when virtue requires exposure, he will scarcely feel that it is peril to which he is exposing himself. Glory, the good of mankind, the approbation of his own heart, the approbation of God,—these are all which the brave man sees; and he who, seeing these, can sacrifice them to the love of mere animal life, is indeed unworthy, I will not say of vanquishing in a cause which it is noble to prevail, but even of perishing in a cause in which it is noble to perish.

The next desire to the consideration of which I proceed, is our desire of pleasure; to which the fear of pain may be regarded as opposed. Annihilation indeed seems to us an evil, independently of the happiness or misery of which it may deprive us, or from which it may free us. We love the mere continuance of our being, but we love still more our well-being; and existence is valuable to us chiefly as that which can be rendered happy. He who formed us to be happy, of course formed us to be desirous of happiness. The desire, indeed, may be considered as almost involved in the very notion of happiness itself, which could scarcely be conceived by us as happiness, if it were not conceived as that which is an object of desire.

I may say of the love of pleasure what I have said of the love of life. As it is not the love or preservation of life which is unworthy of a brave and honourable man, but the love of a life that is inconsistent with nobler objects of desire; it is, in like manner, not the love of pleasure which is unworthy of us, for pleasure, in itself, when arising from a pure source, is truly as pure as the source from which it flows; but the love of pleasure that is inconsistent with our moral excellence. The delight which virtue gives, and which devotion gives, is no small part of the excellence even of qualities so noble as devotion and virtue. We love men more, we love God more, because it is impossible for us to love them more without an increase of our delight. In this sense, indeed, to borrow a beautiful line, which expresses much in a very few words,

> Pleasure is nought but Virtue's gayer name.*

Even of pleasures which do not flow immediately from virtue, but of which virtue is far from forbidding the enjoyment, how many are

* Young's Night Thoughts, Night viii. v. 573.

there which nature is continually inviting us to enjoy! There are seasons, in which we cannot move a single step, or look around us, or inhale a single breath of air, without some additional happiness. To move is delightful, to rest is delightful. It seems almost as if the same sun, which is everywhere diffusing light, were diffusing everywhere happiness; and not to be happy, and not to love the sources of happiness around us, seem to us almost like ingratitude to the Author of these, and a sort of rebellion against that benevolence which so manifestly wills our enjoyment. The words with which Beattie concludes one of the most beautiful stanzas of his principal poem, express, in this respect, a sentiment with which it is impossible for us not to sympathize.

O how canst thou renounce the boundless store
Of charms which Nature to her votary yields!
The warbling woodland, the resounding shore,
The pomp of groves, and garniture of fields;
All that the genial ray of morning gilds,
And all that echoes to the song of even,
All that the mountain's sheltering bosom shields,
And all the dread magnificence of Heaven,
O how canst thou renounce, and hope to be forgiven?*

The love of pleasure, then, is far from being unworthy of man, since all which we admire in the universe, all which raises us to admiration of the Author of the universe, is accompanied with it. We cannot love virtue without loving a source of delight; we cannot love him, who has made us capable of loving virtue, without a delight still more ardent. We must love pleasure if we love whatever is worthy of being loved.

But the pleasures that attend virtue, or which virtue approves, are not the only pleasures which man is capable of feeling. He may have a sort of dreadful satisfaction in the fulfilment of the most malignant desires, or he may become the self-degraded slave of his own appetites. There are sensual gratifications, of which, though virtue may not forbid the temperate use, she forbids the intemperate excess; not because they are pleasures, but because they render us incapable of discharging duties which we have to perform; or, which is a still greater evil, deprive us even of the very wish of discharging our duties. In a former Lecture I endeavoured to describe to you the melancholy progress of a mind which has yielded itself gradually with fewer and fewer struggles, a slave to the tyranny of sensual passions,—of passions which stupify still more than they enslave. It is this stupefaction of better powers and feelings which, far more than the loss of mere fortune and health, is the most pathetic or the most dreadful image in every such description of the sacrifices of the dissolute.

* Minstrel, book i. stanza ix.

Your friends avoid you. Brutishly transform'd,
They hardly know you; or, if one remains
To wish you well, he wishes you in heaven.
Despised, unwept, you fall, who might have left
A sacred, cherish'd, sadly pleasing name,
A name still to be utter'd with a sigh.†

Even if nothing more than mere sensual pleasure were to be taken into account, without comprehending, in our estimate, the miseries of shame and remorse and ruined fortune, and without any regard to those sublimer delights, which the sensual lose, and which they perhaps care not for losing, because they are incapable of conceiving them; there can be no question that in this least important part of happiness, which alone they value, they are inferior to those who enjoy indeed those external pleasures, which it is only gratitude to heaven to enjoy, but who think of their senses as the sources of instruction more than as the medium of indolent luxury. We are not to consider, in our estimate, the momentary enjoyments only; we are to consider the sensual pains, as well as the sensual delights; the languor, the satiety, the sickness, the days that in ill health hang heavily without amusement, and the nights without repose, in which the mind that has no consolation within, is still more restless than the restless body. Yet these are the disquietudes, which, if combined with a dull repetition of amusements that are amusements no more, of splendour that ceases to afford pleasure, because it is a splendour which is even more familiar to us than the want of it, and of intercourse with smiling faces and vacant hearts, which agree with our own, as truly in the listlessness and weariness that are felt as in the cheerfulness that is affected, are what, if we have unfortunately entered on such a life, we strangely term a life of gaiety.

Whom call we gay? That honour has been long
The boast of mere pretenders to the name.
The innocent are gay—The lark is gay,
That drics his feathers, saturate with dew,
Beneath the rosy cloud, while yet the beams
Of day-spring overshoot his humble nest.
The peasant too, a witness of his song,
Himself a songster, is as gay as he.
But save me from the gaiety of those
Whose headaches nail them to a noon-day bed!‡

The innocent, indeed, are the gay; and their gaiety is not sickness and vexation, but happiness. It is a gaiety which flows so readily around them, that it is not easy to distinguish how much of it is derived from without, and how much of it has its source within. All which we perceive, is that they are happy, and that their happiness is not to be obtained without the innocence which leads to it. With this purity of heart, the very senses enjoy pleasures, which require no cost to produce them, but which surpass all the enjoyments which the extravagant

† Armstrong's Art of preserving Health, 200.
‡ Cowper's Task, book i. v. 491—500.

luxury of the sensual can devise. In the first vernal walk of the lovers of nature, the sight of a single cottage, which speaks to them of the happiness of those who dwell in a scene so beautiful, of a single wild-flower, which, at the opening of spring, seems to announce the continued care of that God who is again, as in former years, to cover the earth with all the profusion of his bounty,—gives to them a pleasure, which if the proud and luxurious could purchase by the magnificence of their richest banquets, they would not be magnificent in vain.

The desire of relief from pain may be regarded only as another form of the desire of pleasure; and in this sense, the species of emotion which we have been considering, besides its relation to every accidental pain, comprehends all the desires that are involved in our bodily appetites, as distinguished, in that analysis which we formerly made, from the mere uneasiness which gives occasion to the desire; the desire of food or drink, for example, as distinguished from the mere pain of hunger or thirst, which must exist as sensations before any such desires that are subsequent to the sensations can be felt. In the same way, the desire of relief may be thought to comprehend that emotion which is next to be examined by us, the desire of action; and, to a certain degree, it unquestionably does comprehend it; since long inaction produces a pain in our limbs, which prompts us to the necessary motion, as truly as the long want of food produces a pain of a different sort, which prompts us to have recourse to that which alone can give relief to such a pain. But the action, of which I speak at present as the object of a peculiar species of desire, is far more than this desire of relief from muscular languor; it is a continued exertion, which we do not abandon immediately after freeing our muscles from this uneasiness, which soon passes away at the very beginning of exercise, but prosecute, perhaps, till we produce in them a pain of an opposite kind, the pain of fatigue.

I am aware, indeed, that according to the system of many philosophers, who consider our own selfish enjoyment as the sole object of our wishes, to speak of other desires, after mentioning the desire of pleasure as one of our emotions, must be absolutely superfluous; since the desire of pleasure, according to them, must, in some one of its forms, be the desire of every thing which man can immediately desire. The remarks which I made on this subject in my last Lecture, have prepared you, however, I trust, for seeing the fallacy of this supposition; since, though every thing which we desire must have seemed to us desirable, as the very fact of the desire denotes; and though the attainment of every such desire must be attended with pleasure, it does not therefore follow that the pleasure which truly attends this fulfilment of desire, was the primary circumstance which excited the desire itself. We may feel happiness from exertion of every kind, from society, from the discovery of truth, from the good fortune of our friends, and yet have desired these without any view at the moment of the beginning desire to this resulting happiness, and merely from the constitution of our nature, which leads us to desire knowledge, simply as knowledge, because there is something of which we are ignorant, and which we may readily learn, society simply as society. Nature, indeed, has attached pleasure to these, as she has attached pleasure to many of our functions which we do not exercise on account of that pleasure. But in considering the origin of our desires, we are to think only of what is contemplated by the mind at the very moment when the emotion arises, of the circumstances antecedent to the desire, and not of circumstances which may or may not be its consequents. The mother derives pleasure from loving her new-born infant; and a superficial thinker might say, in this case, as indeed many superficial thinkers have said, that she loves her infant for no other reason than this pleasure, and that but for her own selfish delight, she could see it perish without the slightest concern. A very little observation, however, is sufficient to show us, that the love, in this case, though accompanied with pleasure, is, in its origin, independent of the pleasure, and must have preceded it, or the pleasure could not have been felt; for if there had been no previous emotion of a peculiar love in the mother, to distinguish the infant from every other infant, where are we to find the peculiar pleasure, from which alone the peculiar love is said to be derived? What is so evidently true in this case, is true in many other cases. The emotion arises, and is attended with pleasure; but it does not arise on account of the pleasure. On the contrary, the pleasure is felt, because the emotion has previously arisen, and could not have been felt but for the previous emotion that is gratified. It is, as in journeying to some distant scene, at the call of business or of friendship; the landscape may be beautiful, and may delight us, therefore, in every stage of our journey, the very exercise itself may be pleasing. Without the journey, it is evident that we could not have enjoyed this beauty of the scene, and this pleasure of the exercise; but we do not journey on account of these delights. At the same call, we should have traversed the same road, though the landscape had been dreary and desolate on every side, and though fatigue had converted the exercise itself into uneasiness. "Whate'er the mo-

tive," it has been said by a poetical defender of this doctrine,—

> Whate'er the motive, pleasure is the mark:
> For her, the black assassin draws his sword;
> For her, dark statesmen trim their midnight lamp,
> To which no single sacrifice may fall:
> For her, the saint abstains; the miser starves;
> The Stoic proud, for pleasure, pleasure scorn'd:
> For her, affliction's daughters grief indulge,
> And find, or hope, a luxury in tears:
> For her, guilt, shame, toil, danger, we defy,
> And with an aim voluptuous, rush on death.*

This, indeed, though in verse, is as sound philosophy as much duller philosophy of the same kind; but powerful as it may be in poetic antithesis, it is as verse only that it is powerful, not as a statement of philosophic truth. We desire, indeed, all these objects; and however ill-fitted some of them may appear to be productive of delight, we may perhaps feel pleasure in all these objects, as we certainly should feel pain, if we were not to obtain what we desire, whatever the object of desire may have been; but it is not the pleasure which was the circumstance that prompted our desire when it arose, it was the desire previously awakened which was accompanied with pleasure, or was productive of pleasure, the pleasure being, in all these cases, the effect of the previous desire, and necessarily presupposing it. We desire the happiness of others, and we have pleasure in this desire; but, with the same capacity of mere love as now, we should have desired the happiness of others, though no direct pleasure to ourselves had followed our generous wish. We desire knowledge, and we are delighted with the attainment of it; but if the constitution of our mind had continued in every other respect the same as now, we should have felt curiosity, though it had terminated only in simple knowledge.

It is the very nature of our mind, as originally constituted with certain tendencies, that some objects should seem to it immediately desirable; as it is its very nature that certain objects should seem to it immediately proportioned in symmetry, or related to each other in various ways. When we think of the series of numbers, two, four, eight, sixteen, we perceive that each is the double of the number preceding, and we perceive this, perhaps, without any pleasure whatever, certainly at least independently of any pleasure which may be felt. The mere conception of the numbers, as a primary feeling, gives rise to the feeling of the relation of the parts of the series, whether the discovery of the relation be or be not accompanied with the pleasure. It is, in short, the very nature of the numbers, so conceived together, to appear to us so related. It is the same with that relation of a different kind, which I have termed desirableness. When we are assured of the particulars of any fact connected with a speculation in which we may be engaged, it is impossible for this fact to be considered by us as something of which we are capable of obtaining more accurate knowledge without being instantly desirable, that is to say, without exciting in instant sequence our desire of knowing it fully. It seems to us desirable, as immediately as four is perceived by us to be the double of two, and eight of four; and it seems to us desirable, merely from its very nature, as a fact illustrative of our particular speculation, as much as two, four, eight, appear to us related, instantly, and without any conception of the pleasure which we may feel in discovering the relation. Pleasure, indeed, attends the discovery; but it is surely very evident, that there must have been curiosity before the pleasure, or no pleasure could have been felt. Pain or disquietude attends the ungratified curiosity. But, in like manner, there must have been a previous desire of knowledge, or if there was no previous desire of knowing any thing, there could be no pain in the continued ignorance. The pleasure and pain, in short, however early, presuppose always a desire still earlier, or they must have been effects that arose from neither.

The immediate desirableness of objects is then, as I flatter myself you have perceived, something very different from the pleasure which attends the fulfilment of the desire, however much the pleasure, once induced, may afterwards become itself a new circumstance of attraction; and there is not therefore necessarily any redundancy of arrangement, in speaking of other sets of desires, after having treated of the love of pleasure, considered simply as pleasure, or as relief from pain. The very desires, indeed, which are thus separated from the desire of mere pleasure, may, when gratified, afford perhaps as much real delight as those of which pleasure was the simple object. But it is sufficient for our arrangement, that this pleasure, however lively it may be in itself, did not constitute to us the primary and instant desirableness of the object, or, in other words, was not that circumstance which we had immediately in view, at the very moment when our desire arose; the direct antecedent, in a train of feelings, of which that other feeling which we term desire was the consequent, and the instant consequent.

I return, then, to the consideration of those desires which I have thought it necessary to add, even after the desire of pleasure.

The first of these, on the consideration of which I had scarcely entered, was the love of action. To be happy, it is necessary that we be occupied; and, without our thinking of the happiness which results from it, na-

* Young's Night Thoughts, Night viii. v. 558—567.

ture has given us a constant desire of occupation. We must exert our limbs, or we must exert our thought; and when we exert neither, we feel that languor of which we did not think before, but which, when it is felt, convinces us how admirably our desire of action is adapted for the prevention of this very evil, of which we had not thought; as our appetites of hunger and thirst are given to us for the preservation of health, of which we think as little, during the indulgence of our appetites, as we think, during our occupation, of the languor which would overwhelm us if wholly unoccupied. How wretched would be the boy, if he were to be forced to lie, even on the softest couch, during a whole day, while he heard at intervals the gay voices of his playmates without, and could distinguish by these very sounds the particular pastimes in which they were engaged! How wretched, in these circumstances, is man himself; and what fretfulness do we perceive, even on brows of more deliberate thought; on brows, too, perhaps, that in other circumstances, are seldom overcast, if a few successive days of wet and boisterous weather have rendered all escape into the open air, and the exercises which this escape would afford, impossible!

"The sort of bodily pleasure which we derive from exercise," says the author of a very pleasing little French work on the theory of our agreeable feelings, "cannot be analyzed, indeed, without becoming almost insensible. The pleasure which accompanies a motion of the hand, escapes from us by its littleness; but it is not on that account the less real. Do not women every day save themselves from many hours of listless uneasiness, merely by a little motion of the fingers, in some slight work, to which they attach no other value than as it is a source of this very amusement to them? The charm of the particular work itself, and the general pleasure of being occupied, have need of being combined, to make any sensible impression."*

Without the knowledge of the pleasure that is thus felt in mere exertion, it would not be easy for us to look with satisfaction on the scene of human toil around us, which assumes instantly a different aspect when we consider this happy principle of our mental constitution. Though we are apt to think of those who are labouring for others as if they were not labouring for themselves also; and though unquestionably, from our natural love of freedom, any task which is imposed cannot be as agreeable as an occupation spontaneously chosen; we yet must not think that the labour itself is necessarily an evil, from which it would be happiness for man to be freed. Nature has not dealt so hardly with the great multitude, in comparison with whom the smaller number, for whose accommodation she seems to have formed a more sumptuous provision, are truly insignificant, and would be unworthy of this seeming preference, if the provision of their means of luxury were all which is involved in the wealth she bestows on them. The wealth of the individual is valuable, chiefly as it leads to the labour of others, and presents, in the reward which it offers, an agreeable object, to mingle with the pleasure of the occupation, and to sooth and sweeten it, even when it rises to fatigue. How different would the busy scene of the world appear, if we could conceive that no pleasure attended the occupations to which so great a majority of our race would then seem to be condemned, almost like slaves that are fettered to the very instruments of their daily task! How different from that scene in which, though we perceive many labouring, and a few at rest, we perceive in the labourer a pleasure of occupation, which those who rest would often be happy to purchase from him, and which they do sometimes endeavour to purchase by the same means by which he has acquired it,—by exercises as violent and unremitted as his, and which have the distinction only of being of less advantage to the world than those toils by which he at once promotes his own happiness, and contributes to the accommodation of others! It is pleasing thus to perceive a source of enjoyment in the very circumstance which might seem most hostile to happiness,—to perceive in the labour itself, of which the necessity is imposed on man, a consolation for the loss of that very freedom which it constrains.

When we do not labour with our limbs, we must labour with our mind; and happy is it for our peace when this mental occupation can supply to us the place of bodily occupation, which, to the rich at least, must always be in a great degree dependent on the accidents of weather, and in some measure too on the society of others. He to whom a book presents occupation, scarcely can be in circumstances in which this occupation is not in some degree at his command; and it is not easy to say how much of happiness, and of that good humour which is no small part of morality, depends on the mere power of occupying ourselves agreeably with this exercise of our eyes and mind, as others, less happy in intellectual taste, are obliged to depend for occupation on exercises that require a greater number of circumstances to place them in their power.

"Choose any station in life which you may prefer," says Pascal, "combine in it every pleasure which seems capable of satisfying the desires of man; if he whom we

* Théorie des Sentimens Agréables, chap. ii.

imagine placed in this situation, has no occupation or amusement, his languishing felicity will not support him for an hour. He must have something to withdraw him from himself, or he is necessarily unhappy.

"Is not the royal dignity great enough of itself to content him who is the object of so much envy? I see indeed that, in other circumstances, to render a man happy, it is necessary to turn him away from the sight of his own misery, though it be only to occupy his whole mind with the anxiety of bending his knee, or pointing his toe in a dance a little better than before. But is it the same with a king? Must he too be amused like others? Would it not be a sort of insult to the joy which he must feel, to occupy his soul with the thought how he is to adapt his steps to the measure of an air, or how he is to send one billiard ball most adroitly to meet another, instead of leaving him to enjoy in repose the contemplation of that majestic glory which surrounds him? Let us make the trial. Let us leave the most magnificent sovereign without company, without occupation, to enjoy himself in all his magnificence at leisure; and the sovereign whom we have left to himself will be only a human being, that feels his miseries like other people. All this therefore is most carefully provided against; and there are never wanting, round the person of kings, a number of idle courtiers, whose only occupation is to watch the time of their leisure, that they may suggest constantly some new amusement in the intervals of public business or of other amusements, and save them from the dreadful misery of being alone, and of knowing what they are.

"Man is so wretched a being," he continues, "that he would soon be tired of himself, without any external cause of dissatisfaction by the mere feeling of what he is; and yet he is so vain and trifling a creature, that, full as he is of a thousand essential causes of disgust, the most insignificant trifle is sufficient to amuse him; so that if we were to consider him seriously, we should find far more reason to pity him for being capable of finding amusement in things so mean and frivolous, than for the distresses which truly afflict him.

"How happens it that that man who was a short time ago in such deep misery at the loss of his only son, and who, loaded with law-suits and quarrels, was this very morning fretted with so many vexations, thinks of these evils no more? Be not astonished at the change; he is now entirely absorbed in other thoughts. He is occupied, and most completely occupied, in seeing where it is that a stag is to try to get a passage,—a weary stag, which his dogs have been pursuing since six o'clock. Nothing more is necessary to account for the transformation. Miserable as man may be, if only we can succeed in occupying him in any manner, he is no longer miserable, he is happy."*

Of the truth of the great facts which Pascal thus states in a very forcible and lively manner, there can be no question; but the conclusion which he draws from them is surely not the conclusion which is most suitable to our nature, and to the great objects of him by whom we were formed. It is much juster, as it is unquestionably far more pleasing to trace, in this necessity of occupation, the evident marks of the intention of Heaven, that man who is to exist among men, and who has powers of mind and of body capable of benefiting them in innumerable ways, is not to suffer these powers to lie idle. The languor which we feel when we cease from exertion reminds us, at every moment, that we are not formed for inactivity, that we have duties to discharge which may become to us amusement, if we only deign to avail ourselves of pleasures that are constantly in our power, and without which, all amusements and exercises, that are only the mimicry of these very duties, would soon become as wearisome almost as idleness itself, of which we are so ready to feel the misery, when it is total idleness unoccupied with a single pastime. It is not to fly the sight of ourselves, and therefore of our miseries, as Pascal says, that we busy ourselves even in trifles; but because Heaven, that has formed us for action, has formed us therefore necessarily to busy ourselves with something, and to occupy ourselves even with trifles, rather than to be wholly unoccupied. In beginning to exert ourselves, or to take interest in the exertions of others, we have no thought either of misery to be avoided, or of happiness to be attained. We are already busy before we have felt the happiness; we are already idle before we have felt the misery of being idle. Nature does not wait for our reflections and calculations. She gives us, indeed, the power of reflecting and calculating, that we may correct the abuses of our desires; but the desires which are necessary to our own well-being, and to the well-being of those around us, she prompts without our bidding. She has formed man with a nature that may suit him to every situation; the monarch, with those passions and powers which are necessary for the humblest of his subjects; the humblest peasant, with the passions and powers of those who are born of kings. The sovereign occupying himself with those voluntary labours which he denominates amusements, may feel, in these very amusements, the common nature which he shares with those who are toiling around him, in labours which they indeed term labours, and think

* Pensées de Pascal, premiere partie, art. vii. sect. 1, 2.

perhaps that they would be happy, if only they had that ease which he finds so painful, and from which he makes so many efforts to free himself, but which are to them what his amusements are to him, a source of occupation, a mode of shaking off that idleness, which, if general, would be inconsistent with the very being of society; and from which, therefore, man is warned or saved by the languor that attends it. When we look at the guards, and the palace, and the splendour, at all those crowds which seem useful only as supplying to him more speedily every thing which his wants require, it is scarcely possible for us to think that a king has any necessity of labouring; but if we look within his breast, and see the constant appetite for occupation, which this ready supply of all his wants inflames rather than mitigates, we discover the same necessity which we feel in ourselves; the same proof, that man is formed to contribute his share of service to the general labours of mankind, to be active even where this propensity of our nature can have no excitement from individual wants, and to minister, in some sort, to the happiness of others, if he does not choose to be the willing minister of his own unhappiness.

LECTURE LXVII.

III. PROSPECTIVE EMOTIONS.—4. DESIRE OF SOCIETY.—5. DESIRE OF KNOWLEDGE.

GENTLEMEN, after the desires which I examined in my last Lecture, that which is next to be considered by us is our desire of society.

Man, as I have already said, is born in society, and dependent on it, in some of its most delightful forms, for the preservation of his infant being, which, without the protection of those who love him the more for the very helplessness that is consigned to their protection, would seem thrown into the world, only to suffer in it for a few hours, and, ceasing to suffer, to cease also to exist.

If man be thus dependent on society for the preservation of his early existence, he is not less dependent on it for the comfort and happiness of his existence in other years. It is to be the source of all the love which he feels, of all the love which he excites, and therefore of almost all the desires and enjoyments which he is capable of feeling. There is not one of his actions which may not, directly or indirectly, have some relation to those among whom he lives; and I may say even, that there is scarcely a moment of his existence, in which the social affection, in some one of its forms, has not an influence on some feeling or resolution, some delightful remembrance of the past, some project of future benevolence or resentment. We are born, as I have said, in society, and dependent on it for our existence; but, even if we could exist without society, we should not exist as men, not even as savage men; for savages, rude as their intercourse is, are still united together by domestic affinities and friendships, and have one common land, as dear to them, or perhaps more dear to them, than the country of the civilized is to its polished inhabitants. With our immortal spirit, and with all the glorious capacities that are developed in society, we should, but for the society that almost gives us a different soul, be only a species of wild animal, that might not yield as readily perhaps to the stronger animals around as the weak of a less noble race, but which would hold with them at best a perilous contest; miserable within the cave, and trembling to venture beyond it. "Make us single and solitary," says an eloquent Roman moralist, "and what are we? The prey of other animals and their victim, the prey which it would be most easy for them to seize, the victim which it would be most easy for them to destroy. Those other animals have, in their own strength, sufficient protection. If they be born to live apart, each has its separate arms to defend it. Man has no tusks or talons to make him terrible. He is weak and naked; but weak and naked as he is, society surrounds him and protects him. It is this which submits to his power all other living things, and not the earth merely, which seems in some measure his own by birth, but the very ocean, that is to him like another world of beings of a different nature. Society averts from him the attack of diseases, it mitigates his suffering when he is assailed by them, it gives support and happiness to his old age, it makes him strong in the great combat of human life, because it leaves him not alone to struggle with his fortune." "Fac nos singulos: quid sumus? præda animalium et victimæ, ac imbecillissimus* et facillimus sanguis; quoniam cæteris animalibus, in tutelam sui, satis virium est. Quæcunque vaga nascuntur, et actura vitam segregem, armata sunt. Hominem imbecillitas cingit: non unguium vis, non dentium, terribilem ceteris fecit. Nudum et infirmum, societas munit. Societas illi dominium omnium animalium dedit; societas terris genitum, in alienæ naturæ transmisit imperium, et dominari etiam in mari jussit. Hæc morborum impetus arcuit, senectuti adminicula prospexit, solatia contra dolores dedit; hæc *fortes* nos facit, quod licet contra fortunam advocare."†

Of a society to which man thus owes all

* Al. imbecillimus—al. vilissimus.
† Seneca de Beneficiis, lib. iv. c. 18.

his strength as well as all his happiness, it is not wonderful that nature should have formed him desirous; and it is in harmony with that gracious provision, which we have seen realized so effectually in our other emotions, that she has formed him to love the society which profits him, without thinking of the profit which it affords; that is to say, without regard to this benefit, as the primary source of a love that would not have arisen, but from the prospect of the selfish gain. We exist in society, and have formed in it innumerable affections, long before we have learned to sum and calculate the consequences of every separate look and word of kindness, or have measured the general advantage which this spontaneous and ready kindness yields, with the state of misery which we should have existed, if there had been no society to receive and make us happy. These affections, so quick to awake in the very moment almost of our waking being, are ever spreading in the progress of life; because there is no moment to the heart, in which the principle of social union is cold or powerless. The infant does not cling to his nurse more readily than the boy hastens to meet his playmates, and man to communicate his thoughts to man. If we were to see the little crowd of the busy school-room rush out, when the hour of freedom comes, and, instead of mingling in some general pastime, betake themselves each to some solitary spot, till the return of that hour which forced them again together, we should look on them with as much astonishment as if a sudden miracle had transformed their bodily features, and destroyed the very semblance of men. As wonderful would it appear if, in a crowded city, or even in the scattered tents of a tribe of Arabs, or in the huts or very caves of the rudest savages, there were to be no communing of man with man, no voice or smile of greeting, no seeming consciousness of mutual presence, but each were to pass each with indifference, as if they had never met, and were never to meet again, or rather with an indifference which even those cannot wholly feel who have met once in the wildest solitudes, and to whom that moment of accidental meeting was the only tie which connects them afterwards in their mutual recognition. The mere presence of a human being, at least when there is no fear to counteract and overcome the affection, is sufficient to give him a sort of interest in our wishes; certainly, if he be in pain or want, an interest in our compassionate wishes, as if he were not wholly a stranger; or rather, such is our love of society, that to be, in the strictest sense of the term, a stranger, is to us a sort of recommendation, as to be a friend, or even a common acquaintance, is also a recommendation, more or less strong, to the same diffusive regard. Qualities thus seemingly opposite excite an interest that is similar; because, opposite as the qualities are, they are still qualities of man; of one who, whether a stranger or a friend, shares our nature, and who cannot be wholly indifferent to those by whom that common nature is shared.

What is every language but a proof of the agency of that feeling which makes it delightful to us to speak and to listen, because it is delightful to us to make our thoughts pass into other hearts, or to share the thoughts of those other hearts? We use speech, indeed, in its vulgar offices, to express to each other the want of bodily accommodations, which can be mutually supplied by those who know each other's necessities; and, as a medium by which these wants can instantly be made known, it is, in these vulgar offices, unquestionably an instrument of the highest convenience, even though it were incapable of being adapted to any other purpose. But how small a part of that language, which is so eloquent an interpreter of every thought and feeling, is employed for this humble end! If we were to reflect on all those gracious communications, and questions, and answers, and replies, that, in a little society of friends, form, for a whole day a happiness which nothing else could give, the few words significant of mere bodily wants would perhaps scarcely be remembered in our retrospect of an eloquence that was expressive of wants of a very different kind; of that social impulse which, when there are others around who can partake its feelings, makes it almost impossible for the heart, whether sad or sprightly, to be sad or sprightly alone; and to which no event is little, the communication of which can be the expression of regard. In that infinite variety of languages which are spoken by the nations dispersed on the surface of the earth, there is one voice which animates the whole,—a voice which, in every country and every time, and in all the changes of barbarism and civilization, still utters a truth, the first to which the heart has assented, and the last which it can ever lose; the voice of our social nature bringing its irresistible testimony to the force of that universal sympathy, which has found man everywhere, and preserves him everywhere, in the community of mankind.

I have said, that the mere presence of a human being is sufficient to give him a sort of interest in our wishes, except in cases where there is some fear to counteract the affection that is thus formed; and I have made this exception to guard you against the fallacy of the theory, which, by dwelling on the cases that form the exceptions only, and omitting all notice of the happier feelings that are universal and original, would represent the natural state of man,—of him who exists only as he has been an object of affec

tion,—as a state of mutual hostility, in which every individual is at war with every other individual. Of this theory, which, if not first stated, was at least first developed fully by Hobbes, I cannot but think that it would be idle to offer any elaborate confutation, and that the attention which has been paid to it by philosophers, is far greater than it deserves. We need but think of the state in which man is born, of the fondness of the parent for the child, of the child for the parent, of that affection which binds a whole family together, to perceive, that all individuals, who are only those very members of the families which we have been considering, cannot, in any state of society, be the foes of all, or even indifferent to their mutual interests; since, in that case, the whole race of mankind must have ceased to exist before the period at which they could be capable of existing, even in a state of war. Every one, it is said, is born to war with every one! But where are these natural combatants to be found? The army which Cadmus raised from the earth, arose indeed only to combat and to perish in mutual destruction; but they rose vigorous and ready armed. Man is not, in the circumstance of his birth, like those fabulous monsters that sprung, in his mere outward semblance, from the serpent's teeth; he is the offspring of love, and his mind is as different as his origin. If he be born to war with man, he must be preserved for years, when his warfare may be effectual; and where is he to be found in those years of weakness that intervene? In looking for the natural combatants who are to be brought upon the stage of blood, where can the sophist hope to find them, unless he look for them among those whom peace and affection have previously been nurturing? Wherever he finds hate, he must find a love that has preceded it. The state of nature, if it have reference to the infancy of each individual, has reference, therefore, to a period which, instead of enmity, exhibits perhaps the strongest and purest example which could be imagined of disinterested love; and, if it have any other meaning than as significant of those original feelings, amid which every individual of all the tribes of mankind has been bred and sustained, it must relate as much to one state of society as to another. All states in which man can exist, must be alike states that are natural to him; and if man was always what he is now, he was surely, even in the most savage state, not a foe merely; for that is only one of his relations, and an accidental one; but a child, a brother, a father, a member of a tribe, a pitier of the sorrows of others, even though he might occasionally, under the influence of some passing resentment, inflict sufferings which, if he had seen them inflicted by another, he would probably have hastened to relieve.

What, then, is the state of nature, the state of nature of parents, sons, brothers, and tribesmen, in which this enmity of all against all is supposed? It is very evident that to make it such a state as may be consistent with the false theory of society which we are considering, we must not think of man as he is, or as he has ever been known to be. We must take away all the feelings of domestic regard, which are visible wherever he is to be found. Fathers, mothers, children, must be as indifferent to each other, as if no common relation had united them; nay, they must be willing to sacrifice, without compunction, the existence of any one of these, for the most trifling personal advantage; the pity which we now feel so readily for the distress even of our very enemies must, in that case, be absolutely unknown to us, even when the sufferer is she who gave us birth. Is this a state of the nature of man? or have we not rather, as has been truly said, in making this very conception, supposed the nature of man to be destroyed? and, while we have preserved the same external form, substituted, for the mild nature of that which animates this form, the ferocious nature of some untameable beast, which makes no distinction of the hand that caresses and the hand that strikes, which breathes only carnage, and feels a sort of irritation, and almost anger, at the sight of every thing which lives? Of such a being, so animated, this may be the natural state, but it is not the state of nature of man. The feelings which nature most powerfully impresses on him,—the first impressions which she makes on his heart, are sentiments of love; and if those first and most powerful feelings, which are as universal as the race of man,—the original feelings of every individual that lives or has lived,—can be truly said to be natural feelings, to continue to exist as in this first state of nature, would be to exist with only affection in the heart, and with expressions of this affection in every look and word.

But we put bars and locks upon our gates, we carry arms, we make laws to direct the power of the state against injustice, we have prisons and executioners. Is this formidable apparatus, it will be said, a part of a system of love? or does it not rather prove that man trembles at the thought of the power of man, as he trembles at the thought of some pestilence, and takes measures of precaution for guarding against infection, and for curing it, or preventing the farther spreading of it, if infection has taken place?

It will be admitted, that these contrivances of offence and defence are not a part of the system of contrivances of universal and never-failing love; but, on the contrary, are indicative of a fear which implies the

possibility of enmity in others, or at least of injustice, which, though it may imply no personal hatred, is, in its effects on us, the same as enmity. But while these instruments of preservation from possible aggression are admitted to be proofs of one set of feelings in man,—of feelings which no defender of the general social nature of man has ever attempted to deny, as a part of that mixed constitution of good and bad for which alone he contends; it may be asked, in like manner, whether the domestic affections, and the general sympathies of our nature, which exist as widely as laws, and have in every case preceded them; whether all the institutions for the relief of the ignorant, and the poor, and the diseased, are proofs of any natural enmity of man to man? Injustice may, indeed, be prevalent, but compassion is surely not less so; and are we to find proofs of universal enmity in a love that is as universal as human sorrow?

> That Virtue known
> By the relenting look, whose equal heart
> For others feels, as for another self;
> Of various name, as various objects wake,
> Warm into action, the kind sense within:
> Whether the blameless poor, the nobly maim'd,
> The lost to reason, the declin'd in life,
> The helpless young, that kiss no mother's hand,
> And the grey, second infancy of age,
> She gives in public families to live,—
> A sight to gladden Heaven.

We are surely not to think of man as only a prisoner or a jailer; we must think of him too as one who, if he suffers, receives relief from those who have no interest in relieving him, except that of their compassion itself; or who himself, with as little expectation of personal advantage, relieves whatever sufferings may come beneath his view. The truth is, that man has desires of various kinds, malevolent as well as benevolent; that, on whatever period of society we may choose to fix, we shall always find many who are disposed to invade the rights of others, and who, in consequence of this mere possibility of aggression, render necessary all those general precautions, and the occasional punishments of which Hobbes speaks; while, at the same time, we shall be equally certain of finding many, who not merely are without the inclination of invading the rights of others, but who gladly make sacrifices of their own personal comfort for their relief. That the state of society, therefore, when there are multitudes comprehended in it, is not a state of unmixed friendship or enmity, unmixed virtue or vice, but a state that is mixed of both; that the first affections, however, the affections which, if there be any that peculiarly deserve the name of natural, have surely the highest claim to that distinction, are uniformly those of love; and that while all must, in infancy, have felt this tie, which bound them to some other breast, it is only a part of mankind over whom those malignant passions, which can be said to be indicative of enmity, or even that injustice which is indicative of indifference to others, rather than malignity, can be said to have any sway. We have all loved, and continued to love; we have not all hated, and continued to hate; certainly, at least, we have not given way to our hatred, as we have yielded our whole soul to the delightful emotions of benevolence.

Even the most unjust and malignant of mankind, it must be remembered, do not lose their love of society. They have their friends, or at least those to whom they give that name, without any suspicion that they are using an inappropriate expression. They would hate to be alone, as much as other people, even though they had no guilty remembrances, which made it doubly necessary for them to be amused. They must still flatter themselves that they enjoy what they are not capable of enjoying, the delights of that cordial intercourse which is sacred to the good. These delights, indeed, the remembrance of consolations received, and of virtues strengthened, the mutual esteem, the mutual trust, the mutual veneration, they as little can possess as they can enjoy the pleasures of conscience, with no remembrances but those of guilt. Yet, though the reality of the social regard of others is denied to them, and though even if, in some singular instance, it were truly to be given to them, it would be impossible for them to put confidence in a friendship which they would know that they had not merited, and therefore could not fail to distrust; they can still at least have the riot and the laughter, and as much of the appearance of social affection, as is consistent with perfect indifference, or perfect hatred at heart; and the riot and the laughter they must have, or be still more miserable than they are. The love of that society which they have so deeply injured, is thus fixed in their heart, as it is fixed in every heart; and what proof could be stronger of its irresistible power? In the very prison, to which the indignation of mankind has driven them, as to the only place which their presence could not pollute, amid wretches as little worthy as themselves of a single thought of momentary affection, they still feel the influence of that principle which makes the presence of man necessary to the comfort of man, as, in better circumstances, it is necessary to his happiness. They must mingle with each other, though they have no plans of guilty co-operation to concert. It is still something in their dismal loneliness to have one, who may laugh at their blasphemies, and at whose blasphemies they may smile in return; and to him who has never known what friendship is, who has only crimes of which to speak, or crimes of which to hear, it is not a relief, but a hea-

vy additional punishment, to be separated from wretches as guilty and miserable as himself; from wretches, who would as gladly, or more gladly, assist in putting his shackles on, as they would assist in releasing him; and who, he knows well, will not laugh less loudly on that day when he is to be led forth to terminate, amid public execrations, his dreadful existence.

Such is the desire of social communion in man; a desire which no habitual penance of solitude, no perfection of virtue, no perfection of vice, if I may use that phrase, can efface from the heart; a desire, the existence of which is not more forcibly demonstrated by all that leads man to mingle with man in happy society, than by the most miserable intercourse which the wretched can form, by the feelings which continue to operate when only guilt is congregated with guilt, and which make of that very prison, to which Hobbes would lead us for a demonstration that man is born only to be regardless of man or hostile to him, the most irresistible demonstration of that great truth of social connexion, which he would vainly adduce it to disprove.

The next of our desires which we have to consider, is our desire of knowledge.

When we think of what man is, not in his faculties only, but in his intellectual acquisitions, and of what he must have been on his entrance into the world, as much in the state of society which is most civilized, as in the rudest state of savage life, it is difficult for us to regard this knowledge and absolute ignorance as states of the same mind. It seems to us almost as if we had to consider a spiritual creation or transformation, as wondrous as if, in contemplating the material universe, we were to strive to think of the whole system of suns and planets, as evolved from a mere particle of matter, or rising from nothing as when originally created. We believe that they were so created, and we know that man, comprehensive as his acquirements are, must have set out in his intellectual career from absolute ignorance; but how difficult is it for us to form any accurate conception of what we thus undoubtingly believe! The mind, which is enriched with as many sciences as there are classes of existing things in the universe, which our organs are able to discern, and which, not content with the immensity of existence, forms to itself sciences even of abstractions that do not exist as objects in nature, and that cannot exist in nature, the mind, which is skilled in all the languages of all the civilized nations of the globe, and which has fixed and treasured in its own remembrance, the beauties of every work of transcendent genius, which age after age has added to the stores of antiquity; this mind, we know well, was once as ignorant as the dullest and feeblest of those minds, which scarcely know enough, even to wonder at its superiority.

But without taking into our consideration the rich endowments of a mind like this, et us think only of one of those humble minds to which I have alluded. How vast are the acquirements even of a mind of this humble rank, and acquirements, too, which a few years, that may be said almost to be years of infancy and apparent imbecility, have formed! Indeed, if all human science were to be divided, as Rousseau says, into two portions, the one comprehending what is common to all mankind, and the other only that stock of truths, which is peculiar to the wise and the learned, he can scarcely be regarded as delivering a very extravagant paradox, in asserting that this latter portion, which is the subject of so much pride, would seem very trifling in comparison of the other. But of this greater portion, we do not think, as he truly says, partly because the knowledge which it comprehends is acquired so very early, that we scarcely remember the acquisition of it, and still more, perhaps, because since knowledge becomes remarkable only by its differences, the elements that are common in all, like the common quantities in algebraic equations, are counted as nothing.

When we think, however, of the elements that are truly contained in this portion of knowledge, which the humblest of mankind partakes, how much is involved in the possession and mastering even of one language, in the accurate adaptation of each arbitrary sign to the thing signified, and the adaptation, not merely of the signs of things to the things themselves, but of the nicer inflections of the signs to the faint and abstract relations of objects! If we knew nothing more of the mind of man, than its capacity of becoming acquainted with the powers of so vast and so complicated an instrument as that of speech, and of acquiring this knowledge in circumstances the most unfavourable to the acquisition, without any of the aids which lessen so greatly our labour in acquiring any other language far less perfectly in after-life, and amid the continual distractions of pains and pleasures, that seem to render any fixed effort absolutely impossible, we might, indeed, find cause to wonder at a capacity so admirable. But when we think of all the other knowledge which is acquired at the same time, even by this mind, which we have selected as one of the humblest, what observations of phenomena, what inductions, what reasonings downward from the results of general observation to particular cases that are analogous, must have occurred, and been formed, almost unconsciously, into a system of physics, of which the reasoner himself, perhaps, does not think as a system, but on which he founds his prac-

tical conclusions, exactly in the same way as the philosopher applies his general principles to the complicated contrivances of mechanics or the different arts; when we think of all this, and know that all this, or at least a great part of all this, must have been done before it could be safe for the little reasoner to be trusted for a single moment at the slightest distance from the parental eye, how astonishing does the whole process appear; and if we had not opportunities of observation, and in some measure, too, the consciousness of our own memory, in our later acquisitions, to tell us how all this has been done, what a variety of means must we conceive nature to have employed for producing so rapidly and so efficaciously this astonishing result! She has employed, however, no complicated variety of means; and she has produced the effect the more surely, from the very simplicity of the means which she has employed. The simple desire of knowledge explains a mystery which nothing else could explain. She has made it delightful to man to know—disquieting to him to know only imperfectly, while any thing remains in his power that can make his knowledge more accurate or comprehensive; and she has done more than all this, she has not waited till we reflect on the pleasure which we are to enjoy, or the pain which we are to suffer. She has given us these, indeed, to stimulate our search, and in part to reward it; but she has prompted us to begin our search without reflection on the mere pleasure or pain which is to reward our activity, or to punish our inactivity. It is sufficient that there is something unknown which has a relation to something that is known to us. We feel instantly the desire of knowing this too. Begin to the child in the nursery some ballad, which involves a tale of marvellous incident, and stop in the very middle of the tale, his little heart will be almost in agony till you resume the narrative; but his eye, before you ceased, was still expressive of that curiosity, of that mere desire of knowing what is to come, which is not painful in itself, producing the pain, but not rising from it when the narrative is broken, and affording the pleasure, but not rising from the pleasure when the narrative is continued. Why is it, that in such a case we feel delight? It is because our previous curiosity has been gratified. Why do we feel pain? It is because our previous curiosity has not been gratified; and to suppose that but for the pleasure of the gratified curiosity, and the pain of the ungratified curiosity, we should have had no curiosity to afford the pleasure or the pain, is a reversal of the order of causes and effects, as absurd as it would be to suppose, that, but for the existence of the flower, we should not have had the root or the stem which supports the flower, that it is the light which flows around us that is the cause of the existence of the sun; and that he who created the sun, and every thing which the sun enlightens, is not merely revealed to us by that world of splendour and beauty which he has formed, but that it is the beauty of the universe which is the cause of the existence of him who created it to be beautiful.

Of the lively curiosity of which I speak, with relation to the tales of our nursery, you must all have some remembrance; and, indeed, it is a curiosity which, even with respect to such tales of fiction, does not cease wholly when we are obliged to assume the airs and the dignity of manhood. We vary our tales in these graver years, and call them romances, dramas, epics; but we are equally ready in any moment of leisure, to be led away by any narrative of strange incidents, which is to us exactly what the simplest ballad was to us then. The pain which attends ungratified curiosity, is most strikingly proved by those tales which are often intentionally suspended at some most interesting moment, and printed as fragments. We feel, in such a case, a vexation that almost amounts to anger, as if the writer of the fragment were wilfully and wantonly inflicting on us pain; and there are many little injuries which we could perhaps much more readily forgive. To be forced to read a succession of such fragments would be truly to any mind which can take interest in the adventures of others, a species of torture, and of torture that, to such a mind, would be far from being the slightest which could be devised.

The curiosity which is thus strikingly exemplified in the eagerness with which we listen to fictitious narratives, is not less strikingly, as it is certainly far more usefully, exemplified in the interest which we feel in the wonders of science. How many nights of sleepless expectation would be given to the chemist, if he could be informed on authority which he could not doubt, that in some neighbouring country a discovery had been made which threw a new light, not merely on what had before been considered as obscure, but on all, or almost all the phenomena which had been considered as perfectly well known; that in consequence of this discovery, it had become easy to analyse what had before resisted every attempt of the analytic art, and to force into combination substances which before had seemed incapable of any permanent union! With what eagerness would he await the communication that was to put into his own hands this admirable power. It must be a distress, indeed, of no common sort which could at such a period withdraw his mind wholly for any length of time from that desire which every thing that met his eye would seem to him to

recall, because it would be in truth for ever present to his mind.

It is needless to extend the illustration through the variety of the sciences. We have a desire of knowledge which nothing can abate,—a desire that, in some greater or less degree, extends itself to every thing which we are capable of knowing, and not to realities merely, but to all the extravagances of fiction. We are formed to know; we cannot exist without knowledge; and nature, therefore, has given us the desire of that knowledge, which is essential not to our pleasure merely, but to our very being.

> Witness the sprightly joy, when aught unknown
> Strikes the quick sense, and wakes each active power
> To brisker measures: witness the neglect
> Of all familiar objects, though beheld
> With transport once; the fond attentive gaze
> Of young astonishment, the sober zeal
> Of age commenting on prodigious things.
> For such the bounteous providence of Heaven
> In every breast implanting this desire
> Of objects new and strange to urge us on,
> With unremitted labour, to pursue
> Those sacred stores that wait the ripening soul,
> In Truth's exhaustless bosom. What need words
> To paint its power? For this the daring youth
> Breaks from his weeping mother's anxious arms,
> In foreign climes to rove; the pensive sage,
> Heedless of sleep, or midnight's harmful damp,
> Hangs o'er the sickly taper; and untir'd
> The virgin follows, with enchanted step,
> The mazes of some wild and wondrous tale,
> From morn to eve, unmindful of her form,
> Unmindful of the happy dress that stole
> The wishes of the youth, when every maid
> With envy pin'd. Hence, finally, by night,
> The village matron, round the blazing hearth,
> Suspends the infant audience with her tales,
> Breathing astonishment, of witching rhymes,
> And evil spirits; of the death-bed call
> To him who robb'd the widow, and devour'd
> The orphan's portion; of unquiet souls
> Ris'n from the grave, to ease the heavy guilt
> Of deeds in life conceal'd; of shapes that walk
> At dead of night, and clank their chains, and wave
> The torch of hell around the murderer's bed.
> At every solemn pause the crowd recoil,
> Gazing each other speechless, and congeal'd
> With shivering sighs, till, eager for the event,
> Around the beldame, all erect they hang,
> Each trembling heart with grateful terrors quell'd.*

If man could have been made to know that his existence depended upon certain acquisitions of knowledge, without any love of the knowledge itself, he might, perhaps, have made the acquisition that was believed to be so important. But to learn, if there had been no curiosity or pleasure in learning, would then have been a task; and like other mere tasks, would probably have been imperfectly executed. Something would have been neglected altogether, or very inaccurately examined, the accurate knowledge of which might have been essential to life itself. Nature, by the constitution which she has given us, has attained the same end, and attained it without leaving to us the possibility of failure. She has given us the desire of knowing what it is of importance for us to know; she has made the knowledge delightful in itself; she has made it painful to us to know imperfectly. There is no task, therefore, imposed on us. In executing her benevolent will, we have only to gratify one of the strongest of our passions, to learn with delight what it is salutary to have learned, and to derive thus a sort of double happiness from the wisdom which we acquire, and from the very effort by which we acquire it.

* Pleasures of Imagination, B. i, v. 232—270.

LECTURE LXVIII.

III. PROSPECTIVE EMOTIONS.—6. DESIRE OF POWER—OF DIRECT POWER, AS IN AMBITION.

GENTLEMEN, after the emotions which I considered in my last Lecture, that which is next in the order of our arrangement is the desire of power.

I do not speak at present of the desire of mere freedom from constraint, though, where any unjust restraint is actually imposed, the desire of freedom from it is, perhaps, the strongest passion which man can feel, and a passion which, in such circumstances, will always be more ardent as the mind is nobler. While it remains, the slave is not wholly a slave. His true degradation begins when he has lost, not his liberty, merely, but the very desire of liberty, and when he has learned to look calmly on himself as a mere breathing and moving instrument of the wishes of another, to be moved by those wishes more than by his own, a part of some external pomp necessary to the splendour of some other being, to which he contributes, indeed, but only like the car, or the sceptre, or the purple robe, a trapping of adventitious greatness, and one of many decorative trappings that are all equally insignificant in themselves, whether they be living or inanimate. He who can feel this, and feel it without any rising of his heart against the tyranny which would keep him down, or even a wish that he were free, may indeed be considered as scarcely worthy of freedom; and if tyranny produced only the evil of such mental degradation, without any of the other evils to which it gives rise directly and indirectly, it would scarcely merit less than at present, the detestation of all who know what man is and is capable of becoming as a freeman, and that wretched thing which he is and must ever continue to be as a slave.

There are minds, indeed, which, long habituated to corruption, can see, in the tyrannical possessor of a power unjustly arrogated, only a source of favour, and of all the partial and prodigal largesses of favour, more easy to be obtained, as requiring, in return

only that profligate subserviency to every vice, which such minds are always sufficiently ready to pay; but what long usage of corruption does it require, before tyranny itself can cease to be hated.

If to a young audience, in those early years when they knew little more of the nature of political institutions, than that under some governments men are more or less happy, and more or less free, than under others, we were to relate the history of one of those glorious struggles which the oppressed have sometimes made against their oppressors, can we doubt for a moment to whom the sympathy and eager wishes of the whole audience would be given? While the first band of patriots might perhaps be overthrown, and their leader a fugitive, seeking a temporary shelter, but seeking still more the means of asserting again the same great cause, with the additional motive of avenging the fallen, how eagerly would every heart be trembling for him, hoping for him, exulting as he came forth again with additional numbers, shrinking and half-despairing at each slight repulse in the long-continued combat, but rejoicing and confiding still more at each renewal of the charge, and feeling almost the very triumph of the deliverer himself, when his standard waved at last without any foe to oppose it, and nothing was to be seen upon the field but those who had perished, and those who were free. In listening to such a narrative, even he who was perhaps, in more advanced years, to be himself the ready instrument of oppression or corruption, and to smile with derision at the very name of liberty, would feel the interest which every other heart was feeling, and would rejoice in the overthrow of despotism, like that of which he was afterwards to be the willing slave, or of which he was at all times ready to become the slave if the liberties of a nation could be sold by his single voice.

Such is the instant sympathy of our nature, with all who are oppressed. We may cease to feel it, indeed, but many years of sordid selfishness must first have quenched in us every thing which is noble, and made us truly as much slaves ourselves as those whose virtue and happiness are indifferent to us. To be free, to have the mind of a freeman, is not to consider liberty as a privilege which a few only are to enjoy, and which, like some narrow and limited good, would become less by distribution; it is to wish, and to wish ardently, that all partook the blessing. What should we think of any one who, enjoying the pleasures of vision, and the inestimable instruction which that delightful sense has yielded to him, and continues every moment to yield, could hear without pity of a whole nation of the blind? And yet, how slight would be the cruelty of such indifference, compared with the guilt of those who, enjoying themselves the blessings of a liberal system of government, should yet feel a sort of malignant triumph in the thought that other nations do not enjoy a liberty like that which they so justly prize,—that there are many millions of human beings, gathered together in tribes which exist still, as their ancestors have for ages existed, in a state of moral darkness, compared with which blindness to the mere sunshine is but an evil of little moment!

O Liberty! thou goddess, heavenly bright,
Profuse of bliss, and pregnant with delight;
Eternal pleasures in thy presence reign,
And smiling Plenty leads thy wanton train;
Eased of her load, Subjection grows more light,
And Poverty looks cheerful in thy sight;
Thou mak'st the gloomy face of Nature gay,
Giv'st beauty to the sun, and pleasure to the day.*

The power however which consists in mere freedom from constraint, is but a negative power. That of which we are at present to consider the desire, is the positive power which one individual may exercise over other individuals.

In a former lecture, in which we considered the desire of action, we saw the very important advantage of this desire, that prompts man incessantly to rise from the indolence in which he might otherwise lie torpid. Our desire of power may be considered as in a great measure connected with this general desire of action. We feel a pleasure of no slight kind in the consciousness of our mere animal energies, as energies inherent in our nature, and obedient to our will. This pride of exercise is one of the first pleasures which we discover in the infant, whose eye shows visible delight at all the little wonders which he is capable of producing himself, far more than at such as are merely exhibited to him. He is pleased indeed when we shake for the first time the bells of his little rattle, before we put it into his own hands; but when he has it in his own hands, and makes himself the noise, which is then such delightful music to his ear, his rapture is far more than doubled. He repeats it instantly, as if wishing to be quite certain that he is capable of executing so marvellous a thing, and the certainty makes his pleasure still greater than before; till, weary of a power of which he can no longer doubt, and stimulated by new objects to new exercises, he again desires something else, and enjoys, and is proud, and again grows weary of the past, to grow afterwards weary of the future. In boyhood, what competitions of this sort, what eagerness to discover how fast we can run, how far we can leap! Every game which then amuses and occupies us, may be considered as a sort of trial of our strength, or agility, or

*Letter from Italy, by Addison.

skill, of some of those qualities in which power consists; and we run or wrestle with those with whom we are perhaps, in combats of a very different kind, to dispute in other years the prize of distinction in the various duties and dignities of life.

From what we do immediately ourselves, the transition to what we do by the agency of others, is a very natural and obvious one. As we feel the power which we possess in being the fastest runner, or the most skilful wrestler, we feel also a sort of power in having the instruments best suited to the different games in which we may have to try our skill with the skill of others. In the early exercises and contentions of the play-ground, we are proud of having the best top, or the best bat; and we look on what they do for us as what we do ourselves, since they are ours as much as our own limbs are ours,—a sort of prolongation of the hands that wield them, obeying our will with the same ready ministry as that with which our hands themselves more directly move at our bidding. We soon learn to be proud, in like manner, of having the best trained pointer, or the horse that has trotted with us the greatest number of miles in the shortest time; and when we have once learned to appropriate to ourselves the achievements of these animals, we have very little more to do in appropriating to ourselves whatever is done by others of our own species, who have done what they have done, in obedience to us as truly as the horse has proceeded in the same line, or turned, or stopped, in obedience to our bridle. Every new being who obeys us is thus, as it were, a new faculty, or number of faculties, added to our physical constitution; and it is not wonderful, therefore, that we should desire to extend the number of these adventitious faculties, more than that we should avail ourselves of the instruments of the optician for quickening our sight, or of a carriage for conveying us over distances which it would have been impossible for us to traverse with the same velocity on foot.

Such is the history of our desire of power. It begins with the pleasure of our mere bodily energies, long before we are capable of conceiving the very thought of operating on other beings like ourselves. But the passion, which is at the first so easily and so simply gratified, without the mastery or the attempted subjugation of other minds, learns afterwards to consider these minds as almost the only objects on which it is at all important to operate; they are instruments of the great game of human ambition; and in that great game, independent of all patriotic feelings, the passion which is not new, though its objects be new, takes pleasure in playing with the interests of nations, and managing whole subject multitudes, as it before took pleasure in wielding skilfully a racket at tennis, or a mace at the billiard table; or as, at a still earlier period, it occupied us with a sort of proud consciousness of command in running over a field, for the mere pleasure of moving limbs that were scarcely felt by us to be our own unless when they were in motion.

So universal is the desire of power over the minds of others, that there is perhaps no one who is wholly exempt from it. Even affection itself, which is so little in need of any additional charm, derives from it some accession to the delight which it affords. That the absolute dependence of the infant renders still more vivid even the vivid emotions of parental love, no one, I conceive, can doubt; and if man, by a different constitution of his nature, could have been born intelligent as in maturer years, strong enough to be exposed to no peril from without, and fearless, therefore, not from ignorance of danger, but from superiority to all the causes of injury by which it was likely for him to be assailed; though the contemplation of the noble being to which they had given life must still have been attended with strong emotions of regard in the bosoms of those to whom the very excellence contemplated and admired by them, was almost a part of their own existence; it is not easy to imagine how very little would, in such circumstances of equality, have remained of that warm tenderness, which, in the present system of alternate feebleness and protection, connects so happily the progressive generations of mankind; when the first look of love which the parents cast on the helplessness before them, is itself a proof that the unconscious object on which they gaze is to be helpless no more; that weak as it may still be in itself, it is to be strong and powerful in the vigilant tenderness of their aid.

Such is the influence of the consciousness of a gentle and benevolent power in the exercise of parental love; and is there no influence of this sort in the exercise of other regards of every species,—no feeling of reciprocal dependence for enjoyment, or rather of reciprocal power of conferring enjoyment, that sweetens the very enjoyment itself, making it as delightful to be the source of happiness as to be the object to whom the happiness ultimately flows? It is sufficiently pleasing indeed to love and to be loved, though these feelings were all which friendship could yield; but there is likewise a pleasure in thinking that our feelings need only to be expressed, to become the feelings too of those who, loving us, can scarcely fail to love whatever we love. Nor is it to our pleasures of affection only that this moral influence of power extends; it extends in some measure also to the delightful consciousness of all our virtues. If suffering were to be relieved, it would surely be of very little consequence to the happi-

ness of the world by whom the relief was given; if vice were to be made sensible of its guilt, of little consequence from whom the purer views that enlighten it were derived; but though it would be of the same moment to the world in general, it would be very far from being so to us. We should delight in the effects, indeed, whoever might have produced them; but our delight would be very different if ourselves had been the instruments.

The difference, so great in these two cases, is not to be considered as arising wholly from the mere self-approbation of our action as virtuous; for if we had truly felt the wish of extending the same good, and the same resolute willingness to make the personal sacrifices that might be necessary to purchase the extension of it, our virtue, as far as our merit or our conscience is concerned, would be the same, not from the pride that our name would be long remembered, as connected with the remembrance of an action that had been beneficial to mankind; though the pleasure of this generous connexion of our image, or our name, may mingle, with no slight accession of joy, even in the pure and tranquil retrospects of those who have been unostentatiously good; but, in some degree at least, from the mere feeling of the action as a work of ours, as that which we have had the conscious power of producing, the feeling of the tie which connects that happiness of others, at which we rejoice with our own mind as its cause, and which, next to the certainty of having done what heaven itself approves, is perhaps the most delightful element in our remembrance of virtue.

It is the same in works of purer intellect. The gravest and most retired philosopher, who scarcely exists out of his library, in giving to the world the result of many years of meditation, delights indeed in the truths which he has discovered, and in the advantage which they may directly or indirectly afford to some essential interests of society; but though these are the thoughts on which, if his virtue be equal to his wisdom, he may dwell with greatest satisfaction, there still comes proudly across his mind, a feeling of pleasure in the thought of the power which he is exercising, or is soon to exercise over the minds of others. He is certainly far more pleased, that the truths which are to effect the general change of opinion, are truths discovered by him, than if exactly the same beneficial effect had flowed from discoveries made by any other person; and though the chief part of this pleasure may unquestionably be traced to the love of glory, and the anticipation of the glory which is loved, much of it as unquestionably flows from the internal feeling of the power which he exercises, and which he has the trust of being able to exercise again in similar circumstances,—a power which is more delightful to him indeed when accompanied with celebrity, but of which the very secret consciousness is itself a delight that is almost like glory to his mind.

When the orator is employed in some great cause that is worthy of his eloquence; asserting, against the proud and the powerful, the right of some humble sufferer, who has nothing to vindicate his right but justice and the eloquence of his protector; or rousing a senate, too apt perhaps to think only of the privileges of a few, or of the interests or supposed interests of one people, to the consideration of the great rights of mankind, of every colour and country; forcing, as it were, upon their eyes, atrocities which they had perhaps at a distance long sanctioned or permitted, and absolving, or at least finishing, by the virtuous triumph of a single hour, the guilt of many centuries; in such cases, indeed, if the orator, while the happiness and misery, the virtue and vice, the glory and infamy of nations are depending on his voice, can think within himself of the power which he is exercising, he would be unworthy at once of the cause which he pleads, and of the eloquence with which he may be pleading it; but when the victory is won, when all the advantages which are to flow from it have been felt with delight, we may then allow some feeling of additional gratification to arise in the mind even of the most virtuous, at the thought of that energy which was so successfully exercised, before which every heart that did not gladly yield to its influence, shrunk as from something dreadful and irresistible; that had swept away all subterfuges of hypocrisy, and left nothing behind but conviction, and joy, and dismay. There are causes in which not to rejoice in the possession of eloquence would be almost to be indifferent to the blessings to which it may lead. The patriot, whom the corrupt tremble to see arise, may well feel a grateful satisfaction in the mighty power which heaven has delegated to him, when he thinks that he has used it only for purposes which heaven approves; for the freedom, and peace, and prosperity of his own land, and for all that happiness which the land that is dearest to him can diffuse to every nation that is within the sphere of its influence or example.

The power which mind exercises over mind in the cases as yet considered by us, is an intellectual or moral agency, underived from any foreign source, and wholly personal to the individual who exercises it. But there is a power which is, for the time, far more extensive, and capable of being coveted by minds which are incapable of feeling and appreciating the intellectual or moral excellence. This is the power which high station con-

fers; the power of forcing obedience even upon the reluctant, and, in many cases, of winning obedience, from that blind respect which the multitude are always sufficiently disposed to feel for the follies as for the virtues of those above them. Much of the pleasure attached to the conception of this power, like that which attends every other species of power, arises, it must be admitted, from the glory which is supposed to attend the possession of official dignities; but the desire of the power itself would be one of the strongest of the passions of men, though this mere power were all which station conferred. To know that there are a number of beings, endowed with many energies which nature seemed to have made absolutely independent of us, who are constantly ready to do whatever we may order them to do, in obedience to our very caprice, is to us, as I have already said, very nearly the same thing, as if some extension of our faculties had been given to us, by the addition of all their powers to our physical constitution. If these instruments of power were mere machines, which subserviency to us could not in any degree debase, and which could be kept in order without any great anxiety on our part, and without occupying that room which the living instruments occupy, we should all probably feel the desire of possessing these subsidiary faculties, since not to wish for some of them at least would be like indifference whether we had two arms or only one, distinct or indistinct vision, a good or bad memory. We are not, with respect to any of our faculties, like that marvellous runner in the fairy tale, who was so very nimble as to be obliged to tie his legs that he might not run too fast. Our powers, bodily or mental, never seem to us to require any such voluntary retardation; and however well fitted they may be for the circumstances in which we are placed, we are yet desirous of being able to do more than, as individuals, we are capable of doing, and would gladly, therefore, avail ourselves of the supplemental machinery, or of such parts of it as would suit best our particular wishes and purposes. But the parts of the machinery of power are living beings like ourselves; and fond as we are of the purposes which we may be desirous of executing by means of them, we have, if we be virtuous, moral affections that preclude the wish. With these moral affections for the liberty and happiness of others, we so much prefer their freedom to our personal conveniencies that we never encroach on it. We do not covet so much the pride of him who sees a whole multitude busy only in furthering his frivolous and ever-changing desires, as the serenity of him whom the world counts far humbler, who sees around him a multitude happy in their own domestic occupations, feeling for him only that friendship which the heart spontaneously offers, and assisting him only with those social services which it is delightful to give, and which, as given with delight, it is delightful also to receive.

When I say, that a virtuous lover of mankind would desire this latter happiness more than the other, I know well that there are many minds of which I must not consider myself as expressing the choice; minds which value the power merely as power; which feel it, therefore, with more pleasure the more servile the multitude of their dependents may be; and which, in their endeavours to rise above the crowd, see no slavery too mean for themselves to endure, if they can purchase, by their own voluntary degradation, the pleasure of commanding.

He who feels within himself the talents which must render his exaltation eminently useful to mankind, and who wishes for power, that there may be more virtue and more happiness in the world, than if he had not been elevated, would indeed be guilty of criminal self-indulgence, if he were to resign himself to the enjoyments of private life, and to neglect the honourable means of rising to a station which his virtues and talents would render truly honourable. To such a mind, however, ambition presents no anxieties; because, though there may not be the happiness of attaining a more useful station, there is still the happiness of being useful in the station already possessed; and it presents no disgrace, even in failure, because the disgrace which the heart feels is only for those who have failed in dishonourable wishes, or who have sought what is honourable in itself by the use of dishonourable means.

But, of the multitude of the ambitious, how few are there of this noble class! how infinitely more numerous they who seek in power only what the virtuous man does not wish so much, as consent to bear in it for the greater good which may attend it! How many who labour perhaps through a long life of ignominy, to be a little more guilty than it is possible for them to be with the narrow means of guilt which they possess, and who die at last without attaining that wretched object for which they have crawled and prostrated themselves, and been every thing which a virtuous man would not be, even for a single moment, for all which kings, or the favourites of kings, could offer! If they fail in their ignoble ambition, it is easy to see what misery they have earned; and if even they succeed at last, what is it which they gain? There is no pleasure in what they possess, while it is inferior to something which they wish with a still more ardent appetite to acquire. "The passion which torments them," as Seneca says, "is like a flame which burns with more violence the more fuel there may have previously been

added to the conflagration." "Eo majora cupimus, quo majora venerunt: ut flammae infinito acrior vis est, quo ex majore incendio emicuit. Aeque ambitio non patitur quenquam in ea mensura honorum conquiescere, quae quondam ejus fuit impudens votum. Nemo agit de tribunatu gratias, sed queritur quod non est ad praeturam usque perductus. Nec haec grata est, si deest consulatus: ne hic quidem satiat, si unus est. Ultra se cupiditas porrigit, et felicitatem suam non intelligit, quia non unde venerit respicit, sed quo tendat."* The happiness enjoyed by one who has risen to power by ignoble means, is perhaps less than that of the most abject of those who depend on him; and the dignity which he has attained, and knows not how to enjoy, however splendid it may be as a mark of distinction, is in this very distinction, a mark of nothing so much as of the unworthiness of him who possesses it,—a memorial of crimes or follies, which, in another situation, would have been unnoticed or forgotten; but which are now forced on the continued execration or contempt of mankind; and in the consciousness or dread of this general feeling, are forced, too, more frequently than they would otherwise have arisen, on the shame and remorse of him who feels, that in purchasing with them every thing else, he has not purchased with them happiness.

In the great scale of power, which ascends from the lowest of the people to the sovereign, to whom all are submitted; in which the inferior, at every stage, is paying court to his superior, and receiving it, in his turn, from those who are inferior to himself, it is not easy to say at what point of the scale the pleasure of the homage is most sincerely felt. There is much truth in one of Fielding's lively pictures of this sort of homage, in which he reduces the difference of power to the different hours of the day at which we are great men. "With regard to time, it may not be unpleasant," he says, "to survey the picture of dependence like a kind of ladder. As, for instance, early in the morning arises the postillion, or some other boy, which great families no more than great ships are without, and falls to brushing the clothes, and cleaning the shoes of John the footman, who, being drest himself, applies his hands to the same labours for Mr. Secondhand, the squire's gentleman; the gentleman, in the like manner, a little later in the day, attends the squire; the squire is no sooner equipt than he attends the levee of my lord, which is no sooner over, than my lord himself is seen at the levee of the favourite, who, after the hour of homage is at an end, appears himself to pay homage to the levee of his sovereign. Nor is there, perhaps, in this whole ladder of dependence, any one step at a greater distance from the other than the first from the second; so that to a philosopher, the question might only seem, whether you would choose to be a great man at six in the morning, or at two in the afternoon."

That there is more true happiness in the enjoyments of private life than in the pursuits of ambition, is one of those commonplaces of morality, which the experience of every day confirms; but which, as that very experience shows, have little effect in overcoming the passion itself, and which are thus ineffectual, because the passion does not relate only to the particular purposes of the individual, but is placed in our bosom for purposes of general advantage, which we are to execute, perhaps, without knowing that we are promoting any ends but those of our own selfish desire.

"The poor man's son," says Dr. Smith, in one of the most eloquent passages of his very eloquent work,—"the poor man's son, whom heaven, in its anger, has visited with ambition, when he begins to look around him, admires the condition of the rich. He finds the cottage of his father too small for his accommodation, and fancies he should be lodged more at his ease in a palace. He is displeased with being obliged to walk afoot, or to endure the fatigue of riding on horseback. He sees his superiors carried about in machines, and imagines that in one of these he could travel with less inconveniency. He feels himself naturally indolent, and willing to serve himself with his own hands as little as possible; and judges that a numerous retinue of servants would save him from a great deal of trouble. He thinks if he had attained all these, he would sit still contentedly, and be quiet, enjoying himself in the thought of the happiness and tranquillity of his situation. He is enchanted with the distant idea of this felicity. It appears in his fancy like the life of some superior rank of beings; and in order to arrive at it, he devotes himself for ever to the pursuit of wealth and greatness. To obtain the conveniencies which these afford, he submits in the first year, nay, in the first month of his application, to more fatigue of body, and more uneasiness of mind, than he could have suffered through the whole of his life from the want of them. He studies to distinguish himself in some laborious profession. With the most unrelenting industry he labours night and day to acquire talents superior to all his competitors. He endeavours next to bring those talents into public view; and with equal assiduity solicits every opportunity of employment. For this purpose he makes his court to all mankind; he serves those whom he hates, and is obsequious to those whom he despises. Through the whole of his life, he pursues the idea of

* De Beneficiis, lib. ii. c. 27.

a certain artificial and elegant repose, which he may never arrive at; for which he sacrifices a real tranquillity, that is at all times in his power, and which, if in the extremity of old age, he should at last attain to it, he will find to be in no respect preferable to that humble security and contentment which he had abandoned for it. It is then in the last dregs of life, his body wasted with toil and diseases, his mind galled and ruffled by the memory of a thousand injuries and disappointments, which he imagines he has met with from the injustice of his enemies, or from the perfidy and ingratitude of his friends, that he begins at last to find that wealth and greatness are mere trinkets of frivolous utility, no more adapted for procuring ease of body or tranquillity of mind, than the tweezer-cases of the lover of toys; and like them too, more troublesome to the person who carries them about with him, than all the advantages they can afford him are commodious. To one who was to live alone in a desolate island, it might be a matter of doubt, perhaps, whether a palace, or a collection of such small conveniencies as are commonly contained in a tweezer-case, would contribute most to his happiness and enjoyment. If he is to live in society, indeed, there can be no comparison; because in this, as in all other cases, we constantly pay more regard to the sentiments of the spectator, than to those of the person principally concerned, and consider rather how his situation will appear to other people, than how it will appear to himself. But in the languor of disease, and the weariness of old age, the pleasures of the vain and empty distinctions of greatness disappear. To one in this situation, they are no longer capable of recommending those toilsome pursuits in which they had formerly engaged him. In his heart he curses ambition, and vainly regrets the ease and the indolence of youth, pleasures which are fled for ever, and which he has foolishly sacrificed for what, when he has got it, can afford him no real satisfaction. Power and riches appear then to be what they are, enormous and operose machines, contrived to produce a few trifling conveniencies to the body, consisting of springs the most nice and delicate, which must be kept in order with the most anxious attention, and which, in spite of all our care, are ready every moment to burst into pieces, and to crush in their ruins their unfortunate possessor. They are immense fabrics, which it requires the labour of a life to raise, which threaten every moment to overwhelm the person that dwells in them, and which, while they stand, though they may save him from some smaller inconveniencies, can protect him from none of the severer inclemencies of the season. They keep off the summer shower, not the winter storm; but leave him always as much, and sometimes more exposed than before, to anxiety, to fear, and to sorrow; to diseases, to danger, and to death."*

Such is the madness of ambition in the individual himself. But it is not of a single member of the social multitude, it is of the great interests of mankind that we should think; and in relation to these, what admirable general purposes does this very madness promote! The labour to which the individual submits without profit, is not profitless to the community. In far the greater number of instances, he is promoting their advantage, careless as he may seem, and careless as he truly is of it. In thinking of ambition, as it may thus operate in its relation to mankind, the moralist is too apt to dwell on the great and visible desolations to which in a few striking cases it gives rise, when the ambitious man has the power of leading armies and forcing nations to be slaves, and of achieving all that iniquity which the audacious heart of man may have had the guilt and folly of considering as greatness. We forget or neglect, merely because they are less striking than those rare evils, the immediate beneficial influence which the passion is constantly exercising in the conduct of the humbler individuals, whose power under the preventive guardianship of laws, is limited to actions that scarcely can fail to be of service to the community. All the works of human industry are, in a great measure, referable to an ambition of some sort, that, however humble it may seem to minds of prouder views, is yet relatively as strong as the ambition of the proudest. We toil, that we may have some little influence, or some little distinction, however small the number of our inferiors may be; and the toils which raise to the petty distinction, are toils of public, though humble utility; and even the means of distinction which the opulent possess, are chiefly in the support of those, who, but for the pride which supports them, while it seems only to impose on them the labour of ministering to all the various wants of their luxury, would have little to hope from a charity that might not be easy to be excited by the appearance of mere suffering in those slight and ordinary degrees in which it makes its appeal rather to the heart than to the senses. It is this silent influence of the passion, contributing to general happiness, where general happiness is not even an object of thought, which it is most delightful to trace; and it is an influence which is felt in every place, at every moment, while the ravages of political ambition, desolating as they may be in their temporary violence, pass away, and give place to a prosperity like that which they seemed wholly to overwhelm,—

* Theory of Moral Sentiments, Part iv. c. 1.

a prosperity which, as the result of innumerable labours, and therefore of innumerable wishes that have prompted these labours, rises again, and continues through a long period of years by the gentler influence of those very principles to which before it owed its destruction.

But while we perceive with gladness the happy social uses to which nature has made the passion for power in mankind instrumental, or rather, to speak with more accuracy, the uses for which nature has made us susceptible of this passion, and while we know well, that the world, therefore, never can be without those who will be moved by ambition to seek the honours and dignities which it is necessary for the happiness of the world that some should seek, it is pleasing for those whose fortune or whose wishes lead them to more tranquil and happier, though less envied occupations, to think that the happiness which so many are seeking, is not confined by nature to the dignities which so very few only are capable of attaining, that it is as wide as the situations of men, and that, while no rank is too high for the enjoyment of virtue, there is no rank that can be regarded as too low for it. It has been as truly as eloquently said, that "when Providence divided the earth among a few lordly masters, it neither forgot nor abandoned those who seemed to have been left out in the partition. These last, too, enjoy their share of all that it produces. In what constitutes the real happiness of human life, they are in no respect inferior to those who would seem so much above them. In ease of body and peace of mind, all the different ranks of life are nearly upon a level; and the beggar, who suns himself by the side of the highway, possesses that security which kings are fighting for."*

LECTURE LXIX.

III. PROSPECTIVE EMOTIONS.—6. DESIRE OF POWER—OF INDIRECT POWER, AS IN AVARICE.

GENTLEMEN after the remarks which I made in my last Lecture on power, as an immediate object of desire, we are naturally led to consider that peculiar and very interesting modification of the desire of power, in which the object seems to be less the direct command itself, than the means by which the command may indirectly be exercised. Such is that form of ambition which is commonly denominated avarice.

By the affections which we excite,—by our talents, whether of pure reason or of eloquence,—by the authority of public station we exercise, as you have seen, a ready dominion over the minds of others. We obtain a command over them, which, though less direct, is not less powerful, by the possession of those things which they are desirous of possessing, and for which, accordingly, they are ready to dispose of their personal services, or to transfer to us some of those means of enjoyment which they possess, and of which we in our turn are desirous. To have what all men wish to have, with the power of transferring it to them, is to have a dominion over every thing which they can transfer to us, equal to the extent of the wishes on their part.

Of the power of gratifying these wishes, wealth is the universal representative, or rather the universal instrument. To possess it, is to exercise a sway less obvious indeed, but, in its extent far more imperial than that which ever rewarded or punished the successful arms of the most illustrious conqueror,—a sway as universal as the wishes of mankind,—a sway, too, which is exercised in every case without compulsion, and even with an eagerness, on the part of him who obeys, equal to that which is felt by him who is obeyed.

What conqueror is there, who has not seen, beyond the march of his armies, some stubborn tribe that resisted still the force which had crushed whole nations in its dreadful career; beyond which, if they too had been crushed, some other tribe as stubborn would still have risen, to remind the victor of his weakness, even at the very moment in which his sway was stretched over a wider space than had ever been covered with slavery and misery before by a single individual? The empire which a rich man exercises finds no nation or tribe that wishes to resist it. It commands the services of man wherever man can be reached, because it offers to the desires of man the power of acquiring whatever objects of external enjoyment he is most eager to acquire. From the north to the south, from the east to the west, every thing that can be rendered active is put in motion by him, who remains tranquilly at home exciting the industry of those of whose very existence he is ignorant, and receiving the products of labour for his own use, without knowing from whom he receives them. It is almost as in the magic stories of romance in which the hero is represented as led from the castle-gate by hands that are invisible to him, ushered to a splendid banquet, where no one seems present, where wine is poured into the goblet before him at his very wish, and luxurious refreshment after refreshment appears upon the board, but appears as if no hand had brought it. To the rich man, in like manner, whatever he

* Theory of Moral Sentiments, Part iv. c. 1.

wishes seems to come merely because he wishes it to come. Without knowing who they are who are contributing to his idle luxury, he receives the gratification itself, and receives it from hands that operate as invisibly as the fairy hands at the banquet. He gathers around him the products of every sea and every soil. The sunshine of one climate, the snows of another are made subsidiary to his artificial wants; and though it is impossible to discern the particular arms which he is every instant setting in motion, or the particular efforts of inventive thought which he is every instant stimulating, there can be no doubt that such a relation truly exists, which connects with his wishes and with his power the industry of those who labour on the remotest corner of the earth which the enterprising commerce of man can reach.

Since the possession of wealth is thus the possession of indirect power over the labour of millions, it is not wonderful that our desire of every gratification, which the labour of millions can afford, should be attended with the desire of that by which the labour that is to minister to our gratification can be commanded. When viewed in this light, the desire of wealth is only another form of those very desires to which wealth can be rendered instrumental, by affording them the means of indulgence.

But the passion assumes a very different appearance, when it seems confined to the means of exercising an indirect command over the labours of others, without the slightest intention of exercising that sway, certainly without the least attempt to exercise it. If he who was most desirous of wealth were most desirous of obtaining with it those enjoyments, in relation to which alone wealth has any value, there would be no mystery in avarice; and we should scarcely think of giving it a name as a separate passion distinct from the passions to which it was subservient, and of which it was only representative. But it happens, that though prodigality may, in all cases, or nearly in all cases, be considered as connected with avarice, avarice very often exists, and is characterized as avarice only when it exists, without any disposition to employ for purposes of enjoyment what it is so eager to acquire. The mere gold is valued as if it were a source of every happiness, when every happiness which it truly affords, and without relation to which it is nothing, is despised as if of little value compared with that which derives from its power over the very enjoyments that are despised, all the absolute value which it possesses.

The anchoret who, to render himself more acceptable to God, retires from the society and service of man; who sleeps upon the earth; who wraps his feeble limbs in the coarsest garments; who lives on roots and water, and sees his meagre frame waste every day, without a wish to restore its vigour by a diet of richer nourishment, is one whose superstitious weakness we may lament, while we respect the very error from which it flows. But what should we think of him, if, while he slept upon the earth, and covered himself with sackcloth, and scarcely tasted even his scanty food, he were desirous of amassing the means of acquiring the softest couches, the most splendid robes, the richest fare, the most magnificent palaces? Even this inconsistency is not all which the world exhibits. There are human beings, anchorets of a more ignoble order, who submit voluntarily to all these privations, and who feel at the same time this very desire of wealth which such privations render absolutely superfluous, who have the still greater inconsistency of desiring to possess means of luxurious enjoyments, while they already have these means in their possession,—who sleep on the earth, not because they think that God has prohibited every sensual indulgence, but because they fear that their couches, if they were to lie upon them, would be sooner worn out; who clothe themselves in rags, not from humility, but from pride, that trembles lest it should afterwards have to appear in rags; and who, in the midst of inexhaustible abundance, starve, because they do not know how soon, if a thousand improbable things should happen, they may afterwards be obliged to starve.

Poverty, it has been said, has many wants; but avarice is in want of every thing.

Desunt inopiae multa, avaritiae omnia.

"The wealth which the miser only calls his own," says Cyprian, "he guards in his coffers with the same anxiety of watchfulness, as if it were the money of another committed to his charge; he has no other possession of it, than as hindering others to possess it."—"Pecuniam suam dicunt, quam, velut alienam, domi clausam, sollicito labore custodiunt. Possident ad hoc tantum, ne possidere alteri liceat."

The picture which Pope gives us of a celebrated miser, in one of his Moral Essays, absurd, and almost inconsistent with human reason as the character may seem to be, is yet a picture of no small number of mankind; and when the character, in all its deformity, is not to be traced, there are still some features of it that present themselves to the observer, in many individuals who are misers only in certain circumstances, or at certain moments, and who would be astonished if we were to attach to them so disgraceful a name.

After describing the miserable flock-bed, in the worst inn's worst room, in which the Duke of Buckingham, once that "life of

pleasure, and that soul of whim," closed his wretched existence, the poet continues,—

His Grace's fate sage Cutler could foresee,
And well, he thought, advised him, "Live like me."
As well, his Grace replied, "Like you, Sir John!
That I can do when all I have is gone."
Resolve me, Reason, which of these is worse,
Want with a full, or with an empty purse?
Thy life more wretched, Cutler, was confess'd,—
Arise and tell me, was thy death more bless'd?
Cutler saw tenants break, and houses fall,
For very want—he could not build a wall.
His only daughter in a stranger's power,
For very want,—he could not pay a dower.
A few grey hairs his reverend temples crown'd;
'Twas very want that sold them for two pound.
What even denied a cordial at his end,
Banish'd the doctor, and expell'd the friend?
What but a want, which you perhaps think mad,
Yet thousands feel, the want of what he had!*

I have already said, that if avarice consisted merely in the desire of obtaining the wealth by which we might command the gratification of our direct desires, there would be nothing in it at all mysterious, since it would be only another form of these very desires; and that the mystery of this strange passion arises only when the enjoyments which it could command are sacrificed to the mere possession of the means of commanding them. It then, indeed, presents phenomena truly worthy of being analysed, not merely as striking in themselves, but as illustrative of some of the most important general principles of our mental constitution.

It is, in the first place, sufficiently evident that the avarice does not arise from any essential quality of the wealth itself as a mere substance. You cannot suppose that, independent of the relative value which the comparative scarcity of these two metals has produced, a mass of gold would be much more desirable than a mass of iron. It must originally, then, in the eyes of the miser, as of every other person, have derived its high value from the command over the labour of others, or the actual possessions of others, which it was capable of transferring to every one into whose hands it might pass, or from the distinction which the possession of what is rare and universally desired always confers.

The common theory of the value attached by the miser to the mere symbol of enjoyment, is that the symbol, by the influence of the general laws of association, becomes representative of the enjoyment itself. We have so frequently considered money as that which affords us various pleasures, that the value which we attach to the pleasures themselves, is transferred to that which we know will always produce them when exchanged for the enjoyment; and there can be no question that such an association does truly take place, and must take place, though not in a few individuals only, but in all mankind, as long as this well-known principle of the general mental constitution continues to operate. But still, it must be remembered that the mystery in this case remains very nearly the same as before. The theory accounts indeed, and accounts most satisfactorily, for a value beyond its intrinsic use, which the miser, like every one else, may attach to gold; but it does not explain the peculiar associations in his mind which form the very difficulty in question, that very high value which he alone discovers in it; a value so far surpassing that of the quantity of enjoyment which it may command, that the miser seldom thinks of spending, that is to say, of exchanging the mere symbol of enjoyment for the enjoyment itself, while he thinks with insatiable avidity of accumulating what is not to be spent. The common theory, therefore, is manifestly defective. Let us inquire, then, whether a nicer analysis may not afford us a solution.

No one, I conceive, originally, and without regard to its value in exchange, could prize a piece of gold much more than an equal bulk of any thing else that had physical properties of equal direct utility; and originally, too, I conceive, from the indisputable influence of time in all our desires, that if all other circumstances were the same, no one would prefer to a present pleasure, a pleasure of exactly the same intensity and duration at any distant period. For both these reasons, avarice, as it exists in maturer life, could not be an immediate passion, but must have required certain circumstances to produce or foster it.

The circumstances which I conceive to have most effect in heightening the value of the symbol or instrument of enjoyment above the enjoyment itself, is the comparative permanence of the one, and the very fugitive nature of the other. Before the boy lays out his penny in the purchase of an apple or orange, it appears to him valuable chiefly as the mode of obtaining the apple or orange. But the fruit, agreeable as it may have been while it lasted, is soon devoured, its value, with respect to him has wholly ceased, and the penny he knows is still in existence, and would have been still his own if the fruit had not been purchased. He thinks of the penny, therefore, as existing now, and existing without any thing which he can oppose to it as equivalent, and the feeling of regret arises,—the wish that he had not made the purchase, and that the penny, as still existing, and equally capable as before of procuring some new enjoyment, had continued in his pocket. The feeling of regret thus associated with the loss of his penny, will, by frequent repetition, be still more intimately combined with the very conception of those little purchases to which his appetites otherwise might lead him. It will seem a serious

*Pope's Moral Essays, Ep. iii. v. 315—332.

evil to part with that, the pain of having parted with which was a serious evil before. The regret of course must vary with the mode in which the boy has most frequently laid out the contents of his little purse, so as to present, or not to present to his mind, the equivalent enjoyment for which the power of obtaining afterwards a similar amount of enjoyment was resigned. If he has purchased any thing which retains a permanent value, the regret will be less likely to arise, while the pleasure received from the purchase, as frequently presented to his mind during the permanent possession, will, on the contrary, accustom him to value money only as the instrument of obtaining what he feels to be so valuable. It will be the same as if he had given it away for the relief of distress, since in this case, though nothing absolutely permanent is possessed by him, the pleasure of the thought itself, as often as the thought recurs, may almost be considered as something permanent. It is impossible for him to think of his penny without thinking of this also, not as a pleasure wholly past, like that of fruit or sweetmeats devoured, but as a pleasure still present and never-fading, and accompanied therefore with a feeling of satisfaction which precludes all regret. Our first expenses, then, like all the subsequent expenses of our maturer years, may be attended, according to circumstances, either with regret or satisfaction; and it is not easy to say how much of the future avarice of the man may depend on the nature of a few purchases made by the boy, according as these may have been of a kind to give greater or less occasion to the feeling of regret, and to the subsequent association of this feeling with the very notion of any little expense.

I may remark, by the way, the very early connexion which in this manner takes place between prodigality and avarice,—a connexion which continues to subsist, as I have already said, almost universally in maturer life.

But to return to our little miser; it must not be supposed that the regret which is early associated with expense, approaches the nature of that extreme fear of parting with money which constitutes the avarice of manhood. All that is necessary is to produce a slight terror of expense, which the habits of many years may strengthen into parsimony. In the boy it may be scarcely more than what is counted only frugality in a man, and ranked among the virtues; but a boy that is frugal as man is frugal, is a miser of other years.

When the feeling of regret has been frequently blended in a very lively manner with the conception of expense, it is of course readily suggested again in similar circumstances. In every purchase there must be something given away, as well as something received; and, according as the mind is led more to the one or to the other of these, it will be more or less ready to make the exchange. If its thought have turned chiefly to the agreeable object which it wishes to acquire, as, where the object is very pleasing, it will naturally do, unless counteracted by opposite suggestions it will gladly make the purchase; but if, when any such wish arises, its thought be turned, in consequence of former feelings of regret, chiefly to that which it must give to obtain the object, and if the principal reflection be, "How many other things as valuable, or more valuable, could this money procure, and what regret, therefore, shall I afterwards feel if I have parted with it for this one," the very desire of making the purchase may cease altogether, from the mere suggestion of the various other agreeable objects, the acquisition of which the purchase of this one would preclude. The frequent repetition of this deliberate rejection, will of course connect more and more with the very feeling of deliberation, as to any little expense, that feeling of rejection which was its former attendant.

I may remark, in the next place, that if a guinea were significant only of one species of enjoyment, to the same amount which it might procure in exchange, its value would not be felt in so lively a manner, even by the most avaricious. But it recalls to the mind not one species of enjoyment merely which it might command, but as many species as there are objects to be purchased with it. The longer we dwell on it, therefore, the more valuable does it seem, because it suggests more of these equivalents, all of which it seems in his power of commanding them to condense within itself. Accordingly, to the miser, who is accustomed to this contemplation, a guinea is almost like a thousand; and it is not very wonderful, therefore, that any single object which a guinea could purchase, should seem to him trifling, when compared with the precious coin itself, which is felt as the equivalent of many.

In a former lecture, when treating of the influence of habit, in endearing to us, with a value far beyond its intrinsic use, the most trifling object that has been long familiar to us, I endeavoured to account for this, in a great measure, by the number of past enjoyments, that were condensed, as it were, in our very notion of the object; the loss of which, accordingly, seemed to us, by a sort of momentary illusion, to be not the loss of the trifling object alone, but the loss of those more important delights that give it an imaginary value, which it was impossible for us to separate from it. To part with it is in a great measure to part with all the pleasures that seem contained in its very nature, or of which, at least, it is representative to our

thought. An illusion of the same kind, I conceive, operates very powerfully on the miser. He has so often meditated on the worth of a guinea, in its relation to different objects, that it appears to him not a mere piece of gold, nor the representative only of one small amount of enjoyment, but the power of obtaining almost innumerable things; and the very conception of the loss of it is, therefore, like the loss, not of one of those things only, but of every thing which it might have procured. It is as if he were giving away a treasure; because it represents to his mind, in the conception of its various equivalents, as many things as a treasure would be necessary for purchasing.

There is another circumstance which I consider as having great weight with the miser, though, when first stated, it may seem to you perhaps to imply an absurdity too great even for momentary illusion; for the momentary illusion even of a mind subject to so much illusion as that of the miser must certainly be allowed to be, whatever theory we may form of its feelings. To the avaricious there are two thoughts which may be regarded as almost constantly present,—the thought of what they possess, and the thought of some enormous sum, to which perhaps they look, as to the ultimate object of their sordid ambition. Every petty gain is no sooner made than it is instantly added to the sum already possessed, and the new amount repeatedly measured with the greater sum that is only hoped. It is valued not for itself only, but as a part of these far greater products. The loss of the small sum, therefore, however insignificant in itself, is not the loss of it only, but is felt as if it were the loss of much more. It is as if the one hundred thousand pounds, or the half million, which it was before so delightful to contemplate, could no longer be contemplated with the same satisfaction,—as if it, the splendid whole, had almost ceased to exist, by the loss of that which was one of its constituent parts. The illusion is but a momentary one indeed, yet still it recurs as often as the loss itself becomes an object of thought; and a single guinea is thus regretted, almost with the same anguish of heart as if the loss of it had been actual poverty, because it is truly a part, and considered chiefly as a part of that great whole, the loss of which would, without all question, be actual poverty.

It is in this way, I conceive, that the miser, when the avarice is extreme, seriously trembles at approaching poverty, when he is forced to be at the slightest expense. It is quite evident, that he could not seriously believe this, if he discerned clearly the insignificant proportion which the expense bore to his actual wealth. But it is a part of the whole; it is intimately associated with the conception of the whole; and the loss of it, therefore, being inconsistent with the possession of the whole, seems for the moment to take that whole from him. He thinks, with a sort of giddy terror, that he is falling into poverty, firm as his golden support may be; very nearly in the same way as one that stands on the brink of a precipice with the firmest footing, still feels every moment, in the vivid conception of the possible fall, as if he were truly tumbling down the dreadful abyss. If a small parapet had been between him and the precipice, it could not have made his footing more firm, but it would have prevented the agony of giddy terror; if the few guineas, in like manner, had not been lost, the miser scarcely could be said to be richer than after the loss, but the conception of poverty would not have been excited, that conception which rises to the mind with such increased reality when there is any real loss, however trifling, with the notion of which the imaginary loss of the whole actual wealth admits of being blended.

Whatever truth there may be in this speculation, as to the momentary illusion by which the loss of a part, in consequence of the habit of frequently dwelling on it as a part of a great whole, becomes for the moment, like the loss of that great whole itself, —an illusion which seems to me to arise very naturally from the common principles of the mind, as exemplified in many other analogous feelings, and without which, or some similar illusion, it appears to me impossible to account for all the phenomena of extreme avarice; still, whether this speculation be admitted or rejected, the remarks as to the influence of regret, in producing associations favourable to the production and growth of avarice, will not be the less just. While the laws of suggestion in the mind continue as at present, it is impossible that the feeling of regret should attend many little purchases which the child may have made, without some feeling of uneasiness in the similar purchases which he may be led to make again,—an uneasiness which those who know the growth of feelings in the mind from very small beginnings, will not be surprised to see afterwards expanded into all the anxieties, and horrors, and madness of avarice.

The chief circumstance of distinction, then, of the theory which I have ventured to propose to you, from the evident inadequacy of the common theory, is, that instead of making the passion of the miser to depend on the pleasing association of enjoyment, it founds it chiefly on an association of an opposite kind, of the painful feeling of regret. The remembrances which rise to his mind are not so much those of the few moments of some agreeable purchase, as of the more lasting wish that the purchase had not been made. It is not happiness, then, in its sha-

dowy form, which is for ever playing around his heart, even when he contemplates the very symbols of happiness. It is possible pain, not possible pleasure; fear, far more than hope; poverty itself, with all the wretched images of the wants that attend it, in the very redundancy of a wealth which it would weary every one but its never-weary possessor and calculator to compute.

This theory of avarice, as founded on suggestions of regret and not of pleasure, explains very readily some facts, which otherwise, I cannot but think, would be absolutely inexplicable. Nothing is more truly remarkable, for example, than the disproportioned vexation of the miser at losses of very different amount. The loss of a guinea, or even of a shilling, gives him frequently the same uneasiness as the loss of a thousand guineas; and he who would not give away a guinea without the most compunctious terror, has sometimes been known to give away one thousand, perhaps with less difficulty, certainly with less appearance of anxiety, than if it had been a much smaller sum. The reason of this apparent disproportion I conceive to be, that the feeling of regret, which I regard as the predominant feeling in the complex associations of the miser, has been more frequently attached to the loss of a smaller sum, such as that which is given away in common purchases, and arises, therefore, more readily to the mind, merely because it has been thus more frequently associated. A guinea has been regretted a thousand times, a thousand guineas have perhaps never once been regretted, because they have never been given away before. A large sum may, indeed, be analysed into its constituent parts, with the conception of the loss of which the painful regret might be supposed to arise as before; but this analytic reduction requires an operation of thought, which takes place less readily than the simple suggestion of feelings, attached by frequent recurrence to the petty loss itself. So much of avarice, at least of what appears most ridiculous and sordid in avarice, consists in the pitiful saving of a few shillings of those small sums which occur to the demand of every hour, and admit, therefore, of being most frequently combined with regret in some stronger or slighter degree, that it has been said, with great truth, that a very few pounds in the year, laid out as other people would lay them out, would save almost any one from being counted a miser.

It is for the same reason, I may remark, that it is very difficult for those who, in early youth, have struggled with extreme penury, and who have been suddenly raised to affluence, not to have at their heart what may seem like original constitutional avarice to those who do not reflect on its cause,—a love of money, when the love of money seems so little necessary to them,—a terror of expense which was once only economy, but which is economy no more. They carry with them the feelings that have attended their expenses, in a situation in which any little gain was of great relative value, and any little departure from extreme frugality would have been ruin; and hence, perhaps, with every desire of doing good, when they think of their large fortune, and of the means of bounty which it affords them, they do little good in detail, because, in their actual benefactions, the feelings which they have been accustomed to attach to sums that were once great to them, continue still, by the influence of mere association, to arise, when the sums which they tremble to give away are, in relation to their ample means, truly insignificant. A few guineas in their charities, as in their expenses of every sort, seem to them a large sum, because they seemed to them a large sum for the greater part perhaps of a long life. They are misers merely because they once were poor, not because they are indifferent to distress.

When, in such circumstances of sudden change of fortune, the heart readily adapts itself to the change, it may be considered as a proof, that he who is now rich has, even in indigence, been accustomed to look to wealth chiefly as an instrument of gratifying those generous wishes which he now, therefore, delights to gratify; unrestrained in his bounty by any feeling of regret, because the chief regret which he felt before was that of not being able to bestow a relief, the power of bestowing which he now feels to be so inestimable a part of riches.

In these remarks on the growth of avarice, I have considered chiefly that part of the process which is the least obvious. There is one more obvious circumstance, which is, of course, not to be neglected in the theory of this passion; the distinction which great wealth confers, like every thing which is possessed only by a few, and which all, or nearly all, are desirous of possessing. Of the influence of this mere distinction as an object of satisfaction and desire to the miser, there can be no doubt; and it is an influence which increases always as the amount of wealth already accumulated increases. The smallest subtraction from the illustrious amount, lessens in his own eyes his own dignity. It seems to him delightful to be constantly adding to that which, at every addition, makes him more and more illustrious. To take any thing from the heap reverses this process. He feels that he is less than he was; and with this feeling, which is painful in itself, he does not pause to think how very little he is less; and how very near in glory one who possesses a hundred thousand pounds is to him who possesses a hundred thousand pounds and a shilling.

The union of all these feelings in their highest degree is probably necessary to form the perfect miser, as he exists only, in rare cases, for the admiration of the world. But in those half-misers, of whom the world is full, they exist in various degrees and proportions, producing those singular contrasts of feeling and situations, which would be ridiculous, if they were not lamentable and disgusting.

> Not only the low-born and old
> Think glory nothing but the beams of gold,
> The first young lord, whom in the Mall you meet,
> Shall match the veriest huncks in Lombard-street,
> From rescued candle-ends who raised a sum,
> And starves, to join a penny to a plumb.
> For love, young, noble, rich Castalio dies;
> Name but the fair,—love swells into his eyes.
> Divine Mominia! thy fond fears lay down;
> No rival can prevail—but half-a-crown.*

According as these feelings rise more or less strongly, and in a great measure, according as the notion of any particular sum, which may suggest either the enjoyment that may be afforded by it, or the regret that may attend its loss, suggests one of these rather than the other, we are to account for those sudden alternations of avarice and generosity which occasionally appear in the same character. "There is no one circumstance," says Fielding, "in which the distempers of the mind bear a more exact analogy to those which are called bodily, than in that aptness which both have to a relapse. This is plain in the violent diseases of ambition and avarice. I have known ambition, when cured at court by frequent disappointments, (which are the only physic for it,) to break out again in a contest for foreman of the grand jury at an assizes, and have heard of a man who had so far conquered avarice as to give away many a sixpence, that comforted himself at last, on his death-bed, by making a crafty and advantageous bargain concerning his ensuing funeral with an undertaker who had married his only child."

It is very evident, according to that analysis of the passion of the miser, on which I have ventured, that the mere circumstance of approaching and certain death, as in the case now quoted, could not have any great effect in lessening the delight of such a bargain; because the delight of profit to the miser does not depend on enjoyment afterwards to arise from it, but on feelings of the past, associated with the mere gain itself, or with the loss of gain. Gain is still delightful, loss still painful to him, in the same way as in emotions that agree scarcely in any other respect,—the scenes and countenances which he loves are still beautiful to him who knows that death is soon to separate him from every thing which he admires on earth, and that the loveliness, therefore, which he still sees in all his eloquent expression of continued gentleness and kindness, is a loveliness that, in all which it expresses, must be lost to him.

It is equally evident, according to the same analysis, that an accession of wealth, however great, to that which was perhaps only a competence before, will have little chance of lessening avarice, but may, on the contrary, as we see with surprise in many cases of this strange moral anomaly, increase the very avarice that was before scarcely marked as sordid, by rendering more valuable that rich amount which it would be painful to diminish by such ordinary expenses as even frugality allows. The larger the sum possessed, the more nearly does it approach to that beautiful combination of arithmetical figures which delights the imagination as often as it rises like a dream of heaven, and which is, indeed, the only dream of heaven that does arise to the miser, in that voluntary wretchedness to which he has condemned himself,—a wretchedness that has all the mortifications of penance, without the thoughts of virtue and holiness, by which penance is more than soothed, and that must be ever miserable, because a cessation of the miseries that are thus voluntarily induced, would be itself a wretchedness still more dreadful than what is voluntarily suffered.

There are various applications of the theory, which flow from it so evidently, that it is unneccessary to occupy your time in pointing them out. One conclusion, however, of great practical importance, it may be of advantage to state particularly. If avarice, as I conceive, has its origin chiefly in the feelings of regret that attend the early expenses of the child, it must be of the utmost importance to prevent, as much as possible, these primary feelings of regret, by endeavouring to lead him to employ the little money which is at his disposal, in such a manner as may make the very remembrance of the little transfer pleasing to him. When the child hastens to throw away whatever is given to him, in the gratification of his gluttonous appetite, we think that we perceive only prodigality arising. It is future parsimony, on the contrary, which we chiefly see,—a parsimony which will be quick to regret, because it has been thoughtlessly quick to squander, or rather, it is that mixture of prodigality and avarice which almost every prodigal exhibits,—that *societas luxuriae et sordium*, of which the younger Pliny speaks with so much detestation when he describes them as singly most unworthy of the noble nature of man, but still more wretchedly disgraceful, when combined, "quae cum sint turpissima, discreta ac separata, turpius junguntur." Even in mature life, the very necessities to which luxurious extravagance leads, preclude all possibility of being generous; and the generous

*Young's Love of Fame, Sat. iv.

desires which it is thus impossible to gratify, merely on account of selfish indulgences, soon cease to be felt at all. The prodigal is thus almost necessarily a miser, without thinking that he is so; because he is constantly throwing away the money which he obtains, he forgets the rapacity of his desires themselves; his avarice is not, indeed, the avarice of him who lives and dies in rags and wretchedness; but to borrow a very happy expression of Marmontel, it "is a mixture of all the passions which can be satisfied with gold."

LECTURE LXX.

III. PROSPECTIVE EMOTIONS.—6. DESIRE OF POWER,—OF INDIRECT POWER, AS IN AVARICE,—CONCLUDED.—7. DESIRE OF THE AFFECTION OF THOSE AROUND US.—8. DESIRE OF GLORY

My last Lecture, Gentlemen, was occupied with an inquiry into the nature of one of the most seemingly anomalous of human passions,—a passion that has for its object what is directly valuable only in relation to other desires, that disregards, however, the gratification of these very desires to which its object may be considered only as instrumental, and that yet continues, with mad avidity, to labour to accumulate what, but for the enjoyments which are despised and viewed almost with terror, is a burden, and nothing more,—a mass of cumbrous matter, which it is difficult to acquire, and anxious to keep, of no more value in itself, when stamped with the marks of national currency, than when it was buried, with other dross, in the original darkness of the mine.

In what manner the passion of avarice is most probably formed in the mind, I endeavoured to explain to you, by a retrospect of the circumstances that may be supposed most likely to diversify the early pecuniary transactions of the little barterer, who begins in his exchange of pence for toys and sweetmeats, that traffic, which, in more important purchases, is to continue through life, which renders the preservation of life itself, and the enjoyment of all its external pleasures, a sort of commerce, and makes merchants, therefore, in the strictest sense of that term, of the proudest of mankind, who may think, perhaps, that the merchandise which they exercise is dignified by the name of expense, but who, in their most luxurious and prodigal expenses, are only traders in gold and commodities, the barterers of certain sums of gold for certain quantities of other commodities, which, by mutual consent, are received as equivalents.

In this retrospect of the circumstances in which the passion of the young miser may be supposed to originate, we found reason to ascribe it to a process different from that which is commonly assigned as its origin; and explained, I flatter myself, in conformity with the theory which we were led to form, many seeming irregularities with respect to the influence of the passion, for which it does not seem easy to account on any other principle.

In relation to the general moral character of the individual who is subject to it, it would not be easy to find a passion that strips him so completely of all that was originally noble in his constitution, as avarice in its extreme degree. Almost every other passion, however inconsistent it may be with the higher honours of our social nature, has yet some direct relation to mankind. Sensuality itself is not wholly selfish. The more refined voluptuary seeks society to enliven and embellish his pleasures; and even he who has stupified in drunken excesses, not his intellectual faculties only, but almost the very feelings that render him a moral being, finds the madness of the maddest drunkenness a more animating pleasure when shared with some wretched half-human maniac like himself. Even the passions that are absolutely malignant, and that in separating their victim from the kind offices, and from the common courtesies of life, seem to break the very bond of social affinity, still bring the feelings, the thoughts, the emotions of living beings, as objects ever present to the mind, and thus connect man, in some measure, with man, even on appearing to throw them off with violence from each other. He who hates must at least have man before him, and must feel some common tie that connects him with the very object of his hate. But to the miser, there is no tie of human feeling. There are no propinquities to him, no friendships; but the place of these is supplied, and fully supplied, by the single passion which occupies his heart. It is not man, but a mass of inanimate matter, which is ever before his mind, and almost ever before his very eyes, or at least which would be almost ever before his eyes, if there were no fear of exposing as booty what would otherwise be the delight of his unceasing contemplation. He thinks, indeed, and toils; but he thinks only of gold, toils only for gold; and if his gold could be doubled by the annihilation of all beside, he would care little, perhaps, though no other object were to exist, but the mass which he has to measure or compute, and himself the sole happy measurer or computer of it. In his very nature, indeed, he becomes himself almost as little human as that which he adores. Where his gold is buried, his affections too are buried. The figure which Salvian uses, in speaking of this moral torpor of the miser, is scarcely too bold

a one,—that his soul assimilates itself to his treasure, and is transmuted, as it were, into a mere earthly mass. "Mens thesaurizontis thesaurum suum sequitur, et quasi in naturam terrestris substantiae demutatur."

Even if this moral torpor to every kind affection were all, the passion of the miser, contemptible as it might seem, would still be only an object of contempt, or of a mixture of disgust and pity. But with how many positive vices is avarice connected, and how difficult is it for him who values the possession of wealth as far transcending every thing beside, to respect in any of its forms, when it is opposed to his unjust gain, the restraint of that moral principle, which, in all its forms, seems so poor and insignificant in comparison with the wealth which it would preclude him from acquiring, or which it would prevent him at least from preserving in all its undiminished beauty! The miser, even though he were the most sordid of his sordid class, might, perhaps, fulfil some of the social duties of life, if these duties had no relation to gold; but the great misery of his scanty morality, when we consider him in his social connexions, is, that the gold which he loves, is, by its universality of application, as a medium of every external comfort and enjoyment, and consequently of every action by which these can be communicated to others, connected with all, or almost all the duties of life; in requiring which from him, therefore, virtue seems to make from him too extravagant and costly a demand. If no sacrifices were required of him, or if he could be benevolent at a cheaper rate, he might have no great reluctance to be benevolent. To relieve the lowest and most wretched necessities of the indigent, however, even by the pettiest alms, would be to take some few particles from the precious heap. To bring forward into public notice the genius that is still obscure, because it is beaming only in poverty, or even the patient industry that may not yet have found any one to whom its humble talent is an object of demand, would take from the heap a still greater number of particles; and to remember, in some cases, the claims of consanguinity or friendship, even without that dreadful lavishness of expense which the world would scarcely count generosity, to remember them with the most cautious sparingness in the well-measured benefaction, would be to take from the heap, perhaps, what, if the whole sum were very accurately measured, would make it almost sensibly less. In the ordinary dealings of life, in which generosity on any side is out of the question, and mere justice is all that is required, the miser may be honest; but his honesty, if he have fortitude enough to preserve it, is always in peril, and escapes only by a continual struggle. Not to be a knave is in him a sort of magnanimity. To avoid even the meanest fraud, at least to avoid it from any other motive than a fear of law, is a sacrifice to heroic virtue of the same sort, as it would be to a very generous man to strip himself of the half, or more than the half, of all which he possessed, for the comfort of a suffering stranger.

In the contemplation of many of the passions that rage in the heart with greatest fierceness, there is some comfort in the thought that, violent as they may be for a time, they are not to rage through the whole course of life, at least if life be prolonged to old age; that the agitation, which, at every period will have some intermissions, will grow gradually less as the body grows more weak; and that the mind will at last derive from this very feebleness a repose which it could not enjoy when the vigour of the bodily frame seemed to give to the passion a corresponding vigour. It is not in avarice, however, that this soothing influence of age is to be found. It grows with our growth and with our strength, but it strengthens also with our very weakness. There are no intermissions in the anxieties which it keeps awake; and every year, instead of lessening its hold, seems to fix it more deeply within the soul itself, as the bodily covering around it slowly moulders away. What was scarcely necessary in the first fresh years of youth, when in the alacrity of health, and with senses quick to every enjoyment, it might have seemed reasonable to attach a high value to the means of providing for the long series of luxuries of a long life; what was even then scarcely necessary for this abundant provision, is desired more impatiently when a few spare meals more are all which nature seems to ask for the few remaining hours of exhausted age; and when some other disease, perhaps, in aggravation of the sure disease of age itself, is lessening even the small number of those meals, which nature scarcely can be said still to require. The heart which is weary of every thing else, is not weary of coveting more gold; the memory, which has forgotten every thing else, continues still, as Cato says in Cicero's Dialogue, to remember where its gold is stored; the eye is not dim to gold that is dim to every thing beside; the hand, which it seems an effort to stretch out and to fix upon any thing, appears to gather new strength from the very touch of the gold which it grasps, and has still vigour enough to lift once more, and count once more, though a little more slowly, what it has been its chief and happiest occupation thus to lift and count for a period of years far longer than the ordinary life of man. When the relations or other expectant heirs gather around his couch, not to comfort, nor even to seem to comfort, but to await, in decent mimicry of solemn attendance, that moment which they rejoice to view approaching, the

dying eye can still send a jealous glance to the coffer, near which it trembles to see, though it scarcely sees, so many human forms assembled; and that feeling of jealous agony which follows and outlasts the obscure vision of floating forms that are scarcely remembered, is at once the last misery, and the last consciousness of life.

Can a passion so odious, and almost so loathsome to our heart as that which I have now been describing, be subservient to any happy purposes in the general economy of life? It may seem at first as little capable of having any relation to good, as of enjoying good; and if we consider any particular case of the passion, in its extreme degree of sordid parsimony, without regard to the elementary feelings that have composed it, and that may exist in other degrees of combination, avarice would truly seem to be without any relation to good, as in like manner, it would seem, if we were to consider any particular case of the violence of revenge, or of any of the malevolent passions, that the passion which was unquestionably productive of unhappiness to the individual would be productive also in this extreme degree of injury rather than of advantage to society. Yet injurious as it may be in some cases, we have seen that the susceptibility of resentment, which Heaven has placed in our breasts for the terror of the guilty, is, while there is any possibility of aggression on the part of others, productive of good upon the whole, far surpassing all the amount of evil to which, in rarer cases of intemperate violence, it may give rise. It is the general result of the elementary feelings that may have constituted in slow growth our various passions, which we are to consider in an estimate of this kind, not their mere occasional evil in certain cases of unfortunate combinations. What we exclusively term avarice, is evil,—as that form of implacable or disproportioned resentment which exclusively we call revenge, is evil. But avarice is, as we have seen, the result, in certain peculiar circumstances, of feelings which are themselves not advantageous merely, but essential to the happiness, and almost to the very existence of society. If the analysis of the passion of the miser, which I ventured to deliver to you, be just, it is the result of early feelings of regret, that in the particular circumstances in which they arose, were reasonable feelings; and if man were, by his very nature, incapable of feeling regret, however absurd and ruinous his expense might have been, what a scene of misery would life have been continually presenting to our eyes! What reliance, amid so many temptations to inconsiderate luxury, could be placed on the fortune of any one even for a single day? And what domestic happiness could there be if the father, the wife, the son, however rich in the morning, might be expected, almost with certainty, to be in indigence at night? Our provident Creator has arranged better the moral economy of the world. With our sensibility to external enjoyments, and our consequent possibility of being seduced into luxurious and disproportionate indulgence, he has corrected in a great measure this possible evil of what is good in itself, by rendering regret the necessary and uniform, or almost uniform attendant of any disproportionate indulgence that lessens in any considerable degree our fortune, and our consequent means of usefulness. Avarice indeed may be, as we have seen, an occasional result of this very feeling; but what is avarice in a few is frugality in all beside; and the advantages, which the general frugality is every moment affording to almost every family of mankind, are not too dearly purchased—certainly not purchased at a dearer rate than any other amount of equal good is purchased, by the small portion of evil that may be found to attend these advantages, as spread over the whole social community. The general sum of evil in the world would certainly not be lessened, if the possibility of a few cases of avarice were prevented, by the cessation of those simple feelings in which avarice and frugality alike have their rise; but would on the contrary be increased almost to infinity, if these simple feelings were suspended, that secure to every family a permanence of enjoyment, by checking the momentary desire of every individual. There is no fear that, in the multitude of individuals who form a nation, when there are so many solicitations to enjoyment, and therefore to the expense, without which enjoyment cannot be purchased, any very considerable number of them will be misers; and the wealth of the few who may be denominated misers, however closely it may be coffered for a time, is ever ready to make its escape, and seldom requires more for its deliverance than a mere change of its master.

> Ask we what makes one keep, and one bestow?
> The Power who bids the ocean ebb and flow;
> Bids seed-time, harvest, equal course maintain,
> Through reconcil'd extremes of drought and rain;
> Builds life on death, on change duration founds,
> And gives th' eternal wheels to know their rounds.
> Riches, like insects, when conceal'd they lie,
> Wait but for wings, and in their season fly.
> Who sees pale Mammon pine amid his store,
> Sees but a backward steward for the poor;
> This year a reservoir to keep and spare,
> The next a fountain, spouting through his heir,
> In lavish streams to quench a country's thirst,
> And men and dogs shall drink him till they burst.*

The desire which is next in order to those already considered by us, is the desire of the affection of those around us.

Of the nature of that delightful emotion which constitutes love itself, in the various relations in which it may exist, I have al-

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* Pope's Moral Essays, Ep. iii. v. 165—176.

ready treated too fully, to be under the necessity of making any additional remarks on it. But though love, that feeling of affection for the object that is or seems to us amiable, cannot continue for more than a moment, or at least cannot continue long, without a desire of reciprocal affection in the object beloved, the regard which arises instantly on the contemplation of the amiable object, is itself, as a mere state of the mind, distinct from the desires which may instantly, or almost instantly, succeed it. What in common language is termed love, indeed, even without comprehending in it the desire which we are at present considering, is itself, as we have seen, a complex state of mind, including a delight in the contemplation of its object, and a wish of good to that object; and the term in its common use is a very convenient one, for expressing the various kindred feelings, whatever they may be, that are so immediately successive, or so intimately conjoined, as to admit of being briefly expressed together in a single word, without any possibility of mistake. But still it does not require any very subtile discernment to discover, that our feeling of regard, whether simple or complex, is itself different from the desire of that regard which we wish to be reciprocally felt for ourselves. We may separate them in our philosophic analysis, therefore, though in nature they may usually exist together.

In treating of this desire of the love of others as an object of happiness to ourselves, it would be idle to speak of the necessity of one of these forms of affection, for our very existence in those years, when, without the parental love which cherished us, it would have been as little possible for us to exist, as for the plant to flourish without the continued support of the soil from which it sprung. But even after we have risen to maturity, and are able to exist by our own care, or at least by those services which we can purchase or command, how miserable would it be for us to be deprived of all feelings of this happy class! How miserable, though we should still retain the pleasure that is involved in the affection and the benevolent wishes which we might continue to feel for others, to think that these very wishes of affection were not answered by any reciprocal regard; that not a being around us, not even one of those whose welfare we were eager to promote, and whose sorrows we felt almost as our own, had for us any feelings more tender than for the inanimate objects which were seen and passed without any wish of seeing them again!

I alluded, in a former lecture, to the misery we should feel, if we lived in a world of breathing and moving statues, capable of performing for us whatever man is capable of performing, but unsusceptible, by their very nature, of any feelings which connected them with us by relations more intimate than those which connect us with the earth on which we tread, or the fruits that nourish us. Yet if these breathing and moving beings were statues only to us, and were to each other what the individuals of our race, in all their delightful charities, are to those who love them, and those by whom they are loved, how much more painful would our strange loneliness be, since we should then seem not insulated merely, but excluded, and excluded from a happiness which was every instant before our eyes! Even though the same mutual offices were to be continued, there would be no comfort in these mere forms of kindness, if we knew that every heart, however warm to others, was still cold to us. To think that services performed for us, were performed without the slightest wish for our welfare, would indeed be to feel them as something which it would rather grieve than rejoice us to receive; and perfect solitude itself, with all its inconveniencies, would certainly be less dreadful to us, than the ghastly solitude of such a crowd.

So important is it to our happiness, then, that those whom we love should feel for us a reciprocal regard, that nature has, with a happy provision for this moral appetite, if I may so term it,—this want or necessity of our heart, which is scarcely less urgent than our other necessities, endowed us with a ready susceptibility of affection for all who give any demonstration of their affection for us. "Si vis amari, ama,"—Love, if you wish to be loved,—is a very ancient precept, of which all must have felt the force. Not to love those who love us, is to our conception a sort of ingratitude, and an ingratitude which would be attended with as much remorse as if we had sought the affection as a favour to be conferred on us. The assiduities of a lover, though in most cases arising, without any intention on his part, from the pleasure of the mere assiduities themselves, are still, in some slight degree, prompted by his knowledge of this part of our mental constitution. He knows, indeed, that the thousand attentions which he seeks every opportunity of paying are trifling in their own nature; but he knows that they are at least the expressions of affection, and with all the graces and virtues with which he may conceive himself to be adorned, it is to the sense of his affection that he trusts, as much perhaps as to his own personal endowments, for those gentler feelings which he wishes to excite. If it were possible to make a supposition, which I purposely make extravagant, that I may leave nothing but the influence of affection itself; if it were possible that, on the most distant and savage spot of the globe, which was scarcely ever visited but by some annual vessel from our island, there

could exist a human being, who felt for us an affection such as friends only feel; though this solitary being had never met our eye, and never could be expected to be seen by us; though in every thing, but in his love for us, he were as dull as the very brutes around him; if only we could know that he existed, and that he felt for us this ardent sympathy, would it be possible for us to withhold our own sympathy from him? Should we have no eagerness, at the return of the annual ship, to inquire into the fate of him to whom that vessel had so often carried tidings of us; and, whatever insensibility we might imagine ourselves to possess, is it possible for us to imagine it such, as could enable us to hear without emotion, that the friend, the unknown but faithful friend, for whom we inquired, existed no more?

Such is the influence of affection, and so happy that adaptation of nature by which love produces love. In the multitudes which exist together in society, how many are there whose amiable qualities may be considered as nearly similar; and there would therefore have been no tie to connect us, in the delightful intercourse of friendship, with one more than with another, if it had not been for the secret and incessant reaction of kindness on kindness,—a reaction that augments courtesy into regard, and warms common regard into all the ardour and devotion of the most zealous love. But for this progressive and mutual agency, the wish of reciprocal interest which attends affection, and the gratification of which is so delightful a part of affection, would, indeed, have been a cruel gift. It is a gracious boon of nature, only because she has thus happily adapted, to the love which already exists, the love that is soon to be providing for our desire of fonder regard in the bosoms in which we wish to excite it, —a tenderness which this very desire is sufficient of itself to awake, and which requires no other influence to cherish it afterwards, than a continuance of the same delightful wishes by which it was originally produced.

The desire, to the consideration of which we are next to proceed, is one akin to that wish of reciprocal affection which we have now been considering,—the desire of glory,— that passion, to the infinity of whose view the narrow circle, which contains all the objects of our affection, is scarcely a point; which connects us with every human being that exists; and not with these only, but also with every human being that is to exist in the long succession of ages. "Nature," says Longinus, "has not intended man for a low or ignoble being; but has brought us into life in the midst of this wide universe, as before a multitude assembled at some heroic solemnity, that we might be spectators of all her magnificence, and candidates for the prize of glory which she holds forth to our emulation."

> Say, why was man so eminently raised
> Amid the vast creation; why ordain'd
> Through life and death to dart his piercing eye,
> With thoughts beyond the limit of his frame;
> But that the Omnipotent might send him forth,
> In sight of mortal and immortal powers,
> As on a boundless theatre, to run
> The great career of justice; to exalt
> His generous aim to all diviner deeds;
> To chase each partial purpose from his breast;
> And through the mists of passion and of sense,
> And through the tossing tide of chance and pain,
> To hold his course unfaltering, while the voice
> Of truth and virtue, up the steep ascent
> Of nature, calls him to his high reward,
> The applauding smile of Heaven.*

It is in this boundless theatre, with mankind for our witnesses, and God for our judge and rewarder, that we have to struggle with our fortune in that great combat, which is either glory or disgrace, and according to the result of which, life is, or is not, a blessing. We know, indeed, the awful presence of our judge, and this very thought is to us, at times, like the inspiration of some better power with which he deigns to invigorate our weakness. But he is himself unseen by us; and it is not wonderful, therefore, that while he is unseen, and his judgment on which we depend still doubtful, we should sometimes cast an anxious look to the eyes of those witnesses who surround us, that we may see, in the approbation or disapprobation which they express, not the certainty, indeed, but at least some probable omens of that high approval, without which there can be no victory, though all around approve, and with which no failure, though all around condemn.

The love of glory, it has been truly said, is "the last infirmity of noble minds," novissima exuitur. It is not itself virtue, indeed, but

> What other passion, virtue's friend,
> So like to virtue's self appears?

"Contempta fama, contemnuntur virtutes." "To despise fame," says Tacitus, "is to despise the virtues which lead to it;" and there can be no question that he who is altogether heedless whether every human being regard him as a glory to mankind, or as an object of infamy in himself, and of disgrace to that nature which he partakes, must be almost a god, and raised above the very virtues, as well as the vices of humanity, or he must be the most ignoble of the works of God. To have even our earthly being extended in everlasting remembrance; to be known wherever the name of virtue can reach; and to be known as the benefactors of every age, by the light which we have diffused, or the actions which we have performed or prompted, who is there that does not feel some desire of this additional immortality? If, to obtain the mere remembrance of his name, the fe-

* Pleasures of Imagination, B. i. v. 151—166.

rocious oppressor of millions can dare to load himself with every crime, and submit to be held in universal execration, that the world may still know, by the very hatred and curses which he continues to call forth, that there was on the earth, at a period of many ages back, some malignant being, who could exist only within a circle of misery, and who passed from kingdom to kingdom, carrying with him that desolation, the principle of which seemed inherent in him, and essential to his very existence; if even this dreadful remembrance be so valuable in the eyes of man, how much more delightful must be the certainty, that the name which we leave is never to be forgotten indeed; but is never to be forgotten, only because it is to be an object of eternal love and veneration; and that when we shall be incapable ourselves of benefiting the world, there will still be actions performed for its benefit, which would not have been conceived and performed, if we had not existed!

The desire of glory, then, far from being unworthy of a good man, is as truly worthy of him as any of those other secondary desires which minister to that primary desire, which is the only one that cannot be too vivid; the desire of rendering ourselves acceptable by our virtues to him who made us. This best wish, though it is to be the primary wish of every good heart, surely does not require that we should be indifferent to the regard of those whom it is to be our duty to benefit. If it be not wrong to wish for the affection of those around us; the loss of which would deprive us, I will not say merely of some of our highest delights, but of some of the most persuasive excitements to moral excellence; it cannot be wrong to extend this wish of affection beyond the circle that immediately incloses us, and to derive, from the greater number of those to whose approbation we look, a still stronger excitement to that excellence, on which we found our hope of their approval. God and our conscience,—these are, indeed, the awarders of our true praise; and, without the praise of these, the praise of the world is scarcely worthy of being estimated as any thing. But, insignificant as it is, when the voice of our conscience does not accord with it, it is still something when it echoes to us that voice, and when, as distinct from our own self-approval, it seems to us the presage of still higher approbation. It is enough to us, indeed, if God love us. But that great Being knew well how feeble is our nature, and what aid as well as happiness it would derive from other affections. He has not formed us, therefore, to love himself only, but to love our parents, our children, our relatives of every order, the wide circle of our friends, our country, mankind. For the same reason, he has given us a love of glory; not as superseding our love of his favourable judgment of our actions, but as supporting us, while we scarcely dare to look with confidence to that perfect judgment; and representing it to us in some measure as the affection of the virtuous on earth, represents to us that supreme affection which is in heaven. Those who would banish the love of glory from our breast, because God is all, must remember, then, that the very same principle would make the love of a father, a wife, a child, a friend, as indifferent to us, as if they were not in existence, or were incapable of loving or being loved. Our domestic and social affections may be perverted, as our love of glory may be perverted. Both may lead to vice, but as general principles of our constitution, both are auxiliary to virtue.

It is not to love glory much, that is unworthy of us, as beings that can look to a higher judgment than that of man, and that are formed for a still higher reward than man can bestow; but to love glory for unworthy objects, or to love it even for worthy objects, more than we prize that approbation which is far nobler.

It is, in the first place, truly contemptible, when we seek to be distinguished for qualities, to excel in which, though it may be what the world counts glory, is moral infamy; that infamy which the heart in secret feels, even while it strives to comfort itself with a praise which it knows to be void of consolation. The world, that must have distinctions of some sort to which to look with astonishment, gives a distinction even to vice that transcends all other vice, and every age has follies which are fashionable. But who is there, who, in all those situations in which the heart most needs to be comforted, in adversity, in sickness, in the feebleness of old age, has ever derived comfort from the thought of having been the first in every folly, or every crime, it may have been the fashion of the idle and profligate to achieve, and of their idle and profligate imitators to regard with an admiration still more foolish or criminal than the very crime or folly which was its object?

When glory is thus sought, even by an humble individual, in unworthy objects, it is sufficiently contemptible; but how much worse than contemptible is it, how afflicting to the whole race of mankind, when the individual who thus seeks glory, is one who is incapable of feeling the excellence of true glory, and has the melancholy power of seeking, in the misery of others, a hateful celebrity, still more miserable than the misery amid which it is sought!

"If, Sire," says an orator, who was worthy, by his virtue and eloquence, of being the teacher of kings, in one of his noble addresses to the young King of France: "if

this poison infect the heart of the prince; if, forgetting that he is the protector of public tranquillity, he prefer his own false glory to the love and the happiness of his people; if he had rather conquer provinces than reign over hearts, and think it more illustrious to be the destroyer of every neighbouring nation than the father of that which is confided to his care; if the lamentations of his subjects be the only song of triumph that accompanies his victories; what a scourge has God, in his wrath, given to man, in giving him such a master! His glory, Sire, will be ever sullied with blood. Some madmen will sing perhaps his victories, but the provinces, the cities, the villages, will weep them. Superb monuments will be erected to immortalize his conquests; but the ashes, still smoking, of cities that once were flourishing; the wide desolation of plains stripped of their fertility and beauty; the ruins of the walls under which peaceable citizens lie buried; so many public marks of calamities that are to subsist after him, will be sad monuments which are to immortalize his vanity and folly. He will have passed, like a torrent, to ravage the earth; not like a majestic river, to bear to it joy and abundance. His name will have its place among conquerors in the annals of posterity, but it will not be to be found in the list of good kings; and as often as the history of his reign shall be recalled, it will be only as a memorial of the evils which he has inflicted on mankind."*

The Grecian chief, the enthusiast of his pride,
With rage and terror stalking by his side,
Raves round the globe;—he soars into a god!
Stand fast, Olympus! and sustain his nod!
The pest divine in horrid grandeur reigns,
And thrives on mankind's miseries and pains.
What slaughter'd hosts, what cities in a blaze,
What wasted countries, and what crimson seas!
With orphan's tears his impious bowl o'erflows;
And cries of kingdoms lull him to repose.†

Such is the melancholy influence of this passion, when it is content with that dreadful celebrity which crimes can give. The desire of glory, however, is not criminal only when it is fixed on unworthy objects; it may err, too, even when fixed on objects that are worthy in themselves, if the praise itself be preferred to the virtues which deserve it. There are situations in life in which it is necessary to submit even to the dispraise of men for imputed vices, from which we know that we are free, rather than by the sacrifice of our duty, to appear more virtuous by being less worthy of that glorious name. "Non vis esse justus sine gloria! At, mehercule saepe justus esse debebis cum infamia." Such a trial of virtue is, indeed one of the hardest trials which virtue has to bear; but it is still a trial which virtue can bear. To have the certainty, that by violating a single trust which we have yet the fortitude not to violate, by revealing, in a few words, a secret confided to us, we should immediately appear noble in the eyes of those who look on us now with contempt, is to be in a situation of which the generous, who alone are capable of a moral triumph so exalted, alone are worthy,—a situation that is painful indeed in many respects, but the pain of which is richly remunerated by the feelings that accompany it, and by the feelings that are to be its eternal reward.

* Massillon, Petit Carême.
† Young's Love of Fame, sat. vii.

LECTURE LXXI.

III. PROSPECTIVE EMOTIONS.—8. DESIRE OF GLORY.

Gentlemen, after considering the desire which it is impossible for any one not to share in some degree of the affection of those for whom he himself feels regard, and with whom he has to mingle in the familiar intercourse of social life, I proceeded, in the close of my last Lecture, to consider the kindred desire of glory, the desire of those feelings of wonder and veneration that are to arise in bosoms, of which not the veneration merely, but the very existence is to be unknown to us.

We have seen how strong this desire of glory is as a passion, whatever may be the nature of the delight which the glory itself yields when attained. Let us now then consider this delight, which is evidently not a simple pleasure, as a subject of analysis, like that which we have employed in considering the happiness that attends some of our other complex emotions.

In the first place, there is involved in the complex pleasure, that pleasure of simple esteem which is an object of our desire, even though one individual only were to feel it for us; a modification of that general desire of affection, which is most obvious and most vivid in the domestic relations of life, but which, in its wide circle, embraces all mankind.

In the next place, there is a pleasure in the approbation of others, as it confirms our own doubtful sentiments. Conscience, indeed, is the great estimator of our actions; but we feel that even conscience may sometimes flatter us, and we seek an additional security on which to lean, while we look back on our own merits or demerits. The desire of glory, therefore, it has been truly said,

Is virtue's second guard,
Reason her first; but reason wants an aid;
Our private reason is a flatterer;
Thirst of applause calls public judgment in,
To poise our own.‡

‡Young's Night Thoughts, Night vii. v. 700—701.

The praise which we receive unjustly, cannot, indeed, unless where the heart is corrupted, make vice appear to us virtue; but when it is not thus unjustly given, it makes us surer that we see virtue where it is, and that we have seen it where it was; that we have done well when we trusted in our own heart that we had done well.

This then is a second, and very important element of the pleasure of glory.

A third element of the complex delight, is that which by the greater number of the lovers of glory, is felt as the most important element of the whole; the pleasure of mere distinction of a superiority attained over others, in that of which all are ambitious, or are supposed to be ambitious. Life is a competition, or a number of competitions. We are continually measuring ourselves with others in various excellencies,—in excellencies so various, that there is scarcely any thing in which one human being can differ from another that may not be a subject of internal measurement, and therefore of some degree of joy or sorrow, as the measurement is or is not in our favour. It is in the eyes of others, however, that the competitors for honour wish to distinguish themselves; and the internal measurement, therefore, when it is unfavourable, is painful chiefly because it is considered by them as representing or corresponding with that which others too will form. The voice of glory, then, the most delightful of all voices to their ear, is, at every stage of their progress, a proof that the distinction which they sought has been, to a certain extent, obtained; that they are recognised as superiors,—that they have risen above the crowd,—and that they have now among their enviers those to whom the multitude beneath are looking with envy, only because they dare not, in their very wishes, look so high as that prouder eminence which they have reached.

There is yet, I cannot but think, in the complex delight of glory, a fourth pleasure, and one which, though it may be less obvious, and founded only on illusion, is not less real in itself. The pleasure to which I allude, consists in the feeling of a sort of extension which glory gives to our being. He who thinks of us is connected with us. We seem to exist in his heart. We are no longer one, we are more than one, or at least have a wider unity, commensurate with the wideness of the applause which we receive, or flatter ourselves that we are receiving. If we could imagine at any moment, that there was not a being, in the whole multitude of mankind, whose thought was not fixed on us, and fixed with admiration, we should feel as if our own existence in this delightful moment were spread over all. It would be impossible for any one, in such circumstances, to think of himself as limited to that little point of space to which he is truly confined. He would live, as it were, along the whole nations of the globe, with a feeling of diffusive consciousness almost like omnipresence, or rather with a feeling of intimate union that is more than omnipresence. Some illusion, then, must be in the vivid interest which we attach to undeserved praise. The common theory of the illusion is, that we merely believe ourselves to be where we are praised, and to hear what is said of us. The illusion, however, appears to me to extend to something which is far more than this, to a momentary extension of our capacity of feeling, as if enlarged by that of every one in whose mind and heart we conceive our thought to arise. We have gained, as it were a thousand souls, at least we seem for the moment to live in a thousand souls; and it is not wonderful that such an extension of our being should seem to us delightful, when the emotions through which it is expanded are those of admiration and love.

Such, then, are the important elements that together form, as I conceive, the delight of contemporary glory. And the praise which we hear, or which we are capable of hearing, may, it will perhaps be allowed, be justly regarded by us as desirable. But what is posthumous glory? and how can man, who reasons at all, it will be said, give to such idle and profitless renown, a single thought that might be better employed on acquisitions which he is capable of knowing that he has made, and therefore of enjoying?

The same expansion of our being, as if it existed wherever the thought of us exists, which I conceive to form so important a part of the pleasure of contemporary praise, seems to me to furnish the chief circumstance that solves the apparent difficulty of accounting for a desire which to reason may appear so very absurd. There are some circumstances in it, however, which may require a little fuller consideration. Of the universality of the desire of a praise that is not to terminate with the life that is capable of feeling it there can be no doubt.

"Love of Fame the universal Passion," is the title which an ingenious satirist has given to a very lively series of poems; and in another poem he describes it, in a happy allegory, as the great object which, in the general voyage of life, is sought by all, though attained by few of the adventurers who seek it.

> Some sink outright:
> O'er them, and o'er their names, the billows close:
> To-morrow knows not they were ever born.
> Others a short memorial leave behind,
> Like a flag floating when the bark's engulph'd;

It floats a moment, and is seen no more:
One Cæsar lives, a thousand are forgot. *

Yet, if to extinguish a passion, nothing more were necessary than to show its absolute futility, the love of posthumous glory must long have ceased to be a passion, since almost every moralist has proved, with most accurate demonstration, the absurdity of seeking that which must, by its nature, be beyond the reach of our enjoyment; and almost every poet has made the madness of such a desire a subject of his ridicule; though, at the same time it cannot be doubted, that if the passion could have been extinguished, either by demonstration or ridicule, we should have had fewer demonstrations, and still less wit on the subject. "Can glory be any thing," says Seneca, "when he, who is said to be the very possessor of it, himself is nothing!"—"Nulla est omnino gloria, cum is, cujus ea esse dicitur, non extet omnino."

"Thirst for glory," say Wollaston, "when that is desired merely for its own sake, is founded in ambition and vanity; the thing itself is but a dream, and imagination, since, according to the differing humours and sentiments of nations and ages, the same thing may be either glorious or inglorious; the effect of it, considered still by itself, is neither more health, nor estate, nor knowledge, nor virtue to him who has it; or, if that be any thing, it is but what must cease when the man dies; and after all, as it lives but in the breath of the people, a little sly envy, or a new turn of things extinguishes it, or perhaps it goes quite out of itself. Men please themselves with notions of immortality, and fancy a perpetuity of fame secured to themselves by books and testimonies of historians. But alas! it is a stupid delusion, when they imagine themselves present and enjoying that fame at the reading of their story after death. And besides, in reality, the man is not known ever the more to posterity because his name is transmitted to them. He does not live because his name does. When it is said Julius Cæsar subdued Gaul, beat Pompey, changed the Roman commonwealth into a monarchy, &c. it is the same thing as to say, the conqueror of Pompey, &c. was Cæsar, that is, Cæsar and the conqueror of Pompey are the same thing; and Cæsar is as much known by the one designation as by the other. The amount then is only this, that the conqueror of Pompey conquered Pompey, or somebody conquered Pompey; or rather, since Pompey is as little known now as Cæsar, somebody conquered somebody. Such a poor business is this boasted immortality, and such as has been here described, is the thing called glory among us."

"What's fame?" says Pope, addressing Lord Bolingbroke,—

A fancied life in other's breath,
A thing beyond us, even before our death.
Just what you hear you have, and what's unknown,
The same, my lord, if Tully's or your own.
All that we feel of it begins and ends
In the small circle of our foes and friends;
To all beside, as much an empty shade,
An Eugene living, as a Cæsar dead,
Alike, or when, or where, they shone, or shine,
Or on the Rubicon, or on the Rhine.†

If, then, after we are no more, the reputation of Tully and our own be, with respect to us who can enjoy neither, precisely the same, why is it that the praise which the eloquence of the Roman orator must continue to receive from the generations that are to come, affects us with no particular interest, and that we attach so very strong an interest to the praise which we flatter ourselves is to accompany our own name? The common explanation which is given of the difference in the two cases is, that we imagine ourselves still present and conscious of our own glory. But this very imagination is the difficulty to be explained, since it does not depend on any accidental caprice of fancy, but is so permanently attached to the nature of our glory, that whatever number of ages we may suppose to intervene, and though we are abundantly convinced that the praise can never reach us in the tomb, we yet cannot think of this praise for a single moment with indifference. It has thus every appearance of being an essential part of the complex notion itself; and the explanation which I am about to submit to you, therefore, seems to me the more accurate, as it proceeds on this very circumstance. The difference of the interest felt in the two cases supposed, must, if the imaginary glory be the same in both, depend on the difference of the conceptions which we form of ourselves and others, as the subjects of the praise that is to be lavished in the distant periods of which we think; since the imaginary glory, as combined with the conception either of ourselves or of others, forms our whole notion of posthumous reputation. What then is the difference of these two conceptions on which the whole resulting difference depends? The conception which we have of another person, is chiefly of that external form and other qualities which make him an object of our senses. The conception of ourselves, however, is very different—not different merely as our conceptions of other individuals are different, but in kind more than in degree. It is not so much the conception of our external form, as of the various feelings by which we have become sensible of our own existence; the retrospect, in short, of that general consciousness which pervades, or ra-

* Young's Night Thoughts, Night viii. v. 195—201.

† Essay on Man, Ep. iv. v. 237—246.

ther which constitutes these feelings, and identifies them all as affections of one sentient mind. To think of the reputation of any one, however, is, as I have already remarked, to have the feeling of reputation combined with that complex notion which we have formed of the person; which is usually, when it is not of ourselves we think, little more than the conception of a certain form, or perhaps of certain works of art of which he has been the author. But the complex notion of ourselves, as I have said, is very different. Of this, consciousness forms an essential part; and to combine the reputation, as imagined, with the notion of ourselves, is therefore necessarily to combine it with the consciousness which is involved in the very notion of ourselves. We cannot think of what we call self, but as that which is the subject of the various feelings that form to us all which we remember of our life, as the living and sentient being that is capable of hearing praise, and of feeling delight in praise; and to take away this capacity of sense and enjoyment, and to substitute a total insensibility, would be to change the complex notion of that which we call self, into one as completely different from it as our complex conception of any one individual is different from our complex conception of any other individual of opposite features and form. What is recognised by us as ours, then, has been already, and must have been already, combined in our thought with this very notion of consciousness. It not enough, therefore, to say, that when we take pleasure in the contemplation of our own future glory, we imagine ourselves present and enjoying it; since we can go still farther and say, that in consequence of the very nature of our conceptions, it is impossible for us to consider future glory as our own, without imagining it as combined with that consciousness, which is an elementary and essential part of the very conception of ourselves; and without which, though the glory itself would be the same, it could not be felt by us as ours.

It is, in a great measure, from the same cause that we think with so much horror of the physical circumstances which succeed our death:—

> The knell, the shroud, the mattock, and the grave,
> The deep damp vault, the darkness, and the worm.

In explanation of this horror, of which it is impossible for us to divest ourselves, it is usually said that we imagine ourselves suffering what the insensibility which death produces must have rendered altogether indifferent: and it is true that we do form this imagination. But the reason of our forming this very imagination is, that the notion of consciousness, as I have now stated, is an actual component part of the complex notion of ourselves, and that, accordingly, whatever it may be which we combine with the complex notion of ourselves, to that we must attach the consciousness which is a part of it. To think of ourselves in the grave, is not to think of a mere mass of matter, for our notion of ourselves is very different. It is to think of that which, without some capacity of feeling, is not, in our momentary illusion, recognised by us as ourself,—that self which we know only as it is capable of feelings, and which divested of feeling, therefore, would be to our conception like another individual.

In these cases, the feeling of our own reality blends itself with the ideas of imagination, and thus gives a sort of present existence to the objects of these ideas however unexisting and remote. We are present in future ages, in the same way as we are present in distant climates, when we think of our own glory as there; because, to the conception of our glory, the conception of that being whom we call self is necessary; and the being whom we call self is known to us only as that which lives and feels. We do not delight in the contemplation of our posthumous glory then because we imagine ourselves present; but considering the glory as our glory, it is impossible not to imagine ourselves present, and therefore impossible not to feel, in some degree, during the brief illusion, as if the praise itself were actually heard and enjoyed by us.

Such, then, it appears to me is glory, in the analysis of the complex delight which the attainment of it affords, and in the nature of that illusion which connects us with praise that is never to be heard by us in the most distant climate or age, converting, in the mere conception of this praise, the praise itself almost into a part of our very being, and rendering the passion for glory one of the strongest passions that influence the conduct of mankind.

The relation which this powerful passion bears to our moral character, I have already, in some measure, endeavoured to exhibit to you. I represented it to you as an affection which is far from being unworthy of man in itself, though often leading, like all the other affections of our nature, to moral improprieties, when the desire is directed on an object that is unworthy of it; as the misdirection of any other of our desires may in like manner be vice, or productive of vice. Many moralists and pious writers, undoubtedly with the purest intention of elevating above every thing earthly our love of virtue, and our love of that great Being of whom virtue is the worship, have been led to represent the love of glory as a passion that ought not to coexist with these nobler desires, and as necessarily derogating from their sublimer influence. The same argument, however, as I endeavoured to show you, which would thus render culpable, in some degree, the

wish of the esteem of mankind, would render also culpable, in some degree, the wish of the esteem of the smaller number of our relatives and friends, that portion of mankind more immediately connected with us. If it would be wrong to feel pleasure in the thought, that our virtuous use of the talents which Heaven has given us, has excited the esteem and emulation of fifty or one hundred, or hundreds of thousands, it would be wrong to feel pleasure in the thought, that the same good qualities had excited the esteem of ten or twelve, since the esteem of those ten or twelve is, in strictness of argument, as little essential to our love of virtue, and the God of virtue, as the esteem of millions. If our actions are to be governed simply by those great views, and if every other affection which coexists with these, and co-operates with them, is to be torn from our bosom, before we can aspire to the character of virtue, how many affections that foster virtue as much as they promote happiness, must instantly be torn away! Did Epaminondas love his country less, and was his courage or his conduct less formidable to its enemies, because he rejoiced, on the day of his great victory, that his parents were still alive to hear of it? and do we love our Creator less, because, in practising what he commands, we rejoice that there are hearts which sympathize with ours, which, loving the same virtue that is loved by us, feel for us the esteem which we should have felt in our turn for them, if the action had been theirs? If, indeed, Epaminondas, to gratify some vindictive feeling of those whom he honoured, had deserted to the enemy, we should then have looked on the filial affection as truly immoral in this instance, and unworthy of a mind that had the glorious sense of higher motives; and if, in our enjoyment of glory, instead of deriving pleasure from the sympathy which others feel in our virtues, we were to derive pleasure from their approbation of some vice or folly, our love of glory would, in like manner, be a passion, of which, in this instance at least, it would have been well for us to be divested.

The opponents of the love of glory, then, either say too much, or they say too little. If they were to contend that no affection should be felt but for God alone, no desire of the esteem of any other individual being, however intimately connected with us by the ties of nature or of friendship, though we might think their doctrine false in itself, and in the highest degree injurious to the happiness of the world, we should at least in the very error of their doctrine see some consistency of principle. But if they say, that in our love of approbation and esteem we may virtuously extend our wishes beyond the judgment of that supreme excellence, which, in placing us in the midst of multitudes of our fellow-men, cannot have placed us there to be absolutely indifferent to their opinion, where is it that the limit is to be placed? If a line of virtue be to be drawn around us, beyond which it would be vice for a single thought of earthly approbation to look, how wide is this moral diameter to be, and how is that feeling which would be virtue if it related to one hundred, to become instantly vice, when it relates to one hundred and one?

Man should undoubtedly love mankind, though they were incapable, by their very nature, of returning his kindness. But our divine Author has not given us duties only to perform. He has made those duties delightful, by the reciprocities of affection which he has diffused from breast to breast; and we love mankind, not merely because we feel that it is morally right to love them, or because it is the will of Heaven, but from a social impulse that precedes or accompanies these views, and in some degree also because the very intercourse of good offices is a source of some of the happiest gratifications of our life. Of those secondary affections with which Heaven has graciously sweetened our duties, the esteem or veneration of mankind, of which glory is the expression, is one of the most pleasing; and though it may occasionally mislead to vice, its general direction is unquestionably favourable to that virtue which cherishes it, and delights in feeling its reciprocal support.

But still, the love of glory, though not meriting in itself disapprobation, and though powerful in the aid which it gives even to our noblest feelings, is, it must be owned, a desire only of secondary importance. It derives its high value from its concurrence with the voice within our own breast; which it reflects to us in a thousand gladdening sympathies; and when it is in opposition to these, to obey it, or even to wish to obey it, is not to be in danger of being guilty, but to have been already guilty. It is to be considered, therefore, rather as a delightful excitement, subsidiary to our weakness, than as itself a great directing principle; and either when the glory is sought in unworthy objects, or when the praise of virtue is preferred to virtue itself, it is not merely unworthy of influencing us, but, as the history of every nation shows in terrifying examples of the past, may lead to excesses which the world, whose mad admiration, or at least the hope of whose mad admiration, excited or encouraged them, may for ages lament.

"It has been often asked," says an eloquent French philosopher, "whether a sense of duty alone may not supply the place of glory. The question does honour to those who make it; but the answer to it is simple. Render all governments just, and give to all men individually elevated sentiments, and

then glory will perhaps be useless to mankind. Far be it from me to calumniate human nature. I cannot doubt that there are heroic individuals, who, in doing good, have thought of their duty, and only of their duty, and from whom great actions have escaped in silence. At Athens there was an altar erected to the Unknown God. We might erect, in like manner, an altar with this inscription, To the virtuous who are unknown. Unknown during life, forgotten after death, they were great, though they did not seek the praise of greatness, the less they sought the praise of greatness, the greater they truly were. But in doing justice to our nature, let us not flatter ourselves with too high an estimate of it. There are few of those souls which are sufficient to themselves, and which march on with a firm step beneath the eye of reason which guides them, and of God who looks upon them. The greater number of men, weak by the frailties and inconsistencies of their nature, weaker still by the examples that are every moment assailing them, and by the value which circumstances too often add to crimes and meannesses, having neither courage enough to be always virtuous, nor audacity enough to be always wicked; but embracing by turns good and evil, without the power of fixing in either, feel their virtue principally in their remorse, and their strength chiefly in the secret reproaches which they often make to themselves for their weakness. In this state of feebleness they require a support. The desire of reputation, coming in aid of their too weak sense of duty, binds them to that virtue which otherwise they might quit. They would dare, perhaps to blush to themselves; they would fear to blush before their nation and their age."

"Nor must we think," he continues, "that even those souls of a more vigorous character, which do not stand in need of glory as a support, do not require it at least as a relief and a compensation. We cry out against Athens for its proscription of great men. But the ostracism of which we complain is everywhere. There is everywhere Envy striving to sully what is beautiful, and to bring down what is elevated. It may be said that at the very moment when Merit appeared in the world, Envy too was born, and began her persecution. But Nature at the same instant created glory, and gave it to her in charge, to atone for all the miseries which that persecution was to occasion."

"It seems, indeed, as if virtue and genius, so often oppressed on earth, took refuge far from the real world, in this imaginary world of glory, as in an asylum in which justice is re-established. There Socrates is avenged, Galileo acquitted, Bacon remains a great man. There Cicero fears no longer the sword of the assassin, nor Demosthenes the poison. There Virgil is far above that emperor whom he deified. Gold and vanity are not there to distribute places, and exalt the unworthy. Each individual, by the mere ascendency of his genius or of his virtues, mounts, and takes his rank. The oppressed arise, and recover their dignity. Those who have been assailed and insulted during the whole progress of their life, find glory at least at the entrance of that tomb which is to cover their ashes. Envy disappears, and immortality commences."*

The desire of glory, then, of which it is impossible for mankind to divest themselves, it would not be well for the happiness of mankind if it were in their power to shake off. But the desire of glory is one state of mind,—the consciousness of the glory itself, as attained, is another state; and all may feel the desire of that which only few attain. It is not the attainment of glory, accordingly, which adds to the amount of happiness in the world, so much as the mere desire itself, in its general influence on action.

In treating of the desire of power, I was led to notice how much more equally happiness is distributed than the external differences of pomp and authority would lead us to imagine; though there can be no reason to fear that any demonstration of this most important equality will ever lead mankind to give up that desire of power, which, to far the greater number of mankind, is almost an essential part of their very nature, and which it would be truly unfortunate for mankind if all should relinquish. The same remark is not less applicable to mere glory than to power. The illustrious and the obscure are indeed very different to the eyes of others; but the amount of happiness in the hearts of both, when every necessary deduction is made, is probably very little different; and is, upon the whole, perhaps, at least in many instances, likely to be greater in those breasts in which few would think of seeking it.

The love of glory resembles the love of mere power in this circumstance, too, as well as in others, that it must rise still higher, or scarcely feel the pleasure of the height which it has reached; and the tenure of the possessor, I may remark, is almost equally precarious in both cases.

Denied the public eye, the public voice,
As if he lived on others' breath he dies.
Fain would he make the world his pedestal,
Mankind the gazers, the sole figure he.
Knows he that mankind praise against their will,
And mix as much detraction as they can?
Knows he that faithless Fame her whisper has
As well as trumpet; that his vanity
Is so much tickled from not hearing all?†

If all were indeed heard, the detracting

* Thomas, Essai sur les Eloges.
† Young's Night Thoughts, Night viii. v. 490—498.

whispers of Fame, as well as her clamorous applause, what lessons of humility would be taught to the vain and credulous, whose ears the whispers cannot reach; and who, therefore, listening only to the louder flatteries that are intended to reach them, consider the praise which is addressed to them as but a small part of that universal praise which is everywhere, as they believe, proclaiming their merits; and in their reputation of a few months, which is to fade perhaps before the close of a single year, regard themselves as already possessing immortality!

In our estimates of glory, however, as a source of distinction, the whispers which are not heard are to be taken into account with the praises which are heard; and then, if the real heartfelt virtues of both be the same, how very near to equilibrium will be the happiness of the obscure and the illustrious!

The most humble, to be happy, must indeed have that feeling of self-approval, which, if a thought of the opinions of others arise, may be sufficient of itself to give the delightful conviction that, if the heart could be laid open to every gaze, no one could disapprove. There is thus a sort of purer silent glory implied in the very consciousness of moral excellence; but where this moral satisfaction truly exists, and exists in a mind that does not require to be confirmed in its own internal estimate by the opinion of others, what the world regards as renown would scarcely be felt as an accession of pleasure. As mere glory, indeed, if no evil were to attend it, that is to say, as an expression of the esteem and gratitude of a world which the virtuous had sought to benefit, it could not fail to be pleasing; but however pleasing it might be in itself, there are minds by which, when taken together with all its consequences, it would be dreaded, perhaps, rather than desired, as necessarily depriving of pleasures which are inconsistent with public eminence, and which they valued still more than the celebrity that would preclude them. In such circumstances of virtuous privacy,

> How far above all glory sits*
> The illustrious master of a name unknown;
> Whose worth, unrivall'd and unwitness'd, loves
> Life's sacred shades, where gods converse with men.†

Delightful, then, as glory may be in itself, and useful as the desire of it most truly is, as a general auxiliary principle of our nature, the attainment of the glory that is so generally wished is far from being necessary to happiness, which in many cases may have accessions of enjoyment from other sources that would be incompatible with the tumult of glory, and which that tumultuous pleasure scarcely could repay. The highest happiness may indeed be that of him who is known as widely as wisdom and virtue can be known, loved universally, and revered for qualities which are worthy of universal reverence. Yet we may still not the less say, "Bene qui latuit, bene vixit." If there are many who regret that they are doomed to the shade, there are many too who repent that they have ever quitted it; or at least there are many who might so repent, if the loss of this very power of repentance were not itself an evil, and one of the worst evils of guilty distinction. "He," says Seneca, in one of the choruses of his tragedy of Thyestes,—"he feels indeed the heaviness of death, who, known too well to all the world, dies unknown to himself."

> Stet quicunque volet potens
> Aulae culmine lubrico:
> Me dulcis saturet quies.
> Obscuro positus loco,
> Leni perfruar otio.
> Nullis nota Quiritibus
> Aetas per tacitum fluat.
> Sic cum transierint mei
> Nullo cum strepitu dies
> Plebeius moriar senex.
> Illi mors gravis incubat,
> Qui notus nimis omnibus
> Ignotus moritur sibi.‡

High renown can as little be the possession of many as high station; and if heaven had appropriated happiness to it, it must have left almost all mankind in misery. It has in this, as in every other instance, dealt more equally with those whom it has raised into glory, and those whom it has left obscure. Each has his appropriate enjoyments; and while Guilt alone can be miserable, it scarcely matters to Virtue whether it be known and happy, or happy and unknown.

LECTURE LXXII.

III. PROSPECTIVE EMOTIONS.—9. DESIRE OF THE HAPPINESS OF OTHERS.—10. DESIRE OF THE UNHAPPINESS OF THOSE WHOM WE HATE.—GENERAL REMARKS ON CONCLUDING THE CONSIDERATION OF OUR PROSPECTIVE EMOTIONS.

GENTLEMEN, the pleasure which glory affords, being evidently not a simple, but a complex pleasure, engaged us yesterday in an inquiry into the nature of the elementary feelings that compose it; and we were led, I flatter myself, into some interesting analyses, both of the complex delight of glory itself, and of that peculiar illusion of present reali-

* How far above Lorenzo's glory sits,—in the original.
† Young's Night Thoughts, Night viii. v. 481—484.

‡ Last verses of the Chorus concluding the second Act.

ty, which, however far we may conceive our glory to spread over the earth, and through the ages that are to succeed us, still seems to carry with it, as if necessarily diffused in the very conception, our own ever-present feeling, our own capacity of knowing and enjoying praises which never are to reach our ears.

The two desires which remain to be considered by us, will require but little examination; since they flow so readily from some emotions before examined at length, as to appear almost parts of them, rather than any distinct emotions. The first is our desire of the happiness of others,—a desire that forms, as I have already said in my analysis of love, a part of every affection to which we commonly give that name, and that increases in vividness with every increase of the mere regard; but which, like the desire of reciprocal affection, that is also a part of what is commonly termed love, is a state of mind distinguishable from the mere admiration, respect, regard, which the sight or conception of the beloved object directly induces, admitting of a ready separation in our thought, however complex the love may be, as it usually exists in nature.

It is this desire of the happiness of those whom we love, which gives to the emotion of love itself its principal delight, by affording to us constant means of gratification. He who truly wishes the happiness of any one, cannot be long without discovering some mode of contributing to it. Reason itself, with all its light, is not so rapid, in discoveries of this sort, as simple affection, which sees means of happiness, and of important happiness, where reason scarcely could think that any happiness was to be found, and has already, by many kind offices, produced the happiness of hours, before reason could have suspected that means so slight could have given even a moment's pleasure. It is this, indeed, which contributes in no inconsiderable degree to the perpetuity of affection. Love, the mere feeling of tender admiration, would, in many cases, have soon lost its power over the fickle heart, and, in many other cases, would have had its power greatly lessened, if the desire of giving happiness, and the innumerable little courtesies and cares to which this desire gives birth, had not thus, in a great measure, diffused over a single passion the variety of many emotions. The love itself seems new at every moment, because there is every moment some new wish of love that admits of being gratified; or rather, it is at once, by the most delightful of all combinations, new, in the tender wishes and cares with which it occupies us, and familiar to us, and endeared the more, by the remembrance of hours and years of well-known happiness.

The desire of the happiness of others, though a desire always attendant on love, does not, however, necessarily suppose the previous existence of some one of those emotions which may strictly be termed love. I already showed you, when treating of compassion, that this feeling is so far from arising necessarily from regard for the sufferer, that it is impossible for us not to feel it when the suffering is extreme, and before our very eyes, though we may, at the same time, have the utmost abhorrence of him who is agonizing in our sight, and whose very look, even in its agony, still seems to speak only that atrocious spirit, which could again gladly perpetrate the very horrors for which public indignation, as much as public justice, had doomed it to its dreadful fate. It is sufficient that extreme anguish is before us; we wish it relief before we have paused to love, or without reflecting on our causes of hatred; the wish is the direct and instant emotion of our soul in these circumstances,—an emotion which, in such peculiar circumstances, it is impossible for hatred to suppress, and which love may strengthen, indeed, but is not necessary for producing It is the same with our general desire of happiness to others. We desire, in a particular degree, the happiness of those whom we love, because we cannot think of them without tender admiration. But, though we had known them for the first time, simply as human beings, we should still have desired their happiness; that is to say, if no opposite interests had arisen, we should have wished them to be happy, rather than to have any distress; yet there is nothing in this case which corresponds with the tender esteem that is felt in love. There is the mere wish of happiness to them,—a wish which itself, indeed, is usually denominated love, and which may, without any inconvenience, be so denominated in that general humanity which we call a love of mankind, but which we must always remember does not afford, on analysis, the same results as other affections of more cordial regard, to which we give the same name. To love a friend is to wish his happiness indeed, but it is to have other emotions at the same instant, emotions without which this mere wish would be poor to constant friendship. To love the natives of Asia or Africa, of whose individual virtues or vices, talents or imbecility, wisdom or ignorance, we know nothing, is to wish their happiness; but this wish is all which constitutes the faint and feeble love. It is a wish, however, which, unless when the heart is absolutely corrupted, renders it impossible for man to be wholly indifferent to man; and this great object is that which nature had in view. She has, by a provident arrangement, which we cannot but admire the more, the more attentively we examine it, accommodated our

emotions to our means, making our love most ardent, where our wish of giving happiness might be most effectual, and less gradually, and less in proportion to our diminished means. From the affection of the mother for her new-born infant, which has been rendered the strongest of all affections, because it was to arise in circumstances where affection would be most needed, to that general philanthropy, which extends itself to the remotest stranger, on spots of the earth which we never are to visit, and which we as little think of ever visiting as of exploring any of the distant planets of our system; there is a scale of benevolent desire which corresponds with the necessities to be relieved, and our power of relieving them; or with the happiness to be afforded, and our power of affording happiness. How many opportunities have we of giving delight to those who live in our domestic circle, which would be lost before we could diffuse it to those who are distant from us! Our love, therefore, our desire of giving happiness, our pleasure in having given it, are stronger within the limits of this sphere of daily and hourly intercourse than beyond it. Of those who are beyond this sphere, the individuals most familiar to us are those whose happiness we must always know better how to promote than the happiness of strangers, with whose particular habits and inclinations we are little if at all acquainted. Our love, and the desire of general happiness which attends it, are, therefore, by the concurrence of many constitutional tendencies of our nature, in fostering the generous wish, stronger as felt for an intimate friend than for one who is scarcely known to us. If there be an exception to this gradual scale of importance, according to intimacy, it must be in the case of one who is absolutely a stranger,—a foreigner, who comes among a people with whose general manners he is perhaps unacquainted, and who has no friend to whose attention he can lay claim, from any prior intimacy. In this case, indeed, it is evident, that our benevolence might be more usefully directed to one who is absolutely unknown, than to many who are better known by us, that live in our very neighbourhood, in the enjoyment of domestic loves and friendships of their own. Accordingly, we find, that by a provision which might be termed singular, if we did not think of the universal bounty and wisdom of God,—a modification of our general regard has been prepared, in the sympathetic tendencies of our nature for this case also. There is a species of affection to which the stranger gives birth, merely as being a stranger. He is received and sheltered by our hospitality, almost with the zeal with which our friendship delights to receive one with whom we have lived in cordial union, whose virtues we know and revere, and whose kindness has been to us no small part of the happiness of our life.

Is it possible to perceive this general proportion of our desire of giving happiness, in its various degrees, to the means which we possess, in various circumstances of affording it, without admiration of an arrangement so simple in the principles from which it flows, and at the same time so effectual,—an arrangement which exhibits proofs of goodness in our very wants, of wisdom in our very weaknesses, by the adaptation of these to each other, and by the ready resources which want and weakness find in these affections which everywhere surround them, like the presence and protection of God himself?

"O humanity!" exclaims Philocles in the Travels of Anacharsis, "generous and sublime inclination, announced in infancy by the transports of a simple tenderness, in youth by the rashness of a blind but happy confidence, in the whole progress of life by the facility with which the heart is ever ready to contract attachment! O cries of nature! which resound from one extremity of the universe to the other, which fill us with remorse, when we oppress a single human being; with a pure delight, when we have been able to give one comfort! love, friendship, beneficence, sources of a pleasure that is inexhaustible! Men are unhappy, only because they refuse to listen to your voice: and ye divine authors of so many blessings! what gratitude do those blessings demand! If all which was given to man had been a mere instinct, that led beings, overwhelmed with wants and evils, to lend to each other a reciprocal support, this might have been sufficient to bring the miserable near to the miserable; but it is only a goodness, infinite as yours, which could have formed the design of assembling us together by the attraction of love, and of diffusing, through the great associations which cover the earth, that vital warmth which renders society eternal, by rendering it delightful."*

The last desire in our arrangement, that which we are next to consider, may seem, indeed, at first to be inconsistent with these delightful feelings of social regard, the importance of which I have repeatedly endeavoured to illustrate to you, though, to those who have felt them, as you all must have felt them, they do not require any argument to prove their importance. The desire which still remains to be noticed, is our desire of evil to others, a desire that bears the same relation to hatred in all its forms, which the desire of happiness to others bears to all

* Chap. lxxviii.

the diversities of love. It is an element of the complex affection, not the mere hatred itself, as the desire of diffusing happiness is only an element of the complex affection, which is usually termed love. I have already, in treating of the simple modifications of hatred itself, anticipated the remarks which it might otherwise have been necessary to offer now, on the importance to the happiness of society, of this class of our affections, while society presents any temptations to violence or fraud, that are kept in awe by individual and general resentment, and that, without those guards which protect the innocent, would lay waste all that beautiful expanse of security and happiness which forms the social world, making a desert of nature, and converting the whole race of mankind into fearful and ferocious savages worthy only of inhabiting such a wilderness. As the whole system of things is at present constituted, in other respects, therefore, it is not of less importance that man should be susceptible of feelings of malevolence on certain occasions, than that he should be susceptible of benevolence in the general concerns of life; and man, accordingly, is endowed with the susceptibility of both.

Like our other emotions, however, our malevolent wishes, important as they truly are, and relatively good as a part of our general constitution, may, as we know too well, be productive of evil when misdirected; and though they have this in common with all our desires, even with those which are essentially most benevolent, that may, in like manner, by misdirection or excess occasion no slight amount of evil to individuals and society; the misdirection, in the case which we are now considering, may be far more fatal to happiness, and therefore requires a stronger check of misery to restrain it. We may produce evil, indeed, to those whom we wish to benefit, and may produce it in consequence of our very desire of benefiting them; but at least the desire itself was one which it was happiness to feel. It was something gained to social enjoyment, though more may have been lost. In our malevolent wishes, however, when they arise where they should not arise, there is no addition to the general happiness of the world to allow even the slightest deduction from the misery that is added; but, on the contrary, there is a double evil, not merely the evil that may be inflicted on others, who are the objects of the malevolence, but that which may be said to have been already inflicted on the mind itself, which has had the painful wish of inflicting evil.

The desire of evil to others, since it is necessary to the protection of the world only in certain cases, is to be measured, then, in our moral estimates, by the nature of the brief or permanent hatred in which it may have originated; and is allowable, therefore, only in the cases in which the hatred is truly a feeling that is necessary in such circumstances for the protection of this social scene. It is virtuous, for example, to feel indignation at oppression; and it is virtuous, therefore, to wish that the oppressor, if he continue to be an oppressor, may not finish his career without punishment, so as to present to the world the dangerous example of guilt, that seems, by its external prosperity, to defy at once humanity and heaven. To take a case of a very different sort, however, it is not virtuous to wish, even for a moment, evil to some successful competitor, who has outstripped us in any honourable career; and the desire of evil in this case is not virtuous, because there is no moral ground for that hatred in which the desire originated, when the hatred was not directed to any quality that could be injurious to general happiness, but had for its only object an excellence that has surpassed us, by exhibiting to the world qualities which are capable of benefiting, or at least of adorning it, still more than the qualities of which we are proudest in ourselves. Before we think ourselves morally justifiable, then, in any wish of evil to those whom we hate, we must be certain that the hatred which we feel is itself morally justifiable, as directed to actions or qualities which it would not be virtuous to view with complacency or even with indifference; and that, as it is the guilty frame of mind alone which is hateful in the eyes of a good man, the hatefulness must cease in the very moment of repentance, and the wish of the repentance, therefore, as the most desirable of all changes, be a wish that is ever present, to temper even that pure and gentle indignation which the virtuous feel.

There are minds, however, of which the chief wishes of evil are not to those whom it is virtuous to view with disapprobation, but to those whom it is vice not to view with emotions of esteem and veneration. We are eager for distinction in that great theatre of human life, in the wide and tumultuous and ever-varying spectacles of which we are at once actors and spectators; and when the distinction which we hoped is preoccupied by another of greater merit, our own defect of merit seems to us not so much a defect in ourselves as a crime in him. We are, perhaps, in every quality exactly what we were before; but we are no longer to our own eyes what we were before. The feeling of our inferiority is forced upon us; and he who has forced it upon us has done us an injury to the extent of the uneasiness which he has occasioned, and an injury which, perhaps, we do not feel more as it has affected us in the estimation of others, than we feel it in the mode in which it has affected us in our estimate of our-

selves. An injury, then, is done to us; and the feelings which heaven has placed within our breasts as necessary for repelling injury, arise on this instant feeling of evil which we have been made to suffer. But what were necessary for repelling intentional injury arise, where no injury was intended; and though the minds in which they thus arise must be minds that are in the highest degree selfish, and incapable of feeling that noble love of what is noble, which endears to the virtuous the excellence that transcends them, there still are minds, and many minds so selfish, and so incapable of delighting in excellence that is not their own.

The malevolent affection with which some unfortunate minds are ever disposed to view those whom they consider as competitors, is denominated jealousy, when the competitor, or supposed competitor, is one who has not yet attained their height, and when it is the future that is dreaded. It is denominated envy when it regards some actual attainment of another. But the emotion, varying with this mere difference of the present and the future, is the same in every other respect. In both cases, the wish is a wish of evil, a wish of evil to the excellent, and a wish which, by a sort of anticipated retribution, is itself evil to the heart that has conceived it.

If we were to imagine present together, not a single small group only of those whom their virtues or talents had rendered eminent in a single nation, but all the sages and patriots of every country and period, without one of the frail and guilty contemporaries that mingled with them when they lived on earth, if we were to imagine them collected together, not on an earth of occasional sunshine and alternate tempests like that which we inhabit, but in some still fairer world, in which the only variety of the seasons consisted in a change of beauties and delights, a world in which the faculties and virtues that were originally so admirable, continued still their glorious and immortal progress, does it seem possible that the contemplation of such a scene, so nobly inhabited, should not be delightful to him who might be transported into it! Yet there are minds to which no wide scene of torture would be half so dreadful an object of contemplation as the happiness and purity of such a scene, minds that would instantly sicken at the very sight, and wish, in the additional malevolence of the vexation which they felt, not that all were reduced to the mere level of earthly things, but that every thing which met the eye were unmixed weakness, and misery, and guilt.

This scene is imaginary only; but what is imaginary as thus combined, is true in its separate parts. There is happiness on earth, virtue on earth, intellectual excellence on earth; and where these exist and are seen by it, envy is as in that imaginary world. He who has not a whole system of which to wish the physical and moral loveliness destroyed, may have wishes that would gladly blast at least whatever peculiar beauty is to be found in this mixed system. He may wish all mankind to remain in ignorance of important truths, when the most important truths that could be revealed to them were to be the discovery of any other genius than his own. He may sigh over the relief which multitudes are to receive from institutions of a sage benevolence which he was not the first to prompt. If his country be rejoicing at triumphs that have been triumphs of freedom and humanity still more than of the arms of a single state, he may add his silent consternation and anguish to the rage and grief of the tyrant whose aggressions have been successfully resisted, and may lament that he has not himself become a slave by national disasters, which, in making all slaves, would at least have lessened the glory of a rival. He may wish evil even here, as he would have wished it in that better scene; and if he wish it less, it is only because the multitude with whom he has to mix on earth have more imperfections of every sort; and being less worthy, therefore, of love or veneration, are less objects of a hatred that extends in its deadliest rancour only to what is worthy of being loved and venerated.

There is one change, indeed, which in a single moment would dissipate all the malevolence of this malevolent spirit. To convert the hatred into a feeling which might not be very different perhaps from complacency, it would be necessary only to take away every quality that is worthy of love, to make wisdom folly, kindness cruelty, heroic generosity a sordid selfishness, and the glory which was the result of all those better qualities, the execration or disgust of mankind. When the hatred of the virtuous might begin, then the hatred of the envious certainly might cease.

The wishes of evil which flow from such a breast, are, as I have said, evil, in the first place, to the breast which feels them; as the poisonous exhalation, which spreads death perhaps to others, is itself a proof of the disease of the living carcass that exhales it. Envy is truly, in its own miseries, the punishment of itself.

> Risus abest, nisi quem visi movere dolores,
> Nec fruitur somno, vigilantibus excita curis;
> Sed vidit ingratos, intabescitque videndo
> Successus hominum; carpitque et carpitur una
> Suppliciumque suum est.

It is hence, by a sort of contradictory character, what one of the old theological writers has strongly stated it to be, "at once the justest of passions, and the most unjust,"—"ex omnibus affectibus iniquissimus simul et ae-

quissimus;" the most unjust, in the wrongs which it is ever conceiving or perpetrating against him who is its object; the justest in the punishment with which it is ever avenging on itself the wrongs of which it has been guilty.

If even in thinking of the happiness of those whom they hate, the envious saw only that happiness, as it truly is, mixed with many anxieties that lessen the enjoyment of honours and dignities to their possessor, the misery with which those dignities of others are regarded would be less. But the chief misery of a mind of this cast is, that the happiness on which it dwells is a happiness which it creates in part to its own conception, a pure happiness that seems intense in itself only because it is intensely hated, and that continually grows more and more vivid to the hatred that is continually dwelling on it. The influence of happiness, as thus contemplated by a diseased heart, is like that of light on a diseased eye, that merely, as pained by rays which give no pain to others, imagines the faint colours which are gleaming on it to be of dazzling brilliancy.

When a statue had been erected by his fellow-citizens of Thasos to Theagenes, a celebrated victor in the public games of Greece, we are told that it excited so strongly the envious hatred of one of his rivals, that he went to it every night, and endeavoured to throw it down by repeated blows, till at last, unfortunately successful, he was able to move it from its pedestal, and was crushed to death beneath it on its fall. This, if we consider the self-consuming misery of envy, is truly what happens to every envious man. He may perhaps throw down his rival's glory; but he is crushed in his whole soul, beneath the glory which he overturns.

In thus making the malevolent wishes of the envious heart a source of internal misery, Nature has shown a provident regard for the happiness of mankind, which would have suffered far more general violation, if it had been as delightful to wish evil as to wish good. Nor is this true only in cases in which the malevolent wishes are misdirected against excellence, merely as excellence. The same gentle tempering influence has been provided, as we have seen, for the virtuous malevolence of those who are malevolent only to cruelty and injustice. It is necessary, indeed, that man should be capable of feeling indignation and resentment in these cases, as o. feeling benevolence in the more ordinary happy intercourse of social life. But since excess in one of these classes of feelings might lead to far more dangerous consequences than excess in the other, Nature, as I took occasion to point out to you in a former lecture, has been careful to provide against the more hurtful excess, by rendering benevolence delightful in itself, even while its wishes exist merely as wishes, and resentment painful in itself, while its object is unattained, and unless in some very obdurate hearts, ready to be appeased by slight atonements, by the very acknowledgment of the evil done, or by the mere intervention of a few months or days between the injury and the moment of forgiveness. On the nature of these feelings it would be unnecessary however to dwell longer; my only object at present being to point out the place of their arrangement, as prospective emotions, capable of being separated by internal analysis from those immediate emotions of dislike which constitute the varieties of simple hatred.

When I began the consideration of our prospective emotions,—those emotions which regard the future, and which may regard it either with desire or fear, I stated that it would be unnecessary to discuss at length, first, all our desires, and then all our fears; that there was no object which might not, in different circumstances, be an object of hope and fear alternately, according as the good or evil was present or remote, or more or less probable, and that the discussion of one set of the emotions might therefore be considered as supplying the place of a double and superfluous discussion. When, however, any important circumstance of distinction attended the fears opposed to the desires considered by us, I have endeavoured occasionally to point these out to you. I shall not therefore at present enlarge on them.

In treating of our emotions, particularly of those which I have termed prospective, I have dwelt only on the more prominent forms which they assume; because in truth they exist in innumerable forms, as diversified by slight changes of circumstances. It is easy for us to invent generic names, and to class under these, various affections of the mind, which, though not absolutely similar in every respect, are at least analogous in some important respects. But we must not forget, on that account, that the affections thus classed together, and most conveniently classed together, are still different in themselves; that what we have termed the desire of knowledge, for example, as if we had one simple desire of this kind, is generically inclusive of complex feelings as numerous as the objects existing in the universe; and even far more numerous, since they find objects in the abstract relations of things as much as in things themselves; emotions that have stimulated, and still stimulate, and will for ever continue to stimulate, every inquiry of man, from the first gaze of the infant's trembling eye, which he scarcely knows how to direct on the little object before him, to the sublimest speculations of the philosopher, who scarcely finds

in infinity itself an object sufficient for his research. On many of our emotions that shadow into each other by gradations almost imperceptible, it would have been interesting, if my limits had permitted, to dwell at greater length, and to trace and develop them, as varied by the changes of circumstances in which they arise. Indeed, as I have before remarked, under this comprehensive and most interesting class of our mental affections, might be considered every thing which has immediate reference to the whole ample field of moral conduct,—whatever renders man worthy or unworthy of the approving and tranquillizing voice within, and of that eternal approbation of the great Awarder of happiness, of whose judgment, in its blessings or its terrors, the voice of conscience itself, powerful as it may be, is but the short and feeble presage.

The narrowness of my limits, then, I trust, will apologize sufficiently for a brevity of discussion, in many cases, which was unavoidable. In our view of those emotions, however, which by their peculiar complexity, or general importance, seemed to me worthy of nicer examination, I have endeavoured to direct your thought as much as possible to habits of minute analysis, without which there can be no advance in metaphysical science. This very minuteness of analysis, to which I wished to accustom you, as much for the sake of habit as for the nicer results of the particular inquiries themselves, may in some instances have led to distinctions, which to many of you, perhaps, may have seemed superfluous, or too subtile, as requiring from you a little more effort of thought than would have been necessary in following arrangements more familiar to you, though I conceive less accurate. You are not to suppose, however, that in analyzing our complex emotions, and arranging in different subdivisions, the various feelings that seem to me to be involved in them as elements, I object to the use of the common phraseology on the subject, which expresses in a single term many feelings that are truly in nature, either immediately consecutive, or intimately conjoined, though, in our stricter analysis, I may have found it necessary to divide them. This you are not to think, any more than you are to suppose that the chemist, who inquires into the elements of vegetable matter, which exist in a rose or a hyacinth, and who, after his decomposition of those beautiful aggregates, arranges their elementary particles in different orders, as if the aggregates themselves were nothing, and the elements all, objects to the use of the simple terms rose and hyacinth, as significant of the flowers which have been the subjects of his art, and which still continue to have a delightful unity to his senses, even while he knows them to have no real unity, and to be only a multitude of atoms, similar, or dissimilar. What the rose and the hyacinth are to him, our complex feelings are to us. We may know and consider separately, and arrange separately, their various elements, but when we consider them as they exist together, we may still continue to give them, as complex feelings, the names by which, as complex feelings, they are familiarly and briefly expressed.

I now then conclude the remarks which I had to offer on the last order of our mental affections, the important order of our emotions, those affections of various kinds, in which almost all that is valuable in our earthly life is to be found, and many of which, we have every reason to believe, are not to be limited to those scenes in which they first were felt, but are to share the immortality of our existence, and to become more vivid as our capacity becomes quicker, for the discernment of that moral or divine excellence which inspired them here,—excellence on the contemplation of which we have delighted to dwell on earth, even amid the distraction of cares, and follies, and vices, from which, in a nobler state of being, we may hope to be exempt.

In our benevolent emotions, we have remarked what it is impossible not to remark, their obvious relation to the supreme benevolence of him who has communicated to us these delightful feelings, and who may be said to have made us after his own image, more in this universality of generous desire, with which we are capable of embracing the whole orb of being, than in our feeble intellectual faculties, which, proud as they are of their range of thought, are unable to comprehend the relations of a single atom to any other single atom. In our malevolent emotions, we have traced, in like manner, their admirable harmony with the other parts of the great system of our moral world, as necessary in the community for the punishment of evil in the guilty individual, and consequently for the prevention of evil in others, or for that equally salutary punishment of its own evil, which the mind in remorse inflicts upon itself.

> This double lot
> Of evil in the inheritance of man
> Required for his protection no slight force,
> In ceaseless watch;* and therefore was his breast
> Fenced round with passions, quick to be alarm'd,
> Or stubborn to oppose; with fear, more swift
> Than beacons, catching flame from hill to hill,
> Where armies land; with anger uncontroll'd
> As the young lion bounding on his prey;
> With sorrow, that locks up the struggling heart,
> And shame, that overcasts the drooping eye,
> As with a cloud of lightning. These the part
> Perform of eager monitors, and goad
> The soul more sharply than with points of steel,
> Her enemies to shun, or to resist. †

It is in our moral constitution, as in the

* No careless watch, in the original.
† Pleasures of Imagination, second form of the poem, book ii. v. 570—584.

physical universe. To him who knows the beautiful arrangements of the planetary motions, the very gloom of night suggests the continued influence of that orb which is shining in other climes, and which could not have carried light and cheerfulness to them, but for the darkness in which we are reposing. To him who considers our malevolent emotions only, these emotions may seem like absolute darkness in our moral day; but he who views them in their relation to the whole, perceives their necessity for the preservation of those very feelings of gentle regard to which they seem opposed. In the very resentment of individuals, and the indignation of society, he perceives at a distance those emotions of benevolence which, like the unfading sunshine, are not quenched by the temporary gloom that darkens our little portion of the social sphere, preserving, even in absence, that inexhaustible source of radiance which is speedily to shine on us as before, with all the warmth and brilliancy of the past.

LECTURE LXXIII.

GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS ON CONCLUDING THE PHYSIOLOGY OF MIND.—COMMENCEMENT OF ETHICS.—OBLIGATION, VIRTUE, MERIT, DIFFER ONLY IN THEIR RELATION TO TIME.—AN ACTION, IN MORALS, IS NOTHING ELSE THAN THE AGENT ACTING.

In my last Lecture, Gentlemen, I brought to a conclusion my remarks on the various emotions of which the mind is susceptible, and with these, consequently, my physiological view of the mind, in all the aspects which it presents to our observation; the order of our emotions being, as you will remember, the last of the orders into which I devided the mental phenomena.

We have reviewed, then, all the principal phenomena of the mind; and I flatter myself, that now, after this review, you will see better the reasons which have led me, in so many instances, to deviate from the order of former arrangements; since every former arrangement of the phenomena would have been absolutely inconsistent with the results of the minuter analysis into which we have been led. With the views of other philosophers, as to the nature and composition of our feelings, I might, indeed, have easily adhered to their plan; but I must then have presented to you views which appear to myself defective; and however eminent the names of those from whom I may have differed, it appeared to me my duty, in every instance in which I believed their opinions to be erroneous, to express to you my dissent firmly, though, I hope, always with that candour, which not the eminent only deserve, but even the humblest of those who have contributed their wish at least, and their effort to enlighten us.

In reducing to two generic powers or susceptibilities of the mind, the whole extensive tribe of its intellectual states, in all their variety, I was aware that I could not fail at first to be considered by you as retrenching too largely that long list of intellectual faculties to which they have been commonly referred. But I flatter myself you have now seen that this reference to so long a list of powers has arisen only from an inaccurate view of the phenomena referred to them, and particularly from inattention to the different aspects of the phenomena, according as they are combined or not combined with desire, in the different processes of thought, that have thence been termed inventive, or creative, or deliberative.

In like manner, when I formed one great comprehensive class of our emotions, to supersede what appeared to me to have been misnamed, by a very obvious abuse of nomenclature, the active powers of the mind, as if the mind were more active in these than in its intellectual functions, I may have seemed to you at the time to make too bold a deviation from established arrangement. But I venture to hope, that the deviation now does not seem to you without reason. It is only now, indeed, after our comprehensive survey of the whole phenomena themselves has been completed, that you can truly judge of the principles which have directed our arrangement of them in their different classes. I know well the nature and the force of that universal self-illusion, by which analyses and classifications that have been made by ourselves, seem always to us the most accurate classifications and analyses which could be made; but if all the various phenomena of the mind admit of being readily reduced to the classes under which I would arrange them, the arrangement itself, I cannot but think, is at least more simple and definite than any other previous arrangement which I could have borrowed and adopted.

In treating of the extensive order of our emotions, which comprehends all our moral feelings, you must have remarked that I did not confine myself to the mere physiology of these feelings, as a part of our mental constitution, but intermixed many discussions as to moral duty, and the relations of the obvious contrivances of our moral frame to the wisdom and goodness of its Author,—discussions which you might conceive to be an encroachment on other parts of the course, more strictly devoted to the inquiries of ethics and natural theology. These apparent anticipations, however, were not made without intention; though, in treating of phenomena so admirably illustrative of the gracious pur-

poses of our Creator, it would not have been very wonderful if the manifest display of these had of itself, without any farther view, led to those very observations which I intentionally introduced. It was my wish, on a subject so important to the noblest feelings and opinions which you are capable of forming, to impress you with sentiments which seem to me far more necessary for your happiness than even for your instruction, and to present these to you at the time when the particular phenomena which we were considering, led most directly to these very sentiments. It was my wish too, I will confess, to accustom your minds as much as possible to this species of reflection,—a species of reflection which renders philosophy not valuable in itself only, admirable as it is even when considered in itself alone, but still more valuable for the feelings to which it may be made subservient. I wished the great conceptions of the moral society in which you are placed, of the duties which you have to perform in it, and of that eternal Being who placed you in it, to arise frequently to your mind, in cases in which other minds might think only that one phenomenon was very like another phenomenon, or very different from it; that the same name might, or might not, be given to both; and that one philosopher, who lived on a certain part of the earth at a certain time, and was followed by eight or ten commentators, affirmed the phenomena to be different, while another philosopher, with almost as many commentators, affirmed them to be the same. Of this at least I am sure, that your observation of the phenomena themselves will not be less quick, nor your analysis of them less nicely accurate, because you discover in them something more than a mere observer or analyst, who inquires into the moral affinities with no higher interest than he inquires into the affinity of a salt or a metal, is inclined to seek; and even though your observation and analysis of the mere phenomena were to be, as only the ignorant could suppose, less just on that account, there can be no question that if you had learned to think with more kindness of man, and with more gratitude and veneration of God, you would have profited more by this simple amelioration of sentiment, than by the profoundest discovery that was to terminate in the accession which it gave to mere speculative science.

I now, however, proceed to that part of my course which is more strictly ethical.

The science of ethics, as you know, has relation to our affections of mind, not simply as phenomena, but as virtuous or vicious, right or wrong.

Quid sumus, et quidnam victuri gignimur, ordo
Quis datus, aut metae quam mollis flexus, et unde;
Quis modus argento, quid fas optare, quid asper
Utile nummus habet: patriae, charisque propinquis
Quantum elargiri deceat: quem te Deus esse
Jussit, et humana qua parte locatus es in re.*

In the consideration of questions such as these, we feel indeed that philosophy, as I have already said, is something more than knowledge,—that it at once instructs and amends us,—blending, as a living and active principle, in our moral constitution, and purifying our affections and desires, not merely after they have arisen, but in their very source. It is thus, in its relation to our conduct, truly worthy, and worthy in a peculiar sense, of that noble etymology which a Roman philosopher has assigned to it as the most liberal of studies. "Quare liberalia studia dicta sint vides; quia homine libero digna sunt. Ceterum unum studium vere liberale est, quod liberum facit: hoc sapientiae, sublime, forte, magnanimum, caetera pusilla et puerilia sunt." The knowledge of virtue is indeed that only knowledge which makes man free; and the philosophy which has this for its object, does not merely teach us what we are to do, but affords us the highest aids and incitements, when the toil of virtue might seem difficult, by pointing out to us, not the glory only, but the charms and tranquil delight of that excellence which is before us, and the horrors of that internal shame which we avoid, by continuing steadily our career. Its office is thus, in a great measure, to be the guardian of our happiness, by guarding that without which there is no happiness,—

Whether, on the rosy mead,
When Summer smiles, to warn the melting heart
Of Luxury's allurement; whether, firm
Against the torrent, and the stubborn hill,
To urge free Virtue's steps, and to her side
Summon that strong divinity of soul
Which conquers Chance and Fate; or on the height
The goal assign'd her, haply to proclaim
Her triumph; on her brow to place the crown
Of uncorrupted praise; through future worlds
To follow her interminated way,
And bless Heaven's image in the heart of man. †

What then is the virtue which it is the practical object of this science to recommend?

That the natural state of man is a state of society, I proved in a former lecture, when, in treating of our desires in general, in their order as emotions, I considered the desire of society as one of these.

That man, so existing in society, is capable of receiving from others benefit or injury, and, in his turn, of benefiting or injuring them by his actions, is a mere physical fact, as to which there cannot be any dispute.

But though the physical fact of benefit or injury is all which we consider in the action of inanimate things, it is far from being all

* Persius, Satira iii. v. 67—72.
† Pleasures of Imagination, second form of the poem, book i. v. 504—515.

of which we think in the case of voluntary agents, when there is not merely benefit or injury produced, but a previous intention of producing it. In every case of this kind in which we regard the agent as willing that particular good or evil which he may have produced, there arise certain distinctive emotions of moral approbation or disapprobation, those immediate emotions, of which, as mere states or affections of the mind, I before treated, when I considered the order of our emotions in general. We regard the action in every such case, when the benefit or injury is believed by us to have entered into the intention of him who performed the action, not as advantageous or hurtful only, but as right or wrong; or, in other words, the person who performed the particular action, seems to us to have moral merit or demerit in that particular action.

To say that any action which we are considering is right or wrong, and to say that the person who performed it has moral merit or demerit, are to say precisely the same thing; though writers on the theory of morals have endeavoured to make these different questions, and have even multiplied the question still more by other divisions, which seem to me to be only varieties of tautological expression, or at least to be, as we shall find, only the reference to different objects of one simple feeling of the mind.

When certain actions are witnessed by us, or described to us, they excite instantly certain vivid feelings, distinctive to us of the agent, as virtuous or vicious, worthy or unworthy of esteem. His action, we say, is right, himself meritorious. But are these moral estimates of the action and of the agent founded on different feelings, or do we not mean simply, that he, performing this action, excites in us a feeling of moral approbation or disapprobation, and that all others, in similar circumstances, performing the same action, that is to say, willing, in relations exactly similar, a similar amount of benefit or injury, for the sake of that very benefit or injury, will excite in us a similar feeling of approbation in the one case, and of disapprobation in the other case? The action cannot truly have any quality which the agent has not, because the action is truly nothing, unless as significant of the agent whom we know, or of some other agent whom we imagine. Virtue, as distinct from the virtuous person, is a mere name, as is vice distinct from the vicious. The action, if it be any thing more than a mere insignificant word, is a certain agent in certain circumstances, willing and producing a certain effect; and the emotion, whatever it may be, excited by the action is, in truth, and must always be the emotion excited by an agent real or supposed. We may speak of the fulfilment of duty, virtue, propriety, merit, and we may ascribe these variously to the action, and to him who performed it; but whether we speak of the action or of the agent, we mean nothing more, than that a certain feeling of moral approbation has been excited in our mind by the contemplation of a certain intentional production, in certain circumstances, of a certain amount of benefit or injury. When we think within ourselves, is this what we ought to do? we do not make two inquiries, first, whether the action be right, and then, whether we should not have merit in doing what is wrong, or demerit in doing what is right for us to do; we only consider whether doing it, we shall excite in others approbation or disapprobation, and in ourselves a corresponding emotion of complacency or remorse. According to the answer which we give to our own heart, in this respect, an answer which relates to the single feeling of moral approbation or disapprobation, we shall conceive that we are doing what we ought to do, or what we ought not to do; and knowing this, we can have no further moral inquiry to make as to the merit or demerit of doing what is previously felt by us to be right or wrong.

Much of the perplexity which has attended inquiries into the theory of morals, has arisen, I have little doubt, from distinctions which seemed to those who made them to be the result of nice and accurate analysis, but in which the analysis was verbal only, not real, or at least related to the varying circumstances of the action, not to the moral sentiment which the particular action in certain particular circumstances excited. What is it which constitutes an action virtuous? What is it which constitutes the moral obligation to perform certain actions? What is it which constitutes the merit of him who performs certain actions? These have been considered as questions essentially distinct; and because philosophers have been perplexed in attempting to give different answers to all these questions, and have still thought that different answers were necessary, they have wondered at difficulties which themselves created, and struggling to discover what could not be discovered, have often, from this very circumstance, been led into a scepticism which otherwise they might have avoided, or have stated so many unmeaning distinctions as to furnish occasion of ridicule and scepticism to others. One simple proposition has been converted into an endless circle of propositions, each proving and proved by that which precedes or follows it. Why has any one merit in a particular action? Because he has done an action that was virtuous. And why was it virtuous? Because it was an action which it was his duty, in such circumstances, to do. And why was it his duty to do it in such circumstances? Because there was a moral obliga-

tion to perform it. And why do we say that there was a moral obligation to perform it? Because if he had not performed it he would have violated his duty, and been unworthy of our approbation.—In this circle we might proceed for ever, with the semblance of reasoning, indeed, but only with the semblance; our answers, though verbally different, being merely the same proposition repeated in different forms, and requiring, therefore, in all its forms to be proved, or not requiring proof in any. To have merit, to be virtuous, to have done our duty, to have acted in conformity with obligation,—all have reference to one feeling of the mind, that feeling of approbation which attends the consideration of virtuous actions. They are merely, as I have said, different modes of stating one simple truth; that the contemplation of any one, acting as we have done in a particular case, excites a feeling of moral approval.

To this simple proposition, therefore, we must always come in our moral estimate, whatever divisions or varied references we may afterwards make. Persons acting in a certain manner, excite in us a feeling of approval; persons acting in a manner opposite to this, cannot be considered by us without an emotion perhaps as vivid, or more vivid, but of an opposite kind. The difference of our phraseology, and of our reference to the action or the agent, from which, indeed, that difference of phrase is derived, is founded chiefly on the difference of the time at which we consider the action as meditated, already performed, or in the act of performance. To be virtuous, is to act in this way; to have merit, is to have acted in this way; to feel the moral obligation or duty, is merely to think of the action and its consequences. We imagine in these cases a difference of time, as present, in the virtue of performing it—past, in the merit of having performed it—future, in the obligation to perform it; but we imagine no other difference.

Why does it seem to us virtue to act in this way? Why does he seem to us to have merit, or, in other words, to be worthy of our approbation, who has acted in this way? Why have we a feeling of obligation, or duty, when we think of acting in this way? The only answer which we can give to these questions is the same to all, that it is impossible for us to consider the action, without feeling that, by acting in this way, we should look upon ourselves, and others would look on us, with approving regard; and that if we were to act in a different way, we should look upon ourselves, and others would look upon us, with abhorrence, or at least with disapprobation. It is indeed easy to go, perhaps, a single step or two back, and to say that we approve of the action as meritorious, because it is an action which tends to the good of the world, or because it is the inferred will of Heaven that we should act in a certain manner; but it is very obvious that an answer of this kind does nothing more than go back a single step or two, where the same questions press with equal force. Why is it virtue, obligation, merit, to do that which is for the good of the world, or which Heaven seems to us to indicate as fit to be done? We have here the same answer, and only the same answer, to give, as in the former case, when we had not gone back this step. It appears to us virtue, obligation, merit, because the very contemplation of the action excites in us a certain feeling of vivid approval. It is this irresistible approvableness, if I may use such a word, to express briefly the relation of certain actions to the emotion that is instantly excited by them, which constitutes to us, who consider the action, the virtue of the action itself, the merit of him who performed it, the moral obligation on him to have performed it. There is one emotion, and it seems to us more than one, only because we make certain abstractions of times and circumstances from the agent himself, and apply every thing which is involved in our present emotion to these abstractions which we have made; to the action, as something distinct from the agent, and involving, therefore, a sort of virtue separate from his personal merit; to his own conception of the action before performing it, as something equally distinct from himself, and involving in it the notion of moral obligation as prior to the action.

If we had not been capable of making such abstractions, the action must have been to us only the agent himself, and the virtue of the action and the virtue of the agent been, therefore, precisely the same. But we are capable of making the abstraction, of considering the good or evil deed, not as performed by one individual, in certain circumstances peculiar to him, but as performed by various individuals in every possible variety of circumstances. The same action therefore,—if that can truly be called the same action which is performed, perhaps, with very different views in different circumstances,—is, as we might naturally have supposed, capable of exciting in us different emotions, according to this difference of supposed views, or of the circumstances in which those views are supposed to have been formed. It may excite our approval in one case; or in another case be so indifferent as to excite no emotion whatever; and in another case may excite in us the most vivid disapprobation. The mere fact, however, of this difference of our approbation or disapprobation, when we consider the circumstances in which an action is performed to have been different, is evidently not indicative in itself of any thing

arbitrary in the principle of our constitution, on which our emotions of moral approbation or disapprobation depend; by which an action, the same in all its circumstances, is approved by us and condemned; since it is truly not the same action which we are considering, when we thus approve, in one set of circumstances, of an action, of which we perhaps disapprove when we imagine it performed in different circumstances. The action is nothing, but as is the agent himself, having certain feelings placed in certain circumstances, producing certain changes. The agent whom we have imagined, when the emotion which we feel is different, is one whom we have supposed to have different views, or to be placed in different circumstances; and though the mere changes, or beneficial or injurious effects produced in both cases, which seem to our eyes to constitute the action, may be the same in both cases, all that is moral in the action, the frame of mind of the agent himself is as truly different as if the visible action, in the mere changes or effects produced, had itself been absolutely different. The miser, whose sordid parsimony we scorn, exhibits, in his whole life, at least as much mortification of sensual appetite as the most abstemious hermit, whose voluntary penance we pity and almost respect. The coward, when it is impossible to fly, will often perform actions which would do honour to the most fearless gallantry; the seeming patriot who, even in the pure ranks of those generous guardians of the public who sincerely defend the freedom and happiness of the land which they love, is a patriot perhaps most unwillingly, because he has no other prospect of sharing that public corruption at which he rails, will still expose the corruption with as much ardour as if he truly thought the preservation of the liberty of his country a more desirable thing than an office in the treasury; and he who, being already a placeman, has of course a memory and a fancy that suggest to him very different topics of eloquence, will describe the happiness of that land over the interests of which he presides, with nearly the same zeal of oratory, whether he truly at heart take pleasure in the prospect which he pictures, or think the comforts of his own high station by far the most important part of that general happiness which is his favourite and delightful theme. If we were to watch minutely the external actions of a very skilful hypocrite for half a day, it is possible that we might not discover one in which the secret passion within burst through its disguise; yet, if we had reason before to regard him as a hypocrite, the very closeness of the resemblance of his actions, in every external circumstance, to those of virtue, would only excite still more our indignation. They excite these different feelings, however, as I have before said, because the actions in truth are not the same; the action, in its moral aspect, being only the mind impressed with certain views, forming certain preferences, and thus willing and producing certain changes; and the mind, in all the cases of apparent similarity to which I have now alluded, having internal views as different as the external appearances were similar.

Obvious as the remark may seem, that an action cannot be any thing distinct from the agent, more than beauty from some object that is beautiful, and that when we speak of an action, therefore, as virtuous, without regard to the merit of the particular agent, we only conceive some other agent acting in different circumstances, and exciting in us consequently a different feeling of approbation, by the difference of the frame of mind which we suppose ourselves to contemplate; it strangely happens that little attention has been paid to this obvious distinction, that the action has been considered as something separately existing, and that we suppose, accordingly, that two feelings are excited in us immediately by the contemplation of an action; a feeling of right or wrong in the action, and of virtue or vice, merit or demerit, in the agent, which may correspond, indeed, but which may not always be the same; as if the agent could be virtuous, and the action wrong, or the action right, and he not meritorious, but positively guilty. In this way, a sort of confusion and apparent contradiction have seemed to exist in the science of morals, which a clearer view of the agent and the action as one would have prevented, and the apparent confusion and contradiction, where none truly exists, have been supposed to justify in part, or at least have led in some degree to conclusions as false in principle, as dangerous in their practical tendency.

No voluntary act, intentionally productive of benefit or injury, can, as it appears to me, excite directly any such opposite sentiments of right in the action and demerit in the agent, or wrong in the action and merit in the agent. We take into account, in every case, the whole circumstances of the individual; and his action in these circumstances is indifferent to us, or it excites an emotion of approbation or disapprobation more or less vivid. The agent, and the circumstances in which he is placed, the agent, and the changes which he intentionally produces, these are all which truly constitute the action; and the action, thus compounded of all these circumstances, seems to us right if we approve of it, wrong if the emotion, which constitutes moral disapprobation, arise when we consider it.

We may, however, as in the instances which I have already used, after approving or disapproving a particular action, consider some other individual of different habits and

different views, or in circumstances in some other respects different, performing a similar action, that is to say, producing a similar amount of benefit or injury, in the same way as, after having seen a green hill, we can imagine a hill yellow or black exactly of the same figure; and it is as little wonderful, that the new combination of moral circumstances should excite in us a new emotion, as that a yellow or black hill should seem to us less or more beautiful than a green one. Though virtue, as different from the virtuous agent, is a mere abstraction, like greenness, yellowness, blackness, as different from objects that are green, yellow, black, it is still an abstraction which we are capable of making; and, having made it in any particular case, we can conceive multitudes to exist with different views in the situation in which the single individual existed, whose action we have considered as virtuous. The action, even though in its effects it may be precisely the same, will then, perhaps, excite in us very different feelings. It may seem to us worthy of blame rather than of praise, or scarcely worthy of praise at all, or worthy of still higher admiration; but the difference arises from the change of circumstances supposed, not from any necessary difference in the principle of our moral judgments. In this way, by imagining some other agent with different views, or in different circumstances, and in this way only, I conceive, we learn to consider actions separately from the particular agent, and to regard the morality of the one as distinct from the merit of the other; when, in truth, the action which we choose to denominate the same, is, as a moral object, completely different.

If we were present when any one, unacquainted with the nature of the different lenses of the optician, looked at any small animal through a magnifier, or a multiplier, in a piece of plane coloured glass, we should never think of blaming his sense of vision as imperfect, though he were seriously to believe that the animal at which he looked was much larger than it is, or was not one merely, but fifty, or was blue, not white. If, however, we were to conceive others, or the same individual himself, to look at the same object without the medium interposed, and to form the same opinion, we should then unquestionably ascribe to their vision what we before ascribed to the mere lense interposed; and, if we conceived our own sight to be perfect, we could not but conceive theirs to be imperfect. It is precisely the same in that distinction of the virtue of an action and the virtue of the agent, which has produced so much confusion in the theory of morals. We conceive, in the one case, the moral vision of the agent with the lense interposed, in the other case without the lense; and we make in the one case an allowance which we cannot make in the other. But still I must repeat, that in making this very allowance, it is only on account of the difference of circumstances that we make it, and that we cannot justly extend the difference from the mere medium to the living principle on which moral vision depends.

When we speak of an action, then, as virtuous, we speak of it as separated from all those accidental intermixtures of circumstances which may cloud the discrimination of an individual; when we speak of a person as virtuous, we speak of him as acting perhaps under the influence of such accidental circumstances; and though his action, considered as an action which might have been performed by any man under the influence of other circumstances, may excite our moral disapprobation in a very high degree, our disapprobation is not extended to him. The emotion which he excites is pity, not any modification of dislike. We wish that he had been better informed; and when his general conduct has impressed us favourably, we feel perfect confidence that, in the present instance also, if he had been better informed, he would have acted otherwise.

In reducing all the various conceptions, or at least the conceptions which are supposed to be various, of duty, virtue, obligation, merit, to this one feeling which rises on the contemplation of certain actions,—a feeling which I am obliged to term moral approbation or disapprobation, because there is no other word in use to denote it, though I am aware that approbation and disapprobation, which seem words of judgment rather than of emotion, are not terms sufficiently vivid to suit the force and liveliness of the sentiment which I wish to express,—I flatter myself that I have in some degree freed this most interesting subject from much superfluous argumentation. Why do we consider certain actions as morally right; certain actions as morally wrong? why do we consider ourselves as morally bound to perform certain actions,—to abstain from certain other actions? why do we feel moral approbation of those who perform certain actions,—moral disapprobation of those who perform certain other actions? For an answer to all these, I would refer to the simple emotion, as that on which alone the moral distinction is founded. The very conceptions of the rectitude, the obligation, the approvableness, are involved in the feeling of the approbation itself. It is impossible for us to have the feeling, and not to have these; or, to speak still more precisely, these conceptions are only the feeling itself variously referred in its relation to the person and the circumstance. To know that we should feel ourselves unworthy of self-esteem, and objects rather of self-abhorrence, if we did not act in a certain

manner, is to feel the moral obligation to act in a certain manner, as it is to feel the moral rectitude of the action itself. We are so constituted, that it is impossible for us, in certain circumstances, not to have this feeling; and, having the feeling, we must have the notions of virtue, obligation, merit. It is vain for us to inquire why we are so constituted, as to rejoice at any prosperous event, or to grieve at any calamity; or why we cannot perceive any change without believing that in future the same antecedent circumstances will be followed by the same consequents. I may remark too, that, as in the case now mentioned, it is impossible for us to have the belief of the similarity of the future to the past, simple as this belief may seem to be, without having at the same time the conceptions of cause, effect, power; so, in the case of moral approbation and disapprobation, it is impossible for us to have these feelings, however simple they may at first appear, without the conception of duty, obligation, virtue, merit, which are involved in the distinctive moral feeling, but do not produce it, as our notions of power, cause, effect, are involved in our belief of the similarity of the future to the past, but are not notions which previously existed, and produced the belief; or, to speak more accurately, these notions are not involved in the feeling, which is simple, but are rather references made of this one simple feeling to different objects.

When I say, however, that it is vain to inquire why we feel the obligation to perform certain actions, I must be understood as speaking only of inquiries into the nature of the mind itself. Beyond it we may still inquire, and discover what we wish to find, not in our own nature, but in the nature of that Supreme Benevolence which formed us. We do not see, indeed, in the nature of the mind itself, any reason that the present should be considered by us as representative of the future. We know, however, that if man had not been so formed as to believe the future train of physical events to resemble the past, it would have been impossible for him to exist, because he could not have provided what was necessary for preserving his existence, nor avoided the dangers which would then, as now, have hung over him at every step; and knowing the necessity of this belief to our very existence, we cannot think of him who formed us, to exist without discovering, in his provident goodness, the reason of the belief itself. But if the existence of man would have been brief and precarious, without this faith in the similarity of the future, it would not have been so wretched as if the mind had not been rendered susceptible of the feelings which we have now been considering, the feelings of approbation and disapprobation, and the notions and affections that originate in these. I shall not attempt to picture to you this wretchedness—the wretchedness of a world in which such feelings were not a part of the mental constitution—a world without virtue, without love of man or love of God; in which, wherever a human being met a human being, he met him as a robber or a murderer, living only to fear and to destroy, and dying, to leave on the earth a carcass still less loathsome in all its loathsomeness than the living form which had been animated but with guilt. Our only comfort in considering such a dreadful society is, that it could not long subsist, and that the earth must soon have been freed from the misery which disgraced it.

We know, then, in this sense, why our mind has been so constituted as to have these emotions; and our inquiry leads us, as all other inquiries ultimately lead us, to the provident goodness of him by whom we were made. God, the author of all our enjoyments, has willed us to be moral beings, for he could not will us to be happy, in the noblest sense of that term, without rendering us capable of practising and admiring virtue.

LECTURE LXXIV.

AN ACTION, IN MORALS, IS NOTHING BUT THE AGENT ACTING.—APPARENT EXCEPTIONS TO THIS DOCTRINE.—SOPHISTRY OF THOSE WHO CONTEND THAT MORAL DISTINCTIONS ARE ACCIDENTAL.—MISTAKES OF SOUNDER MORALISTS THAT HAVE GIVEN SOME COUNTENANCE TO THIS SOPHISTRY.—VIRTUE AND VICE MERE ABSTRACTIONS.—THE MIND SOMETIMES IS INCAPABLE OF PERCEIVING MORAL DISTINCTIONS, AS, 1. WHEN UNDER THE INFLUENCE OF EXTREME PASSION.—2. THE COMPLEXITY OF ACTIONS MAY MISLEAD US IN OUR ESTIMATE OF GOOD AND EVIL.—3. ASSOCIATION MAY ALSO MISLEAD US.

THE object of my last Lecture, Gentlemen, was to make you acquainted with the nature and source of our notions of moral excellence and moral delinquency, the primary moral notions to which, as the directors of conduct, every ethical inquiry must relate.

In this elucidation of a subject, the most interesting of all the subjects which can come under our review, since it comprehends all that is admired and loved by us in man, and all that is loved by us and adored in God, I endeavoured to free the inquiry, as much as possible, from every thing which might encumber it, particularly to explain to you the real meaning of some distinctions, which, as commonly misunderstood, have led to much superfluous disputation on the theory of virtue, and partly in con

sequence of the inconsistencies and confusion which they seem to involve, have had the still more unfortunate effect of leading some minds to disbelief or doubt of the essential distinctions of morality itself.

The most important of these misconceptions relate to our notions of virtue, obligation, merit; for the origin of which, writers on Ethics are accustomed to have recourse to different feelings, and different sources of feeling, but which, I endeavoured to show you, have all their origin in one emotion, or vivid sentiment of the mind, that vivid sentiment which is the immediate result of the contemplation of certain actions, and to which we give the name of moral approbation. An action, though we often speak of it abstractly, is not, and cannot be, any thing which exists independently of the agent. It is some agent, therefore, real or supposed, whom we contemplate when this sentiment of approbation in any case arises; an agent placed, or imagined to be placed, in certain circumstances, having certain views, willing and producing certain effects of benefit or injury What the agent is, as an object of our approbation or disapprobation, that his action is; for his action is himself acting. We say, indeed, in some cases, that an action is wrong, without any loss of virtue on the part of the agent in the peculiar circumstances in which he may have been placed; that it is absolutely wrong, relatively right; but in this case the action of which we speak as right and wrong in different circumstances, is truly, as I showed you, in these different circumstances, a different action; that is to say, we consider a different agent, acting with different views; in which case it is as absurd to term the moral action—that which excites our approbation or disapprobation—the same, as it would be to term a virtuous sovereign and his tyrannical successor the same, because they have both been seated on the same throne, and worn the same robes and diadem. One individual putting another individual to death, excites in us abhorrence, if we think of the murderer and the murdered as friends, or even as indifferent strangers. But we say, that the same action of putting to death implies relatively nothing immoral, if the individual slain were a robber entering our dwelling at midnight, or an enemy invading our country. It surely however requires no very subtile discernment to perceive, that the murderer of the friend, and the destroyer of the foe, being agents, acting with different views, in different circumstances, their actions, which are only brief expressions of themselves, as acting in different circumstances, are truly different; and, being different, may of course be supposed to excite different feelings in him who considers them, without any anomaly of moral judgment. The same action, in its only true sense of sameness,—that is to say, the same frame of mind in circumstances precisely similar,—cannot then be relatively right and absolutely wrong, as if the moral distinction were loose and arbitrary. If it be relatively right, it is absolutely right; and what we call the absolute action that is wrong is a different action; an action as different, from that which we term relatively right, as a morass is different from a green meadow, which are both plains; or a clear rivulet from a muddy canal, which are both streams. We do not say that a morass, though relatively ugly, is, with all its relative ugliness, absolutely beautiful, because it would be beautiful in other circumstances,—if drained, and covered with verdure, and blooming with the wild-flowers of summer, and still gayer with the happy faces of little groups, that may perhaps be frolicing in delight, where before all was stillness and desolation. Such a meadow is indeed beautiful; but to our senses, that judge only of what is before them, not of what the immediate object might have been, or might still be in other circumstances, such a meadow is not a morass; and as little, or rather far less, is the slaughter of half an army of invaders, in one of those awful fields on which the liberty or slavery of a people waits on the triumph of a single hour, to be classed in the same list of actions with the murder of the innocent and the helpless, though with complete similarity of result in the death of others. If the effect alone could be said to constitute the moral action; both terminate equally in the destruction of human life, and both imply the intention of destroying.

An action, then, as capable of being considered by us, is not a thing in itself, which may have various relations to various agents, but is only another name for some agent of whom we speak, real or supposed; and whatever emotion an action excites, is therefore necessarily some feeling for an agent. The virtue of an action is the virtue of the agent—his merit, his conformity to duty or moral obligation. There is, in short, an approvableness, which is felt on considering certain actions; and our reference of this vivid sentiment to the action that excites it, is all which is meant by any of those terms. We are not to make separate inquiries into the nature of that principle of the mind by which we discover the rectitude of an action, and then into the nature of the moral obligation to perform it, and then into the merit of the agent; but we have one feeling excited in us by the agent acting in a certain manner; which is virtue, moral obligation, merit, according as the same action is considered in point of time, when it is the subject, before performance, of deliberation and choice, of actual performance when chosen, or of memory when already performed. It

is all which we mean by moral obligation, when we think of the agent as feeling previously to his action, that if he were not to perform the action, he would have to look on himself with disgust, and with the certainty that others would look on him with abhorrence. It is all which we mean by the virtue of the agent, when we consider him acting in conformity with this view. It is merit when we consider him to have acted in this way; the term which we use varying, you perceive, in all these cases, as the action is regarded by us as present, past, or future, and the moral sentiment in all alike, being only that one simple vivid feeling, which rises immediately on the contemplation of the action.

The approvableness of an action, then, to use a barbarous but expressive word, is at once all these qualities; and the approvableness is merely the relation which certain actions bear to certain feelings that arise in our mind on the contemplation of these actions; feelings that arise to our feeble heart with instant warning or direction, as if they were the voice of some guardian power within us, that in the virtues of others points out what is worthy of our imitation, in their vices what we cannot imitate without being unworthy of the glorious endowments of which we are conscious; and unworthy too of the love of him who, though known to us by his power, is known to us still more as the Highest Goodness, and who, in all the infinite gifts which he has lavished on us, has conferred on us no blessing so inestimable as the capacity which we enjoy of knowing and loving what is good. To say that an action excites in us this feeling, and to say that it appears to us right, or virtuous, or conformable to duty, are to say precisely the same thing; and an action which does not excite in us this feeling, cannot appear to us right, virtuous, conformable to duty, any more than an object can be counted by us brilliant, which uniformly appears to us obscure, or obscure which appears to us uniformly brilliant. To this ultimate fact, in the constitution of our nature, the principle, or original tendency of the mind, by which, in certain circumstances, we are susceptible of moral emotions, we must always come in estimating virtue, whatever analysis we may make or may think that we have made. It is in this respect, as in many others, like the kindred emotion of beauty. Our feeling of beauty is not the mere perception of forms and colours, or the discovery of the uses of certain combinations of forms; it is an emotion arising from these, indeed, but distinct from them. Our feeling of moral excellence, in like manner, is not the mere perception of different actions, or the discovery of the physical good which these may produce; it is an emotion of a very different kind, a light within our breast, from which, as from the very effulgence of the purest of all truths,

> Is human fortune gladden'd with the rays
> Of Virtue, with the moral colours thrown
> On every walk of this our social scene;
> Adorning for the eye of gods and men
> The passions, actions, habitudes of life,
> And rendering earth, like heaven, a sacred place,
> Where love and praise may take delight to dwell.*

That we do feel this approbation of certain actions, and disapprobation of certain other actions, no one denies. But the feeling is, by many sophistical moralists, ascribed wholly to circumstances that are accidental, without any greater original tendency of the mind to feel, in different circumstances of human action, one or other of these emotions. If man could be born with every faculty in its highest excellence, capable of distinguishing all the remote as well as all the immediate consequences of actions, but free from the prejudices of education, he would, they suppose, look with equal moral love, or rather, with uniform and equal indifference of regard, on him who has plunged a dagger in the breast of his benefactor, and on him who has risked his own life for the preservation of his enemy. There are philosophers, and philosophers too who consider themselves peculiarly worthy of that name, from the nicety of their analysis of all that is complex in action, who can look on the millions of millions of mankind, in every climate and age, mingling together in a society that subsists only by the continued belief of the moral duties of all to all, who can mark everywhere sacrifices made by the generous, to the happiness of those whom they love, and everywhere an admiration of such sacrifices,—not the voices of the timid and the ignorant only mingling in the praise, but warriors, statesmen, poets, philosophers, bearing with the peasant and the child, their united testimonies to the great truth, that man is virtuous in promoting the happiness of man: there are minds which can see and hear all this, and which can turn away, to seek in some savage island, a few indistinct murmurs that may seem to be discordant with the whole great harmony of mankind!

When an inquirer of this class, after perusing every narrative of every nation in every part of the globe, with a faith for all that is monstrous in morality, as ready as his disbelief of prodigies in physics less marvellous, which the same voyagers and travellers relate, has collected his little stock of facts, or of reports which are to him as facts, he comes forward in the confidence of overthrowing with these the whole system of public morals, as far as that system is supposed to be founded on any original moral difference of actions. He finds, indeed, everywhere else parricide

* Pleasures of Imagination, second form of the poem, book ii. v. 151—157.

looked upon with abhorrence; but he can prove this to be wholly accidental, because he has found, on some dismal coast, some miserable tribe in which it is customary to put the aged to death when very infirm, and in which the son is the person who takes upon him this office. For almost every virtue which the world acknowledges as indicated to us by the very constitution of our social nature, he has, in like manner, some little fact which proves the world to be in an error. Some of these he finds even in the usages of civilized life. What is right on one side of a mountain is wrong on the opposite side of it; and a river is sometimes the boundary of a virtue as much as of an empire. "How, then, can there be any fixed principles of morality," he says, "when morality itself seems to be incessantly fluctuating?"

Morality is incessantly fluctuating; or rather, according to this system, there is no morality, at least no natural tendency to the distinction of actions as moral or immoral, and we have only a few casual prejudices which we have chosen to call virtues: prejudices which a slight difference of circumstance might have reversed, making the lover of mankind odious to us, and giving all our regard to the robber and the murderer. We prefer, indeed, at present, Aurelius to Caligula; but a single prejudice more or less, or at least a few prejudices additional, might have made Caligula the object of universal love, to which his character is in itself as well entitled as the character of that philosophic emperor, who was as much an honour to philosophy as to the imperial purple. And in what world is this said? In a world in which Caligula has never had a single admirer, in all the multitudes to whom his history has become known: a world in which, if we were to consider the innumerable actions that are performed in it at any one instant, we should be wearied with counting those which furnish evidence of the truth of moral distinctions, by the complacency of virtue or the remorse of vice, and the general admiration, or disgust and abhorrence with which the virtue, when known to others, is loved, and the vice detested, long before we should be able to discover a single action that, in the contrariety of general sentiment with respect to it, might furnish even one feeble exception.

Some apparent exceptions, however, it must still be allowed, the moral scene does truly exhibit. But are they, indeed, proofs of the absolute original indifference of all actions to our regard? Or do they not merely seem to be exceptions, because we have not made distinctions and limitations which it was necessary to make?

It often happens that, by contending for too much in a controversy, we fail to establish truths that appear doubtful, only because they are mingled with doubtful or false propositions, for which we contend as strenuously as for the true. This, I think, has taken place, in some degree in the great controversy as to morals. In our zeal for the absolute immutability of moral distinctions, we have made the argument for original tendencies to moral feeling appear less strong by extending it too far; and facts, therefore, have seemed to be exceptions which could not have seemed to be so, if we had been a little more moderate in our universal affirmation.

Let us consider, then, what the species of accordance is for which we may safely contend.

That virtue is nothing in itself, but is only a general name for certain actions, which agree in exciting, when contemplated, a certain emotion of the mind, I trust I have already sufficiently shown. There is no virtue, no voice, but there are virtuous agents, vicious agents; that is to say, persons whose actions we cannot contemplate without a certain instant emotion; and what we term the law of nature, in its relation to certain actions, is nothing more than the general agreement of this sentiment in relation to those actions. In thinking of virtue, therefore, it is evident that we are not to look for any thing self-existing, like the universal essences of the schools, and eternal like the Platonic ideas; but a felt relation, and nothing more. We are to consider only agents, and the emotions which these agents excite; and all which we mean by the moral differences of actions, is their tendency to excite one emotion rather than another.

Virtue, then, being a term expressive only of the relation of certain actions, as contemplated, to certain emotions in the minds of those who contemplate them, cannot, it is evident, have any universality beyond that of the minds in which these emotions arise. We speak always, therefore, relatively to the constitution of our minds, not to what we might have been constituted to admire if we had been created by a different Being, but to what we are constituted to admire, and what, in our present circumstances, approving or disapproving with instant love or abhorrence, it is impossible for us not to believe to be, in like manner, the objects of approbation or disapprobation to him who has endowed us with feelings so admirably accordant with all those other gracious purposes which we discover in the economy of nature.

Virtue, however, is still, in strictness of philosophic precision, a term expressive only of the relation of certain emotions of our mind to certain actions that are contemplated by us: its universality is coextensive with the minds in which the emotions arise, and

this is all which we can mean by the essential distinctions of morality, even though all mankind were supposed by us, at every moment, to feel precisely the same emotions on contemplating the same actions.

But it must be admitted, also, that all mankind do not feel at every moment precisely the same emotions on contemplating actions that are precisely the same; and it is necessary, therefore, to make some limitations even of this relative universality.

In the first place, it must be admitted that there are moments in which the mind is wholly incapable of perceiving moral differences; that is to say, in which the emotions that constitute the feeling of these moral differences do not arise. Such are all the moments of very violent passion. When the impetuosity of the passion is abated, indeed, we perceive that we have done what we now look upon with horror, but when our passion was most violent, we were truly blinded by it, or at least saw only what it permitted us to see. The moral emotion has not arisen, because the whole soul was occupied with a different species of feeling. The moral distinctions, however, or general tendencies of actions to excite this emotion, are not on this account less certain; or we must say, that the truths of arithmetic, and all other truths, are uncertain, since the mind, in a state of passion, would be equally incapable of distinguishing these. He who has lived for years in the hope of revenge, and who has at length laid his foe at his feet, may, indeed, while he pulls out his dagger from the heart that is quivering beneath it, be incapable of feeling the crime which he has committed; but would he at that moment be abler to tell the square of four, or the cube of two? All in his mind, at that moment, is one wild state of agitation, which allows nothing to be felt but the agitation itself.

"While the human heart is thus agitated," it has been said, "by the flux and reflux of a thousand passions, that sometimes unite and sometimes oppose each other, to engrave laws on it, is to engrave them not on sand, but on a wave that is never at rest. What eyes are piercing enough to read the sacred characters?"

"Vain declamation!" answers the writer from whom I quote. "If we do not read the characters, it is not because our sight is too weak to discern them, it is because we do not fix our eyes on them; or if they be indistinguishable, it is only for a moment."

"The heart of man," he continues, "may be considered, allegorically, as an island almost level with the water which bathes it. On the pure white marble of the island are engraved the holy precepts of the law of nature. Near these characters is one who bends his eyes respectfully on the inscription, and reads it aloud. He is the lover of Virtue, the Genius of the island. The water around is in continual agitation. The slightest zephyr raises it into billows. It then covers the inscription. We no longer see the characters. We no longer hear the Genius read. But the calm soon rises from the bosom of the storm. The island reappears white as before, and the Genius resumes his employment."

That passion has a momentary influence in blinding us to moral distinctions, or, which is the same thing, an influence to prevent the rise of certain emotions, that, but for the stronger feeling of the passion itself, would arise, may then be admitted; but the influence is momentary, or little more than momentary, and extends, as we have seen, even to those truths which are commonly considered as best entitled to the appellation of universal. The moral truths, it must be allowed—if I may apply the name of truths to the felt moral differences of actions—are, to the impassioned mind, as little universal as the truths of geometry.

Another still more important limitation of the universality for which we contend, relates to actions which are so complex as to have various opposite results of good and evil, or of which it is not easy to trace the consequences. An action, when it is the object of our moral approbation or disapprobation, is, as I have already said, the agent himself acting with certain views. These views, that is to say the intention of the agent, are necessary to be taken into account, or, rather, are the great moral circumstances to be considered; and the intention is not visible to us like the external changes produced by it, but is, in many cases, to be inferred from the apparent results. When these results, therefore, are too obscure or too complicated to furnish clear and immediate evidence of the intention, we may pause in estimating actions which we should not fail to have approved instantly, or disapproved instantly, if we had known the intention of the agent, or could have inferred it more easily from a simpler result; or by fixing our attention chiefly on one part of the complex result, that was perhaps not the part which the agent had in view, we may condemn what was praiseworthy, or applaud what deserved our condemnation. If the same individual may thus have different moral sentiments, according to the different parts of the complex result on which his attention may have been fixed, it is surely not wonderful that different individuals, in regarding the same action, should sometimes approve in like manner, and disapprove variously, not because the principle of moral emotion, as an original tendency of the mind, is absolutely capricious, but because the action considered, though apparently the same, is really different as an object of conception in different

minds, according to the parts of the mixed result which attract the chief attention.

Such partial views, it is evident, may become the views of a whole nation, from the peculiar circumstances in which the nation may be placed as to other nations, or from peculiarity of general institutions. The legal permission of theft in Sparta, for example, may seem to us, with our pacific habits, and security of police, an exception to that moral principle of disapprobation for which I contend. But there can be no doubt that theft, as mere theft,—or, in other words, as a mere production of a certain quantity of evil by one individual to another individual,—if it never had been considered in relation to any political object, would in Sparta also have excited disapprobation as with us. As a mode of inuring to habits of vigilance a warlike people, however, it might be considered in a very different light; the evil of the loss of property, though in itself an evil to the individual, even in a country in which differences of property were so slight, being nothing in this estimate when compared with the more important national accession of military virtue; and, indeed, the reason of the permission seems to be sufficiently marked, in the limitation of the impunity to cases in which the aggressor escaped detection at the time. The law of nature, the law written in the heart of man, then came again into all its authority; or rather, the law of nature had not ceased to have authority, even in those permissions which seemed to be directly opposed to it; the great object, even of those anomalous permissions, being the happiness of the state, the pursuit of which nature points out to our approbation in the same manner, though not with such vivid feelings, as she points out to us for approbation the endeavour to render more happy the individuals around us. It would be a very interesting inquiry to consider, in this way, all those instances which have been adduced as exceptions to natural law, and to detect the circumstances of real or supposed good accompanying the evil permitted, for which the evil itself might in many cases seem to have been permitted; or which, at least, lessened so much the result of evil, in the eyes of those who considered it in the particular circumstances of the age and country, that a very slight temptation might overcome the disapprobation of it, as we find at present in our civilized society, many evils tolerated, not because they are not considered to be evil, but because the evil seems so slight as not to imply any gross disregard of morality. This minute analysis of the instances alleged, however, though it might not be difficult to discover in every case some form of good, which, in the mixed result of good and evil, was present to the approver's mind, my limits will not allow me to extend; but there is one general remark which may in some measure supply the place of more minute discussion, since it may almost be said to convert these very instances into proofs of that general accordance of moral sentiment, in disproof of which they are adduced.

When these supposed exceptions are tolerated, why is it that they are tolerated? Is it on account of the benefit or of the injury that coexist in one complex mixture? Is it said, for example, by the ancient defenders of suicide, that it is to be commended because it deprives mankind of the further aid of one who might still be useful to society, or because it will give sorrow to every relation and friend, or because it is a desertion of the charge which Heaven has assigned to us? It is for reasons very different that it is said by them to be allowable; because the circumstances, they say, are such as seem of themselves to point out that the Divine Being has no longer occasion for our service on earth, and because our longer life would be only still greater grief or disgrace to our friends, and a burden rather than an aid to society. When the usages of a country allow the exposure of infants, is it not still for some reason of advantage to the community, falsely supposed to require it, that the permission is given? Or is it for the mere pleasure of depriving the individual infant of life, and of adding a few more sufferings to the general sufferings of humanity? Where is the land that says, Let misery be produced or increased, because it is misery? Let the production of happiness to an individual be avoided, because it is happiness? Then, indeed, might the distinctions of morality in the emotions which attend the production of good and evil, be allowed to be wholly accidental. But if nature has everywhere made the production of good desirable for itself, and the production of evil desirable, when it is desired and approved, only because it is accompanied, or supposed to be accompanied, with good, the very desire of the compound of good and evil, on this account, is itself a proof, not of love of evil, but of love of good. It is pleasing thus to find nature in the wildest excesses of savage ignorance, and in those abuses to which the imperfect knowledge even of civilized nations sometimes gives rise, still vindicating, as it were, her own excellence,—in the midst of vice and misery asserting still those sacred principles which are the virtue and the happiness of nations,—principles of which that very misery and vice attest the power, whether in the errors of multitudes who have sought evil for some supposed good, or in the guilt of individuals, who, in abandoning virtue, still offer to it an allegiance which it is impossible for them to withhold in the homage of their remorse.

It never must be forgotten, in estimating the moral impression which actions produce, that an action is nothing in itself; that all which we truly consider in it is the agent placed in certain circumstances, feeling certain desires, willing certain changes; and that our approbation and disapprobation may therefore vary, without any fickleness on our part, merely in consequence of the different views which we form of the intention of the agent. In every complicated case, therefore, it is so far from wonderful that different individuals should judge differently, that it would indeed be truly wonderful if they should judge alike, since it would imply a far nicer measurement than any of which we are capable, of the mixed good and evil of the complex results of human action, and a power of discerning what is secretly passing in the heart, which man does not possess, and which it is not easy for us to suppose man, in any circumstances, capable of possessing.

In complicated cases, then, we may approve differently, because we are in truth incapable of distinguishing all the moral elements of the action, and may fix our attention on some of these, to the exclusion of others. Our taste, in like manner, distinguishes what is sweet and what is bitter, when these are simply presented to us; and there are substances which are no sooner put in the little mouth of the infant than he seems to feel from them pleasure or pain. He distinguishes the sweet from the bitter, as he distinguishes them in after-life. Who is there who denies that there is, in the original sensibility of the infant, a tendency to certain preferences of this kind; that there are substances which are naturally agreeable to the taste, substances which are naturally disagreeable, and that it requires no process of education, no labour of years, no addition of prejudice after prejudice, to make sugar an object of desire to the child, and wormwood of disgust? Yet in the luxury of other years, there are culinary preparations which the taste of some approves, while the taste of others rejects them; and in all of which it is difficult to distinguish the prevailing element, whether acid, austere, sweet, bitter, aromatic. If the morals of nations differed half as much as the cookery of different nations, we might allow some cause for disbelief of all the natural distinctions of right and wrong. But what sceptic is there who contends, from the approbation which one nation gives to a sauce or a ragout, which almost sickens him, that the sweet does not naturally differ from the bitter, as more agreeable, the aromatic from the insipid; and that, to the infant, sugar, wormwood, spice, are, as sources of pleasure, essentially the same?

We approve of what we know, or suppose ourselves to know, and we approve according as we know or suppose, not according to circumstances which truly exist, but which exist unobserved by us and unsuspected. It is not contended that we come into the world with a knowledge of certain actions, which we are afterwards to approve or disapprove, for we enter into the world ignorant of every thing which is to happen in it; but that we come into existence with certain susceptibilities of emotion, in consequence of which it will be impossible for us, in after-life, but for the influence of counteracting circumstances, momentary or permanent, not to be pleased with the contemplation of certain actions, as soon as they have become fully known to us, and not to have feelings of disgust on the contemplation of certain other actions. I am astonished, therefore, that Paley, in stating the objection, "that, if we be prompted by nature to the approbation of particular actions, we must have received also from nature a distinct conception of the action we are thus prompted to approve, which we certainly have not received," should have stated this as an objection, to which "it is difficult to find an answer," since there is no objection to which the answer is more obvious. There is not a feeling of the mind, however universal, to the existence of which precisely the same objection might not be opposed. There is no part of the world, for example, in which the proportions of number and quantity are not felt to be the same. Four are to twenty as twenty to a hundred, wherever those numbers are distinctly conceived; but though we come into the world capable of feeling the truth of this proportion, when the numbers themselves shall have been previously conceived by us, no one surely contends that it is necessary, for this capacity, that we should come into the world with an accurate knowledge of the particular numbers. The mind is, by its original constitution, capable of feeling all the sensations of colour, when different varieties of light are presented to the eye; and it has this original constitution, without having the actual sensations which are to arise only in certain circumstances that are necessary for producing them, and which may never, therefore, be states of the mind, if the external organ of vision be imperfect. Even the boldest denier of every original distinction of vice and virtue must still allow, that we do at present look with approbation on certain actions, with disapprobation on other actions; and that, having these feelings, we must by our original constitution, have been capable of the feelings; so that, if the mere capacity were to imply the existing notions of the actions that are to be approved or disapproved, he would be obliged, if this objection had any weight, to allow that, on his own principles, we must equally have innate notions of right and wrong which we have

not, or that we feel certain emotions which we yet had no capacity of feeling. But on an objection which appears to me so very obviously futile, it is idle to dwell so long.

We have made, then, two limitations of that universality and absolute uniformity of moral sentiment for which some ethical writers have too strongly contended; in the first place, when the mind is, as it were, completely occupied, or hurried away by the violence of extreme passion; and, in the second place, when the action which we consider is not the simple intentional production of good as good, or of evil as evil, in certain definite circumstances, but when the result that has been willed is a mixture of good and evil, which it is difficult to discriminate, and in which the good may occur to some minds more readily, the evil to other minds; or in different stages of society, or different circumstances of external or internal situation, the good may be more or less important, and the evil more or less important, so as to have a higher relative interest than it otherwise would have possessed.

To these two limitations it is necessary to add a third, that operates very powerfully and widely on our moral estimates,—the influence of the principle of association. We are not to suppose, that because man is formed with the capacity of certain moral emotions, he is therefore to be exempt from the influence of every other principle of his constitution. The influence of association, indeed, does not destroy his moral capacity, but it gives it new objects, or at least varies the object in which it is to exercise itself, by suggesting with peculiar vividness certain accessory circumstances, which may variously modify the general sentiment that results from the contemplation of particular actions.

One very extensive form of the influence of association on our moral sentiments, is that which consists in the application to particular cases of feelings that belong to a class. In nature there are no classes. There are only particular actions, more or less beneficial or injurious. But we cannot consider these particular actions long, without discovering in them, as in any other number of objects that may be considered by us at the same time, certain relations of analogy or resemblance of some sort, in consequence of which we class them together, and form for the whole class one comprehensive name. Such are the generic words justice, injustice, malevolence, benevolence. To these generic words, which, if distinguished from the number of separate actions denoted by them, are mere words, invented by ourselves, we gradually, from the influence of association in the feelings that have attended the particular cases to which the same name has been applied, attach one mixed notion, a sort of compound, or modified whole, of the various feelings which the actions separately would have excited, more vivid, therefore, than what would have arisen on the contemplation of some of these actions, less vivid than what others might have excited. It is enough that an action is one of a class which we term unjust; we feel instantly not the mere emotion which the action of itself would originally have excited, but we feel also that emotion which has been associated with the class of actions to which the particular action belongs; and though the action may be of a kind which, if we had formed no general arrangement, would have excited but slight emotion, as implying no very great injury produced or intended, it thus excites a far more vivid feeling, by borrowing, as it were, from other analogous and more atrocious actions, that are comprehended under the same general term, the feeling which they would originally have excited. It is quite evident, for example, that in a civilized country, in which property is largely possessed, and complicated in its tenure, and as in the various modes in which it may be transferred, the infringement of property must be an object of peculiar importance, and what is commonly termed justice, in regard to it, be a virtue of essential value, and injustice a crime against which it is necessary to prepare many checks, and which is thence regarded as of no slight delinquency. The offence of the transgressor is estimated, in such a case, not by the little evil which, in any particular case, he may intentionally have occasioned to another individual, but in a great degree also by the amount of evil which would arise in a system of society constituted as that of the great nations of Europe is constituted, if all men were to be equally regardless of the right of property in others. When we read, therefore, of the tendency to theft, in many barbarous islanders of whom navigators tell us, and of the very little shame which they seemed to feel on detection of their petty larcenies, we carry along with us our own classes of actions, and the emotions to which our own general rules, resulting from our own complicated social state, have given rise. We forget, that to those who consider an action simply as it is, the guilt of an action is an object that is measured by the mere amount of evil intentionally produced in the particular case; and that the theft which they contemplate is not, therefore, in its moral aspect, the same offence that is contemplated by us. I need not trace out, in other cases, the influence of general rules, which you must be able to trace with sufficient precision for yourselves.

Such, then, is one of the modes in which

association operates. But it is not in general rules alone that the influence of the associating principle is to be traced. It extends in some degree to all our moral feelings. There is no education, indeed, which can make the pure benevolence of others hateful to us, unless by that very feeling of our own inferiority which implies in envy itself our reverence, and consequently our moral approbation of what we hate; no education which can make pure deliberate malice in others an object of our esteem. But if there be any circumstances accompanying the benevolence and malice, which tend to the disparagement of the one and the elevation of the other, the influence of association may be excited powerfully, in this way, by fixing our attention more vividly on these slight accompanying circumstances. The fearlessness which often attends vice, may be raised into an importance beyond its merit, in savage ages, in which fearlessness is more important for the security of the state, and in which power and glory seem to wait on it; the yielding gentleness of benevolence may, in such circumstances, appear timidity, or at least a degree of softness unworthy of the perfect man. In like manner, when a vice is the vice of those whom we love,—of a friend, a brother, a parent,—the influence of association may lessen and overcome our moral disapprobation, not by rendering the vice in itself an object of our esteem, but by rendering it impossible for us to feel a vivid disapprobation of those whom we love, and mingling, therefore, some portion of this very regard in our contemplation of all their actions. It is because we have the virtue of loving our benefactor, or friend, or parent, that we seem not to feel in so lively a manner the unworthiness of that vice which is partly lost to our notice, in the general emotion of our gratitude. But when we strip away these illusions, or when the vice is pure intentional malice, which no circumstance of association can embellish, it is equally impossible for us to look upon it with esteem, as it is impossible for us to turn away with loathing from him whose whole existence seems to be devoted to the happiness of others, and to rejoice, as we look upon him, that we are not what he is.

Ite ipsi in vestrae penetralia mentis et intus
Incisos apices, et scripta volumina mentis
Inspicite, et genitam vobiscum agnoscite legem.
Quis vitiis adeo stolide oblectatur apertis,
Ut quod agit velit ipse pati? Mendacia fallax,
Furta rapax, furiosum atrox, homicida cruentum
Damnat, et in moechum gladios distringit adulter.
Ergo omnes una in vita cum lege creati
Venimus, et fibris gerimus quae condita libris.

I have made these limitations, because it appears to me that much confusion on the subject of morals has arisen from inattention to these, and from the too great claims which have sometimes been made by the assertors of what they have termed immutable morality. The influence of temporary passion,—of the complication of good with evil, and of evil with good, in one mixed result,—and of general or individual associations, that mingle with these complex results some new elements of remembered pain or pleasure, dislike or regard, it seems to me absurd to attempt to deny. But, admitting these indisputable influences, it seems to me equally unreasonable not to admit the existence of that original susceptibility of moral emotion which precedes the momentary passion, and outlasts it; which, in admiring the complex result of good and evil, admires always some form of good, and which is itself the source of the chief delights or sorrows which the associations of memory furnish as additional elements in our moral estimate.

LECTURE LXXV.

RETROSPECT OF LAST LECTURE.—THE PRIMARY DISTINCTIONS OF MORALITY IMPLANTED IN EVERY HUMAN HEART, AND NEVER COMPLETELY EFFACED.

Gentlemen, having traced, in a former Lecture, our notions of virtue, obligation, merit, to one simple feeling of the mind,—a feeling of vivid approval of the frame of mind of the agent, which arises on the contemplation of certain actions, and the capacity of which is as truly essential to our mental constitution, as the capacity of sensation, memory, reason, or of any of the other feelings of which our mind is susceptible, I considered in my last Lecture, the arguments in opposition to this principle, as an original tendency of the mind, drawn from some apparent irregularities of moral sentiment in different ages and countries.

For determining the force of such instances, however, as objections to the original distinctions of morality, it was necessary to consider precisely what is meant by that general accordance of moral sentiment, which the world may be considered as truly exhibiting. It is only by contending for more than the precise truth, that, in many instances, we furnish its opponents with the little triumphs which seem to them like perfect victory. We give to the truth itself an appearance of doubtfulness, because we have combined it with what is doubtful, or perhaps altogether false.

In the first place, the language which the assertors of virtue are in the habit of employing, when they speak of the eternity and absolute immutability of moral truth, might almost lead to the belief of something self-

existing, which could not vary in any circumstances, nor be less powerful at any moment than at any other moment. Virtue, however, it is evident, is nothing in itself, but is only a general name for certain actions, which excite, when contemplated by us, certain emotions. It is a felt relation to certain emotions, and nothing more, with no other universality, therefore, than that of the minds in which, on the contemplation of the same actions, the same emotions arise. We speak always of what our mind is formed to admire or hate, not of what it might have been formed to estimate differently; and the supposed immutability, therefore, has regard only to the existing constitution of things under that Divine Being who has formed our social nature as it is, and who, in thus forming it, may be considered as marking his own approbation of that virtue which we love, and his own disapprobation of that vice which he has rendered it impossible for us not to view with indignation or disgust.

Such is the moderate sense of the absolute immutability of virtue, for which alone we can contend; a sense in which virtue itself is supposed to become known to us as an object of our thought only, in consequence of certain emotions which it excites, and with which it is coextensive and commensurable; but, even in this moderate sense, it was necessary to make some limitations of the uniformity of sentiment supposed; since it is abundantly evident, that the same actions, that is to say, the same agents, in the same circumstances, willing and producing the same effects, are not regarded by all mankind with feelings precisely the same, nor even with feelings precisely the same by the same individual in every moment of his life.

The first limitation which I made relates to the moments in which the mind is completely occupied and absorbed in other feelings; when, for example, it is under the temporary influence of extreme passion, which incapacitates the mind for perceiving moral distinctions as it incapacitates it for perceiving distinctions of every sort. Virtue, though lost to our perception for a moment, however, is immediately perceived again with distinct vision as before, as soon as the agitation subsides. It is like the image of the sky on the bosom of a lake, which vanishes, indeed, while the waters are ruffled, but which reappears more and more distinctly, as every little wave sinks gradually to rest, till the returning calm shows again, in all its purity, the image of that Heaven which has never ceased to shine on it.

The influence of passion, then, powerful as it unquestionably is in obstructing those peculiar emotions in which our moral discernment consists, is limited to the short period during which the passion rages. We are then as little capable of perceiving moral differences, as we should be, in the same circumstances, of distinguishing the universal truths of geometry; and in both cases, from the same law of the mind,—that general law, by which one very vivid feeling of any sort lessens in proportion the vividness of any other feeling that may coexist with it, or, in other cases, prevents the rise of feelings that are not accordant with the prevailing emotion, by inducing, in more ready suggestion, the feelings that are accordant with it.

The next limitation which we made is of more consequence, as being far more extensive, and operating, therefore, in some degree, in almost all the moral estimates which we form. This second limitation relates to cases in which the result of actions is complicated by a mixture of good and evil, and in which we may fix upon the good, when others fix on the evil, and may infer the intention in the agent of producing this good, which is a part of the mixed result, while others may conceive him to have had in view the partial evil. The same actions, therefore, may be approved and disapproved in different ages and countries, from the greater importance attached to the good or to the evil of such compound results, in relation to the general circumstances of society, or the influence perhaps of political errors, as to the consequences of advantage or injury to society of these particular actions; and, in the same age, and the same country, different individuals may regard the same action with very different moral feelings, from the higher attention paid to certain partial results of it, and the different presumptions thence formed as to the benevolent or injurious intentions of the agent. All this, it is evident, might take place without the slightest mutability of the principle of moral sentiments; because, though the action which is estimated may seem to be the same in the cases in which it is approved and condemned, it is truly a different action which is so approved and condemned; a different action in the only sense in which an action has any meaning, as signifying the agent himself having certain views, and willing, in consequence, certain effects of supposed benefit or injury.

A third limitation, often co-operating with the former, relates to the influence of habit and association in general, whether as extending to particular actions the emotions that have been gradually connected with the whole class of actions under which they have been arranged, or as modifying the sentiments of individuals by circumstances peculiar to the individuals themselves. It is pleasing to love those who are around us; it is pleasing, above all, to love our immediate friends, and those domestic relations to whom we owe our being, or to whose society, in the

first friendships which we were capable of forming, before our heart had ventured from the little world of home into the great world without, we owed the happiness of many years, of which we have forgotten every thing but that they were delightful. It is not merely pleasing to love these first friends; we feel that it is a duty to love them; that is to say, we feel that, unless in circumstances of extraordinary profligacy on their part, if we were not to love them, we should look upon ourselves with moral disapprobation. The feeling of this very duty mingles in our estimates of the conduct of those whom we love; and it is in this way that association in such cases operates; not by rendering vice in itself less an object of disapprobation than before, but by blending with our disapprobation of the action that love of the agent, which is, as it were, an opposite duty. It is the good which is mixed with the bad that we love, not the bad which is mixed with the good; and the primary and paramount love of the good and hatred of the bad remain; though we may seem, in certain cases, to love the one less or more, to hate the other less or more, in consequence of the vivid images which association affords to heighten or reduce the force of the opposite sentiment, when the actions of which we approve or disapprove have a resemblance to the actions of those who have loved or made us happy; whose love, therefore, and the consequent happiness produced by them, arise, perhaps, to our mind at the very moment at which the similar action is contemplated by us.

These three limitations, then, we must make; limitations, the necessity of which it would have been natural for us to anticipate, though no objections had been urged to the original differences of actions as objects of moral sentiment. But, making these limitations,—to some one or other of which the apparent anomalies may, I conceive, be referred,—do we not leave still unimpaired the great fundamental distinctions of morality itself; the moral approbation of the producer of unmixed good as good, the moral disapprobation of him who produces unmixed evil for the sake of evil? Where moral good and evil mix, the emotions may, indeed, be different; but they are different, not because the production of evil is loved as the mere production of evil, and the production of good hated as the mere production of good; it is only because the evil is tolerated for the good which is loved, and the good, perhaps, in other cases, forgotten or unremarked, in the abhorrence of the evil which accompanies it. When some country is found, in which the intentional producer of pure unmixed misery is preferred, on that very account, to the intentional producer of as much good as an individual is capable of producing,—some country, in which it is reckoned more meritorious to hate than to love a benefactor, merely for being a benefactor, and to love rather than to hate the betrayer of his friend, merely for being the betrayer of his friend,—then may the distinctions of morality be said to be as mutable, perhaps, as any other of the caprices of the most capricious fancy. But the denier of moral distinctions knows well, that it is impossible for him to prove the original indifference of actions in this way. He knows that the intentional producer of evil, as pure evil, is always hated, the intentional producer of good, as pure good, always loved; and he flatters himself, that he has succeeded in proving, by an easier way, that we are naturally indifferent to what the prejudiced term moral good and evil, merely by proving, that we love the good so very much, as to forget, in the contemplation of it, some accompanying evil; and hate the evil so very much, as to forget, in the contemplation of it, some accompanying good.

One of our most popular moralists begins his inquiry into the truth of the natural distinctions of morality, by quoting from Valerius Maximus, an anecdote of most atrocious profligacy, which, he supposes, related to a savage, who had been "cut off in his infancy from all intercourse with his species, and consequently, under no possible influence of example, authority, education, sympathy, or habit; and whose feelings, therefore, in hearing such a relation, if it were possible for us to ascertain what the feelings of such a mind would be, he would consider as decisive of the question." I quote the story as he has translated it.

"The father of Caius Toranius had been proscribed by the Triumvirate. Caius Toranius, coming over to the interests of that party, discovered to the officers who were in pursuit of his father's life, the place where he had concealed himself, and gave them a description by which they might distinguish his person. The old man, more anxious for the safety and fortunes of his son, than about the little that might remain of his own life, began immediately to inquire of the officers who seized him, whether his son was well, whether he had done his duty to the satisfaction of his generals. 'That son,' replied one of the officers, 'that son, so dear to thy affections, betrayed thee to us. By his information thou art apprehended and diest.' The officer, with this, struck a poniard to the old man's heart; and the unhappy parent fell, not so much affected by his fate, as by the means to which he owed it." Auctore caedis quam ipsa caede miserior.*

It is necessary, for the very supposition

* Paley's Moral Philosophy.

which is made, that the savage should understand, not merely what is meant by the simple relations of son and father, and all the consequences of the treachery of the son, but that he should know also the additional interest which the paternal and filial relation, in the whole intercourse of good offices from infancy to manhood, receives from this continued intercourse. The author of our mere being is not all which a father in such circumstances is; he is far better known and loved by us as the author of our happiness in childhood and youth, and the venerable friend of our maturer years. If the savage, knowing this relation in its fullest extent, could yet feel no different emotions of moral regard and dislike, for the son and for the father, it would be easier to suppose, that a life of total privation of society had dulled his natural susceptibilities of emotion, than that he was originally void of these. But what reason is there to imagine, that, with this knowledge, he would not have the emotions which are felt by every human being to whom this story is related? It is easy to assert, that knowing every relation of a son and father, as well as the consequence of the action, the savage would not feel what every other human being feels, because it is easy to assume, by begging the question, any point of controversy. But where is the proof of the assertion? We cannot verify the supposition by exact experiment, indeed, for such a savage, so thoroughly exempted from every social prejudice, is not to be found, and could not be made to understand the story even if he were found. But, though we cannot have the perfect experiment, we may yet have an approximation to it. Every infant that is born may be considered very nearly as such a savage; and as soon as the child is capable of knowing the very meaning of the words, without feeling half the force of the filial relation, he shudders at such a tale, with as lively abhorrence, perhaps, as in other years, when his prejudices and habits, and every thing which is not originally in his constitution, may be said to be matured.

We can imagine vessels sent on voyages of benevolence, to diffuse over the world the blessings of a pure religion, we can imagine voyages of this kind to diffuse the improvements of our sciences and arts. But what should we think of a voyage, of which the sole object was to teach the world that all actions are not, in the moral sense of the term, absolutely indifferent, and that those who intentionally do good to the society to which they belong, or to any individual of that society, ought to be objects of greater regard than he whose life has been occupied in plans to injure the society in general, or at least as many individuals of it as his power could reach? What shore is there at which such a vessel could arrive, however barren the soil, and savage the inhabitants, where these simple doctrines, which it came to diffuse, could be regarded as giving any instruction? The half-naked animal, that has no hut in which to shelter himself, no provision beyond the precarious chase of the day, whose language of numeration does not extend beyond three or four, and who knows God only as something which produces thunder and the whirlwind, even this miserable creature, at least as ignorant as he is helpless, would turn away from his civilized instructors with contempt, as if he had not heard any thing of which he was not equally aware before. The vessel which carried out these simple primary essential truths of morals might return as it went. It could not make a single convert, because there would not have been one who had any doubts to be removed. If, indeed, instead of teaching these truths, the voyagers had endeavoured to teach the natives whom they visited the opposite doctrine, as to the absolute moral indifference of actions, there could then be little doubt that they might have taught something new, whatever doubt there might justly be as to the number of the converts.

When Labienus, after urging to Cato a variety of motives, to induce him to consult the oracle of Ammon, in the neighbourhood of whose temple the little army had arrived, concludes with urging a motive which he supposed to have peculiar influence on the mind of that great man, that he should at least make use of the opportunity of inquiring of a being who could not err, what it is which constitutes that moral perfection which a good man should have in view for the guidance of his life,

> Saltem virtutis amator
> Quaere quid est virtus, et posce exemplar honesti,

how sublimely does the answer to this solicitation express the omnipotent divinity of virtue!

> Ille Deo plenus, tacita quem mente gerebat,
> Effudit dignas adytis e pectore voces.
> Quid quaeri, Labiene, jubes? An liber in armis
> Occubuisse velim potius, quam regna videre?
> An noceat vis ulla bono? Fortunaque perdat
> Opposita virtute minas? Laudandaque velle
> Sit satis, et nunquam successu crescat honestum?
> Scimus, et hoc nobis non altius inseret Ammon.
> Haeremus cuncti Superis, temploque tacente,
> Nil facimus non sponte Dei; nec vocibus ullis
> Numen eget: dixitque semel nascentibus auctor
> Quicquid scire licet: sterilis nec legit arenas,
> Ut caneret paucis, mersitque hoc pulvere verum.*

"Cast your eyes," says Rousseau, "over all the nations of the world, and all the histories of nations. Amid so many inhuman and absurd superstitions, amid that prodigious diversity of manners and characters,

* Lucani Pharsalia, lib. ix. v. 565—567, and 569—577.

you will find every where the same principles and distinctions of moral good and evil. The Paganism of the ancient world produced, indeed, abominable gods, who on earth would have been shunned or punished as monsters, and who offered as a picture of supreme happiness, only crimes to commit, and passions to satiate. But vice, armed with this sacred authority, descended in vain from the eternal abode: she found, in the heart of man, a moral instinct to repel her. The continence of Xenocrates was admired by those who celebrated the debaucheries of Jupiter—the chaste Lucretia adored the unchaste Venus—the most intrepid Roman sacrifice to fear. He invoked the God who dethroned his father, and he died without a murmur by the hand of his own. The most contemptible divinities were served by the greatest men. The holy voice of Nature, stronger than that of the gods, made itself heard, and respected, and obeyed on earth, and seemed to banish, as it were, to the confinement of Heaven, guilt and the guilty."

There is, indeed, to borrow Cicero's noble description, one true and original law, conformable to reason and to nature, diffused over all, invariable, eternal, which calls to the fulfilment of duty and to abstinence from injustice, and which calls with that irresistible voice which is felt in all its authority wherever it is heard. This law cannot be abolished or curtailed, nor affected in its sanctions by any law of man. A whole senate, a whole people, cannot dispense from its paramount obligation. It requires no commentator to render it distinctly intelligible, nor is it different at Rome, at Athens, now, and in the ages before and after; but in all ages, and in all nations, it is, and has been, and will be, one and everlasting—one as that God, its great author and promulgator, who is the common Sovereign of all mankind, is himself one. Man is truly man, as he yields to this divine influence. He cannot resist it, but by flying as it were from his own bosom, and laying aside the general feelings of humanity; by which very act he must already have inflicted on himself the severest of punishments, even though he were to avoid whatever is usually accounted punishment. "Est quidem vera lex, recta ratio, naturæ congruens, diffusa in omnes, constans, sempiterna, quæ vocet ad officium jubendo, vetando a fraude deterreat; quæ tamen neque probos frustra jubet aut vetat, nec improbos jubendo aut vetando movet. Huic legi nec obrogari fas est, neque derogari ex hac aliquid licet, neque tota abrogari potest. Nec vero, aut per senatum aut per populum solvi hac lege possumus. Neque est quærendus explanator aut interpres ejus alius. Nec erit alia lex Romæ, alia Athenis, alia nunc, alia posthac; sed et omnes gentes, et omni tempore, una lex et sempiterna et immortalis continebit; unusque erit communis quasi magister, et Imperator omnium Deus ille, legis hujus inventor, disceptator, lator; cui qui non parebit, ipse se fugiet, ac naturam hominis aspernabitur, atque hoc ipso luet maximas pœnas, etiam si cætera supplicia quæ putantur effugerit."

I have already, in a former Lecture, alluded to the strength of the evidence which is borne by the guilty, to the truth of those distinctions which they have dared to disregard. If there be any one who has an interest in gathering every argument which even sophistry can suggest, to prove that virtue is nothing, and vice therefore nothing, and who will strive to yield himself readily to this consolatory persuasion, it is surely the criminal who trembles beneath a weight of memory which he cannot shake off. Yet even he who feels the power of virtue only in the torture which it inflicts, does still feel this power, and feels it with at least as strong conviction of its reality, as those to whom it is every moment diffusing pleasure, and who might be considered perhaps as not very rigid questioners of an illusion which they felt to be delightful. The spectral forms of superstition have indeed vanished; but there is one spectre which will continue to haunt the mind, as long as the mind itself is capable of guilt, and has exerted this dreadful capacity—the spectre of a guilty life, which does not haunt only the darkness of a few hours of night, but comes in fearful visitations, whenever the mind has no other object before it that can engage every thought, in the most splendid scenes and in the brightest hours of day. What enchanter is there who can come to the relief of a sufferer of this class, and put the terrifying spectre to flight? We may say to the murderer, that, in poisoning his friend, to succeed a little sooner to the estate which he knew that his friendship had bequeathed to him, he had done a deed as meritorious in itself, as if he had saved the life of his friend at the risk of his own; and that all for which there was any reason to upbraid himself was, that he had suffered his benefactor to remain so many years in the possession of means of enjoyment, which a few grains of opium or arsenic might have transferred sooner to him. We may strive to make him laugh at the absurdity of the scene, when, on the very bed of death, that hand which had often pressed his with kindness before, seemed to press again with delight the very hand which had mixed and presented the potion. But though we may smile, if we can smile, at such a scene as this, and point out the incongruity with as much ingenious pleasantry as if we were describing some ludicrous mistake, there will be no laughter on that face from which we strive to force a smile. He

who felt the grasp of that hand will feel it still, and will shudder at our description; and shudder still more at the tone of jocular merriment with which we describe what is to him so dreadful.

What, then, is that theory of the moral indifference of actions which is evidently so powerless, or which even he, who professes to regard it as sound philosophy, feels the importance as much as other men; when he loves the virtuous and hates the guilty, when he looks back with pleasure on some generous action, or with shame and horror on actions of a different kind, which his own sound philosophy would teach him to be, in every thing that relates to his own internal feelings, exclusively of the errors and prejudices of education, equal and indifferent? It is vain to say, as if to weaken the force of this argument, that the same self-approving complacency, and the same remorse, are felt for actions which are absolutely insignificant in themselves, for regular observance or neglect of the most frivolous rites of superstition. There can be no question that self-complacency and remorse are felt in such cases. But it surely requires little philosophy to perceive, that, though a mere ceremony of devotion may be truly insignificant in itself, it is far from insignificant when considered as the command of him to whose goodness we owe every thing which we value as great, and to disobey whose command, therefore, whatever the command may be, never can be a slight offence. To consider the ceremonial rite alone, without regard to him who is believed to have enjoined it, is an error as gross, as it would be to read the statutes of some great people, and paying no attention to the legislative power which enacted them, we laugh, perhaps, at the folly of those who thought it necessary to conform their conduct to a law, which was nothing but a series of alphabetic characters on a scrap of paper or parchment, that in a single moment could be torn to pieces or burnt.

Why do we smile on reading, in the list of the works of the hero of a celebrated philosophic romance, that one of these was "a complete digest of the law of nature, with a review of those 'laws' that are obsolete or repealed, and of those that are ready to be renewed, and put in force?" We feel that the laws of nature are laws which no lapse of ages can render obsolete, because they are every moment operating in every heart; and which, for the same reason, never can be repealed, till man shall have ceased to be man.

After these remarks on the general theory of the original moral indifference of actions, which considers all morality as adventitious, without any original tendencies in the mind that could of themselves lead it to approve or disapprove, it may be necessary still to take some notice of that peculiar modification of the theory, which denies all original obligation of justice, but asserts the authority of political enactment, not as attaching merely rewards to certain actions, and punishments to certain other actions, but as producing the very notions of just and unjust, with all the kindred notions involved in them, and consequently a right, which it would be immorality as well as imprudence to attempt to violate.

Of this doctrine, which is to be traced in some writers of antiquity, but which is better known as the doctrine of Hobbes, who stated it with all the force which his acuteness could give it,—a doctrine to which he was led in some measure perhaps by a horror of the civil dissensions of the period in which he wrote, and by a wish to lessen the inquisitorial and domineering influence of the priesthood of that fanatical age, by rendering even religion itself subject to the decision of the civil power;—the confutation is surely sufficiently obvious. A law, if there be no moral obligation, independent of the law, and prior to it, is only the expression of the desire of a multitude, who have power to punish, that is to say, to inflict evil of some kind on those who resist them; it may be imprudent, therefore, to resist them; that is to say, imprudent to run the risk of that precise quantity of physical suffering which is threatened; but it can be nothing more. If there be no essential morality that is independent of law, an action does not acquire any new qualities by being the desire of one thousand persons rather than of one. There may be more danger, indeed, in disobeying one thousand than in disobeying one, but not more guilt. To use Dr. Cudworth's argument, it must either be right to obey the law, and wrong to disobey it, or indifferent whether we obey it or not. If it be morally indifferent whether we obey it or not, the law, which may or may not be obeyed, with equal virtue, cannot be a source of virtue; and if it be right to obey it, the very supposition that it is right to obey it, implies a notion of right and wrong that is antecedent to the law, and gives it its moral efficacy. But, without reasoning so abstractly, are there, indeed, no differences of feeling in the breast of him who has violated a law, the essential equity of which he feels, and of him whom the accumulated and ever-increasing wrongs of a whole nation have driven to resist a force which, however long it may have been established, he feels to be usurpation and iniquity;—who, with the hope of giving freedom to millions has lifted against a tyrant, though armed with all the legal terrors, and therefore with all the morality and virtue of despotism, that sword,

around which other swords are soon to gather, in hands as firm, and which, in the arm of him who lifts it, is almost like the standard of liberty herself? Why does the slave, who is led to the field, in which he is to combat for his chains against those who would release him and avenge his wrongs, feel himself disgraced by obedience, when to obey implicitly, whatever the power may be which he obeys, is the very perfection of heroic virtue? and when he looks on the glorious rebel, as he comes forward with his fearless band, why is it that he looks, not with indignation, but with an awful respect; and that he feels his arm weaker in the fight, by the comparison of what he morally is, and of what those are whom he servilely opposes?

"A sovereign," it has been truly said, "may enact and rescind laws; but he cannot create or annihilate a single virtue." It might be amusing to consider, not one sovereign only, but all the sovereigns of the different nations of the earth, endeavouring by law to change a virtue into a vice,—a vice into a virtue. If an imperial enactment of a senate of kings were to declare, that it was in future to be a crime for a mother to love her child,—for a child to venerate his parent,—if high privileges were to be attached to the most ungrateful, and an act of gratitude to a benefactor declared to be a capital offence,—would the heart of man obey this impotent legislation? Would remorse and self-approbation vary with the command of man, or of any number of men? and would he who, notwithstanding these laws, had obstinately persisted in the illegality of loving his parent, or his benefactor, tremble to meet his own conscience with the horror which the parricide feels? There is, indeed, a power by which "princes decree justice;" but it is a power above the mere voice of kings,—a power which has previously fixed in the breasts of those who receive the decree, a love of the very virtue which kings, even when kings are most virtuous, can only enforce. And it is well for man, that the feeble authorities of this earth cannot change the sentiments of our hearts with the same facility as they can throw fetters on our hands. There would then, indeed, be no hope to the oppressed. The greater the oppression the stronger motive would there be to make obedience to oppression a virtue, and every species of guilt which the powerful might love to exercise, amiable in the eyes even of the miserable victims. All virtue, in such circumstances, would soon perish from the earth. A single tyrant would be sufficient to destroy, what all the tyrants that have ever disgraced this moral scene have been incapable of extinguishing,—the remorse which was felt in the bosom of him who could order every thing but vice and virtue,—and the scorn, and the sorrow, and the wrath of every noble heart, in the very contemplation of his guilty power.

Nature has not thrown us upon the world with such feeble principles as these. She has given us virtues of which no power can deprive us, and has fixed in the soul of him whom more than fifty nations obey, a restraint on his power, from which the servile obedience of all the nations of the globe could not absolve him. There may be flatterers to surround a tyrant's throne, with knees ever ready to bow on the very blood with which its steps are stained, and with voices ever ready to applaud the guilt that has been already perpetrated, and to praise, even with a sort of prophetic quickness of discernment, the cruelties in prospect which they only anticipate. There may be servile warriors, to whom it is indifferent whether they succour or oppress, whether they enslave or free, if they have only drowned in blood, with sufficient promptness, the thousands of human beings whom they have been commanded to sweep from the earth. There may be statesmen as servile, to whom the people are nothing, and to whom every thing is dear, but liberty and virtue. These eager emulators of each other's baseness may sound for ever in the ears of him on whose vices their own power depends, that what he has willed must be right, because he has willed it; and priests still more base, from the very dignity of that station which they dishonour, not content with proclaiming that crimes are right, may add their consecrating voice, and proclaim that they are holy, because they are the deeds of a vicegerent of that Holiness which is supreme. But the flatteries which only sound in the ear, or play perhaps with feeble comfort around the surface of the heart, are unable to reach that deeper-seated sense of guilt which is within.

In subjecting, for the evident good of all, whole multitudes to the sway of a few or of one, Nature then, as we have seen, has thrown over them a shelter, which power may indeed violate, but which it cannot violate with impunity; since even when it is free from every other punishment, it is forced, however reluctantly, to become the punisher of itself. This shelter, under which alone human weakness is safe, and which does not give protection only but happiness, is the shelter of virtue, the shelter of moral love and hate, of moral pity and indignation, of moral joy and remorse. Life, indeed, and many of the enjoyments which render social life delightful, may, at least on a great part of the surface of the earth, be at the mercy of a power that may seem to attack or forbear with no restraint but the caprice of its own will. Yet, before even these can be assailed, there is a voice which warns to de-

sist, and a still more awful voice of condemnation, when the warning has been disregarded. For our best enjoyments, our remembrances of virtue, and our wishes of virtue, we are not dependent on the mercy, nor even on the restraints of power. Nature has provided for them with all her care, by placing them where no force can reach. In freedom or under tyranny they alike are safe from aggression; because, wherever the arm can find its way, there is still conscience beyond. The blow, which reaches the heart itself, cannot tear from the heart what, in life, has been happiness or consolation, and what, in death, is a happiness that needs not to be comforted.

Our own felicity is then truly, in no slight degree, as Goldsmith says, consigned to ourselves, amidst all the varieties of social institutions.

> In every government, though terrors reign,
> Though tyrant kings, or tyrant laws restrain,
> How small, of all that human hearts endure,
> That part which laws or kings can cause or cure!
> Still to ourselves, in every place, consign'd,
> Our own felicity we make or find.
> With secret course, which no loud storms annoy,
> Glides the smooth current of domestic joy.
> The lifted axe, the agonizing wheel,
> Luke's iron crown and Damien's bed of steel,
> To men remote from power but rarely known,
> Leave reason, faith, and conscience all our own.*

"So far," says Cicero, "is virtue from depending on the enactment of kings, that it is as ancient as the system of nature itself, or as the great Being by whom nature was formed." "Vis ad recte facta vocandi et a peccatis avocandi, non modo senior est, quam aetas populorum et civitatum, sed aequalis illius coelum atque terras tuentis et regentis Dei:—Nec si, regnante Tarquinio, nulla erat Romae scripta lex de stupris, idcirco non contra illam legem sempiternam, Sextus Tarquinius vim Lucretiae attulit. Erat enim ratio profecta a rerum natura, et ad rectè faciendum impellens et a delicto avocans, quae non tum denique incipit lex esse cum scripta est, sed tum cum orta est; orta autem simul est cum mente divina."† The law, on which right and wrong depend, did not begin to be law when it was written: it is older than the ages of nations and cities, and contemporary with the very eternity of God.

LECTURE LXXVI.

OF THE SYSTEM OF MANDEVILLE; OF THE INFLUENCE OF REASON ON OUR MORAL SENTIMENTS; OF THE SYSTEMS OF CLARKE AND WOLLASTON.

GENTLEMEN, in the inquiries which have last engaged us, we have seen, what that susceptibility of moral emotion is, to which we owe our notions of virtue and vice, in all their relative variety of aspects: we have seen, in what sense it is to be understood as an original principle of our common nature, and what limitations it is necessary to give to its absolute universality. There is a sophistry, however, the errors of which it was necessary to state to you, that confounds, in these limitations, the primary distinctions themselves; and supposes that it has shown the whole system of morals to be founded on accidental prejudices, when, in opposition to the millions of millions of cases, that obviously confirm the truth of an original tendency to certain moral preferences, it has been able to exhibit a few facts which it professes to regard as anomalous. The fallacy of this objection, I endeavoured accordingly to prove to you, by showing, that the supposed anomalies arise, not from defect of original moral tendencies, but from the operation of other principles which are essential parts of our mental constitution, like our susceptibility of moral emotion; which are not, however, more essential parts of it than that moral susceptibility itself, and which, even in modifying our sentiments of approbation and disapprobation, produce this effect, not by altering the principle which approves and disapproves, but the object which we contemplate when these emotions arise. In the conclusion of my lecture, I examined the kindred sophistry of those political moralists, who, considering right and wrong as of human institution, in their denial of every primary distinction of morals, found a sort of artificial virtue on obedience to the civil power; forgetting that their very assertion of the duty of obedience, supposes a feeling of duty antecedent to the law itself; and that there are principles of equity, according to which even positive laws are judged, and, though approved in many cases, in many cases also condemned, by the moral voice within the breast, as inconsistent with that feeling of justice which is prior and paramount to the law itself.

In some measure akin to the theory of these political moralists, since it ascribes morality, in like manner, to human contrivance, is the system of Mandeville, who considers the general praise of virtue to be a mere artifice of political skill; and what the world consents to praise as virtue in the individual, to be a mere imposition on the part of the virtuous man. Human life, in short, according to him, is a constant intercourse of hypocrisy with hypocrisy; in which, by an involuntary self-denial, present enjoyment of some kind or other is sacrificed, for the pleasure of that praise which society, as cunning as the individual self-denier, is ready indeed to give, but gives only in return

* Concluding verses of the Traveller.

† De Legibus, lib. ii. c. 4, of Gruter's notation—or c. 8, 9, 10, of the common notation—with some alterations and omissions.

for sacrifices that are made to its advantage. His system, to describe it a little more fully, as stated in the inquiry into the origin of moral virtue, prefixed to his remarks on his own Fable of the Bees, is simply this,—that man, like all other animals, is naturally solicitous only of his personal gratification, without regard to the happiness or misery of others; that the great point, with the original lawgivers or tamers of these human animals, was to obtain from them the sacrifice of individual gratification, for the greater happiness of others; that this sacrifice, however, could not be expected from creatures that cared only for themselves, unless a full equivalent were offered for the enjoyment sacrificed; that as this, at least in the greater number of cases, could not be found in objects of sensual gratification, or in the means of obtaining sensual gratification which are given in exchange in common purchases, it was necessary to have recourse to some other appetite of man; that the natural appetite of man for praise readily presented itself, for this useful end, and that, by flattering him into the belief that he would be counted nobler for the sacrifices which he might make, he was led, accordingly, to purchase this praise by a fair barter of that, which, though he valued it much, and would not have parted with it but for some equivalent or greater gain, he still valued less than the praise which he was to acquire; that the moral virtues, therefore, to use his strong expression, are "the political offspring which flattery begot upon pride;" and that, when we think that we see virtue, we see only the indulgence of some frailty, or the expectation of some praise.

Such is the very licentious system, as to moral virtue, of this satirist of man; whose doctrine, false as it is, as a general view of human nature, has, in the world, so many instances which seem to correspond with it, that a superficial observer, who is little accustomed to make distinctions, extends readily to all mankind, what is true only of a part, and because some who wish to appear virtuous are hypocrites, conceives that all virtue is hypocrisy; in the same way as such a superficial thinker would have admitted any other error, stated in language as strong, and with images and pictures as vivid.

It would be idle to repeat, in particular application to this system, the general remarks which I made in my former lectures, on the early appearances of moral emotion, as marking an original distinction of actions, that excite in us moral approbation, from those which do not excite it, and which excite the opposite feeling of moral disapprobation. I shall not even appeal to the conscience of him who has had the happiness of performing a generous action, without the slightest regard to the praise of man, which was perhaps not an object even of conception at all, and certainly not till the action itself was performed. But we may surely ask, in this case, as much as in any other physical hypothesis, by what authority so extensive a generalization is made from so small a number of particular cases? If, indeed, we previously take for granted that all virtue is hypocrisy, every case of virtue which we perceive seeming to us a case of hypocrisy, may be regarded only as an illustration of the doctrine, to the universal truth of which we have already given our assent. But if we consent to form our general conclusion before examination, and then to adapt our particular conclusions to the previous general belief, this sort of authority may be found, for the wildest hypothesis, in physics, as much as for that moral hypothesis, the licentiousness of which is founded on the same false logic. We have only to take the hypothesis, however wild, for granted; and then the facts will be, or will be considered to be, illustrations of it. The question is not, whether, on the supposition of universal hypocrisy, all seeming virtue be imposition, for in that case there could be no doubt; but whether all virtue be hypocrisy; and for this, it is surely necessary to have some stronger proof than the mere fact that some men are hypocrites; or even the very probable inference, that there is a great deal of hypocrisy, (as there is a great deal of virtuous benevolence or self-command,) which we are not capable of discovering, and to which, accordingly, we may erroneously have given the praise of virtue. The love of praise may be a universal principle; but is not more truly universal than the feeling of right and wrong, in some one or other of their forms; and of two feelings, equally universal, it is as absurd to deny the reality of one, as the reality of the other. All actions have not one object. Some are the result of a selfish love of praise; some of a generous love of virtue, that is to say, of love of those whose happiness virtue can promote. The sacred motives of mankind, indeed, in this variety of possible objects, cannot be known; and the paradox of Dr. Mandeville, therefore, has this advantage, that it is impossible to say, in any case of virtue, "Here is virtue that has no regard to praise," since he has still the power of answering, that there may be a desire of praise, though it is not visible to us. But, to reasoning of this sort there is no limit. If we be fond of paradoxes, it is easy to assert that there is no such state as that of health, and to prove it in exactly the same manner, by showing, that many who seem blooming and vigorous are the victims of some inward malady; and that it is, therefore, impossible for us, in pointing out any

one, to say, there is health in this young and active form; since the bloom which we admire may be only the covering of a disease that is soon to prey on the very beauty which it seemed, perhaps for the time, to heighten with additional loveliness. If it be easy to make a little system like that of Mandeville, which reduces all virtue to the love of praise, it is just as easy to reverse the system, and to make all love of praise a modification of the purest virtue. We love it, it may be said, merely that we may give delight to those who love us, and who feel a lively interest in all the honours which can be lavished on us. This theory may be false, or rather truly is so; but however false, or even absurd, it is as philosophic in every respect as the opposite theory of Mandeville, since it proceeds, exactly in the same way, on the exclusive consideration of a certain elementary part of our mixed nature, and extends universally what is only partially true. Indeed, the facts which support it, if every one were to consult his memory, in the earliest years to which he can look back on his original feelings, are stronger, in support of this false generous hypothesis, than of that false ungenerous hypothesis, to which I have opposed it. What delight did the child feel, in all his little triumphs, when he thought of the pleasure which his parents were to feel! When his lesson was well learned, and rewarded with its due commendation, there were other ears than those around, which he would have wished to have heard; and if any little prize was allotted as a memorial of excellence, the pleasure which he felt on receiving it was slight, compared with the pleasure with which he afterwards saw it in other hands, and looked to other eyes, when he returned to his home. Such, it might be said, is the origin of that love of praise which we feel; and its growth in the progress of life, when praise is sought in greater objects, is only the growth of the same generous passion. But I will not dwell longer on an hypothesis which I have stated as false, and obviously false, though, obviously false as it is, it is at least as well founded as that of Mandeville. My only object is to show you, by this complete reversal of his reasoning, with equal semblance of probability, that his hypothesis is but an hypothesis.

But how comes it in this system, which must account for our own emotions, as well as for the emotions of others, that we do approve of certain actions, as virtuous, without valuing them for the mere love of praise, and condemn even the love of praise itself, when the good of the world is intentionally sacrificed to it? I will admit, for a moment, to Mandeville, that we are all hypocrites; that we know the game of human life, and play our parts in it accordingly. In such circumstances, we may indeed assume the appearance of virtue ourselves, but how is it, that we feel approbation of others assuming the same disguise, when we are aware of its nature, and know virtue in all the actions which go under that well-sounding name, to be only a more or less skilful attempt at imposition? The mob in the gallery may, indeed, wonder at all the transmutations in the pantomime, and the silliest among them may believe that Harlequin has turned the clown into a fruit-stand, and himself into a fruit-woman: but, however wide the wonder, or the belief may be, he who invented these very changes, or is merely one of the subordinate shifters of the scenery, cannot surely be a partaker of the illusion. What juggler ever deceived his own eyes? Katerfelto, indeed, is described by Cowper, as "with his hair on end, at his own wonders wondering." But Katerfelto himself, who "wondered for his bread," could not feel much astonishment, even when he was fairly giving the greatest astonishment to others. It must be the same with the moral juggler. He knows the cheat; and he cannot feel admiration. If he can truly feel esteem, he feels that love of virtue, and consequently that distinction of actions, as virtuous or worthy of moral approbation, which Mandeville denies. He may be a dupe, indeed, in the particular case, but he cannot even be a dupe, without believing that virtue is something nobler than a fraud; and, if he believe virtue to be more noble, he must have feelings nobler than any which the system of Mandeville allows. In believing that it is possible for man not to be a hypocrite, he may be considered almost as proving, that he has not, uniformly, been a hypocrite himself.

Even if the belief of a system of this sort, which, as we have seen, has no force but that which it derives from the very common paralogism of asserting the universal truth of a partial conclusion; even if this miserable belief were to have no tendency directly injurious to the morals of those who admit it, the mere loss of happiness which it would occasion, by the constant feeling of distrust to which it must give rise, would of itself be no slight evil. To regard even every stranger, on whom our eyes could fall, as engaged in one unremitting plan of deceit, all deceiving, and all to a certain degree deceived, would be to look on society with feelings that would make absolute solitude comparatively pleasing; and, if to regard strangers in this light would be so dreadful, how far more dreadful would it be, to look, with the same distrust, on those in whom we had been accustomed to confide as friends—to see dissimulation in every eye—in the look of fondness of the parent, the wife, the child, the very caress and seeming innocence of in

fancy; and to think, that, the softer every tone of affection was to our ear, the more profound was the falsehood, which had made it softer, only that it might the more surely deceive! It is gratifying to find, that a system, which would make this dreadful transformation of the whole moral world, is but an hypothesis; and an hypothesis so unwarrantable, because so inconsistent with every feeling of our heart. Yet it is unfortunately a paradox, which admits of much satirical picturing; and, while few pause sufficiently to discover its logical imperfections, it is very possible that some minds may be seduced by the mere lively colouring of the pictures, to suppose, in spite of all the better feelings of which they are conscious, that the representation which is given of human life is true, because a few characters in human life are truly drawn. A rash assent may be given to the seeming penetration which such a view of the supposed artifices of morality involves; and after assent is once rashly given, the very generosity that might have appeared to confute the system, will be regarded only as an exemplification of it. I feel it the more my duty, therefore, to warn you against the adoption of a system, so false to the excellence of our moral nature; not because it is false only, though, even from the grossness of its theoretic falsehood alone, it is unworthy of a single moment's philosophic assent, but still more, because the adoption of it must poison the virtue, and the happiness still more than the virtue, of every mind which admits it. There is scarcely any action for which it is not possible to invent some unworthy motive. If our system requires the invention of one, the invention, we may be sure, will very speedily take place; and, with the loss of that amiable confidence of virtue, which believed and was believed, how much of happiness, too, will be lost, or rather, how little happiness will afterwards remain!

A slight extension of the system of Mandeville produces that general selfish system of morals, which reduces all virtue to the desire of the individual good of the agent. On this it will be necessary to dwell a little more fully, not so much for the purpose of exposing the fallacy of the system itself, important as this exposure is, as for explaining that relation of utility to virtue, of which we so frequently hear, without any very accurate meaning attached to the relation.

In the first place, however, since actions can be estimated as more or less useful, only by that faculty which analyzes and compares, it will be of advantage to make some remarks on the influence of reason on our moral sentiments, and on those theories which, proceeding beyond this indisputable influence, would reduce to mere reason, as if it were the great principle of virtue itself, the whole moral phenomena of our approbation of good and disapprobation of evil.

If all the actions of which man is capable, had terminated in one simple result of good or evil, without any mixture of both, or any further consequences, reason, I conceive, would have been of no advantage whatever, in determining moral sentiments that must, in that case, have arisen immediately on the consideration of the simple effect, and of the will of producing that simple effect. Of the intentional production of good, as good, we should have approved instantly; of the intentional production of evil, as evil, we should as instantly have disapproved; and reason could not, in such circumstances, have taught us to love the one more, or hate the other less; certainly not to love what we should otherwise have hated, nor to hate what we should otherwise have loved. But actions have not one simple result, in most cases. In producing enjoyment to some, they may produce misery to others, either by consequences that are less or more remote, or by their own immediate but compound operation. It is impossible, therefore, to discover instantly, or certainly, in any particular case, the intention of the agent, from the apparent result; and impossible for ourselves to know, instantly, when we wish to perform a particular action, for a particular end, whether it may not produce more evil than good, when the good was our only object,—or more good than evil, when our object was the evil only. Reason, therefore, that power by which we discover the various relations of things, comes to our aid, and pointing out to us all the probable physical consequences of actions, shows us the good of what we might have conceived to be evil, the evil of what we might have conceived to be good, weighing each with each, and calculating the preponderance of either. It thus influences our moral feelings indirectly; but it influences them only by presenting to us new objects, to be admired or hated, and still addresses itself to a principle which admires or hates. Like a telescope, or microscope, it shows us what was too distant, or too minute, to come within the sphere of our simple vision; but it does not alter the nature of vision itself. The best telescope, or the best microscope, could give no aid to the blind. They imply the previous power of visual discernment, or they are absolutely useless. Reason, in like manner, supposes in us a discriminating vision of another kind. By pointing out to us innumerable advantages or disadvantages, that flow from an action, it may heighten or reduce our approbation of the action, and consequently our estimate of the virtue of him whom we suppose to have had this whole amount of good or evil in view, in his intentional production

of it; but it does this only because we are capable of feeling moral regard for the intentional producer of happiness to others, independently of any analyses which reason may make. If we did not love what is for the good of mankind, and love, consequently, those actions which tend to the good of mankind, it would be vain for reason to show, that an action was likely to produce good, of which we were not aware, or evil, of which we were not aware. It is very different, however, when we consider the mind, as previously susceptible of moral emotion. If our emotion of approbation, when we meditate on the propriety of a particular action, depend, in any degree, on our belief of resulting good, and our disapprobation, in any degree, on our belief of resulting evil; to show that the good of which we think is slight, when compared with the evil which accompanies or follows it, is, perhaps, to change wholly our approbation into disapprobation. We should feel, in such circumstances, a disapprobation of ourselves, if, with the clearer view of consequences now presented to us, we were to continue to desire to perform the very action, to have abstained from which before, would have excited our remorse. The utility of reason, then, is sufficiently obvious, even in morality; since, in a world so complicated as this, in which various interests are continually mingling, and in which the good of one may be the evil of many; a mere blind obedience to that voice, which would tell us instantly, and without reflection, in every case, to seek the good of any one, as soon as it was in our power to be instrumental to it, might produce the misery of many nations, or of many ages, in the relief of a few temporary wants of a few individuals. By far the greater portion of political evil, which nations suffer, arises, indeed, from this very source, not so much from the tyranny of power, however tyrannical power may too frequently have been, as from its erring benevolence, in the far greater number of cases, in which it was exercised with the wish of promoting that very good which was delayed, or, perhaps, wholly impeded, by the very means that were chosen to further it. If those rulers, who were truly desirous of the happiness of their people, had only known how they could most effectually produce that happiness which they wished, there can be no question, that the earth at present would have exhibited appearances very different from those which, on the greater part of its surface, meet our melancholy view; that it would then have presented to us an aspect of general freedom and happiness, which not man only, but the great Father and lover of man might have delighted to behold. Reason, then, though it is incapable of giving birth to the notion of moral excellence, has yet important relations to that good which is the direct object of morality.

> Let none with heedless tongue from truth disjoin
> The reign of Virtue. Ere the dayspring flow'd,
> Like sisters link'd in concord's golden chain,
> They stood before the great Eternal Mind,
> Their common parent; and by him were both
> Sent forth among his creatures, hand in hand,
> Inseparably join'd: nor e'er did Truth
> Find an apt ear to listen to her lore,
> Which knew not Virtue's voice; nor, save where Truth's
> Majestic words are heard and understood,
> Doth Virtue deign to inhabit. Go, inquire
> Of nature; not among Tartarean rocks,
> Whither the hungry vulture with its prey
> Returns; not where the lion's sullen roar
> At noon resounds along the lonely banks
> Of ancient Tigris; but her gentler scenes,
> The dovecot, and the shepherd's fold at morn,
> Consult; or by the meadow's fragrant hedge,
> In spring-time, when the woodlands first are green,
> Attend the linnet singing to his mate,
> Couch'd o'er their tender young. To this fond care
> Thou dost not Virtue's honourable name
> Attribute: wherefore, save that not one gleam
> Of truth did e'er discover to themselves
> Their little hearts, or teach them, by the effects
> Of that parental love, the love itself
> To judge, and measure its officious deeds?
> But man, whose eyelids truth has fill'd with day,
> Discerns how skilfully to bounteous ends
> His wise affections move; with free accord
> Adopts their guidance; yields himself secure
> To Nature's prudent impulse; and converts
> Instinct to duty and to sacred law. *

Important, however, as reason is, in pointing out all the possible physical consequences of actions, and all the different degrees of probability of these, it must not be forgotten, that this is all which it truly does; that our moral sentiment itself depends on another principle of our mind; and that, if we had not previously been capable of loving the good of others as good, and of hating the production of evil as evil, to show us that the happiness of every created being depended on our choice, would have excited in us as little eagerness to do what was to be so extensively beneficial, as if we had conceived, that only a single individual was to profit by it, or no individual whatever.

These remarks will show you the inadequacy of the moral systems, which make virtue, in our contemplation of it, a sort of product of reasoning, like any other abstract relation, which we are capable of discovering intellectually; that of Clarke, for example, which supposes it to consist in the regulation of our conduct, according to certain fitnesses which we perceive in things, or a peculiar congruity of certain relations to each other; and that of Wollaston, which supposes virtue to consist in acting according to the truth of things, in treating objects according to their real character, and not according to a character or properties which they truly have not—a system which is virtually the same as that of Clarke, expressing only more awkwardly what is not very simply developed, indeed, even in Dr. Clarke's speculations.

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* Akenside's Pleasures of Imagination, book ii.

These systems, independently of their general defect, in making incongruity,—which, as mere incongruity, bears no proportion to vice, but is often greatest in the most frivolous improprieties,—the measure of vice, assume, it must be remembered, the previous existence of feelings, for which all the congruities of which they speak, and the mere power of discovering such congruities, are insufficient to account. There must be a principle of moral regard, independent of reason; or reason may, in vain, see a thousand fitnesses, and a thousand truths, and would be warmed with the same lively emotions of indignation, against an inaccurate time-piece, or an error in arithmetical calculation, as against the wretch who robbed, by every fraud which could elude the law, those who had already little of which they could be deprived, that he might riot a little more luxuriously, while the helpless, whom he had plundered, were starving around him.

Fitness, as understood by every one, is obviously a word expressive only of relation. It indicates skill, indeed, in the artist, whatever the end may be; but, considered abstractly from the nature of the end, it is indicative of skill only. It is to the good or evil of the end that we look, and that we must always look, in estimating the good or evil of the fitness itself; and if it be the nature of the end which gives value to the fitness, it is not the fitness, but the end to which the fitness is subservient, that must be the true object of moral regard. The fitness of virtue for producing serene delight is not, as mere fitness, greater than that of vice for producing disquietude and wretchedness; and we act, therefore, as much according to the mere fitnesses of things, in being vicious as being virtuous. If the world had been adapted for the production of misery, with fitnesses opposite indeed in kind, but exactly equal in number and nicety of adjustment to those which are at present so beautifully employed in the production of happiness, we should still have framed our views and our actions according to these fitnesses; but our moral view of the universe and of its Author would have been absolutely reversed. We should have seen the fitnesses of things precisely as before, but we should have seen them with hatred instead of love.

Since every human action, then, in producing any effect whatever, must be in conformity with the fitnesses of things, the limitation of virtue to actions which are in conformity with these fitnesses, has no meaning, unless we have previously distinguished the ends which are morally good from the ends which are morally evil, and limited the conformity of which we speak, to the one of these classes. In this case, however, the theory of fitnesses, it is evident, far from accounting for the origin of moral distinctions, proceeds on the admission of them; it presupposes a distinctive love of certain virtuous ends, by their relation to which all the fitnesses of actions are to be measured; and the system of Dr. Clarke, therefore, if stripped of its pompous phraseology, and translated into common language, is nothing more than the very simple truism or tautology, that to act virtuously, is to act in conformity with virtue.

From this doctrine of conformity to the fitness of things the theory of Wollaston, in which virtue is represented to consist in the conformity of our actions to the true nature of things, scarcely differs, as I have said, in any respect, unless as being a little more circuitous and complicated. The truth, of which Wollaston speaks, is only virtue under another name; and if we had no previous notions of moral good and evil,—no love of the happiness of others more than of their misery, it would be absolutely impossible to determine whether virtue or vice were truth or falsehood, even in the sense in which he uses these terms. If, indeed, we previously take for granted that it is the nature, the true nature, of the parent to be loved by the child, of the child to love the parent, we cannot then, it will be allowed, have any hesitation in admitting that the child, in performing offices of tenderness to the parent, treats the parent according to his true nature; and that, if he were to treat him unkindly, he would treat him not according to his true nature, but as if he were a foe to whose true nature such usage would be accordant. In taking for granted this very nature, however, the agreement or disagreement with which we have chosen to denominate truth or falsehood, is it not evident that we have taken for granted all those duties which are strangely said to depend on the perception of an agreement, that cannot even be conceived by us, till the duties themselves, as constituting the real nature or truth of our various relations, in the actions which are said to agree with it, have been previously supposed? If there were no previous belief of the different moral relations of foes and friends, but all were regarded by us as indifferent, how could any species of conduct which was true with respect to the one, be false with respect to the other? It is false indeed to nature, but it is false to nature only because it is false to that virtue which, before we thought of truth or falsehood, distinguished, with the clear perception of different moral duties, our benefactor from our insidious enemy.

The work of Mr. Wollaston, which, with all its pedantry of ostentatious erudition, and the manifest absurdity of its leading principle, has many profound reflections and acute remarks, which render it valuable on its own account, appears to me, however, I must

confess, more valuable for the light which it indirectly throws on the nature of the prejudices that pervert our judgment, than for the truths which it contains in itself. If I were desirous of convincing any one of the influence of a system in producing, in the mind of its author, a ready acquiescence in errors the most absurd, and in explanations far more necessary to be explained than the very difficulties which they professed to remove or illustrate, I know no work which I could put into his hands better suited for this purpose than The Religion of Nature Delineated. Who but the author of such a system could believe for a moment that parricide is a crime only for the same reason which would make it a crime for any one, (and, if the great principle of the system be just, a crime exactly of the same amount,) to walk across a room on his hands and feet, because he would then be guilty of the practical untruth of using his hands, not as if they were hands, but as if they were feet; as, in parricide, he would be guilty of the practical untruth of treating a parent as if he were not a parent, but a robber or a murderer? Even without considering guilt so atrocious, is common cruelty, in any of its forms, made hateful to us as it should be, or even hateful in the slightest degree of moral disgust by being represented only as the half-ludicrous falsehood of affirming practically, that a man is not a man capable of feeling, but an insensible post; and is it only for a similar falsehood, in this tacit proposition, which we are supposed by our negligence to affirm, that we should reproach ourselves, if we had left any one to perish, whom a slight effort on our part would have saved from destruction? "Should I find a man grievously hurt by some accident," says Wollaston, "fallen down, alone, and without present help, like to perish, or see his house on fire, nobody being near to help or call out; in this extremity, if I do not give him my assistance immediately, I do not do it at all; and by this refusing to do it according to my ability, I deny his case to be what it is; human nature to be what it is; and even those desires and expectations which I am conscious to myself I should have under the like misfortune, to be what they are."* These strange denials we certainly do not make; all which we tacitly declare is, on the contrary, a truth, and a truth of the most unquestionable kind. We affirm ourselves to be what we are, indifferent to the miseries of others: and if to affirm a truth by our actions be all which constitutes virtue, we act as virtuously in this tacit declaration of our insensibility, as if we had flown instantly to the aid of the sufferer, with the most compassionate declaration of our feeling; or rather, if, with the same indifference at heart, we had stooped our body, or stretched out our hand to relieve him, our very attempt to give the slightest relief, according to the theory of moral falsehood, would have been only a crime additional.

Reason, then, as distinguishing the conformity or unconformity of actions with the fitnesses of things, or the moral truth or falsehood of actions, is not the principle from which we derive our moral sentiments. These very sentiments, on the contrary, are necessary before we can feel that moral fitness or moral truth, according to which we are said to estimate actions as right or wrong. All actions, virtuous and vicious, have a tendency or fitness of one sort or other; and every action which the benevolent and malevolent perform, with a view to a certain end, may alike have a fitness for producing that end. There is not an action, then, which may not be in conformity with the fitnesses of things; and if the feelings of exclusive approbation and disapprobation that constitute our moral emotions be not presupposed, in spite of the thousand fitnesses which reason may have shown us, all actions must be morally indifferent. They are not thus indifferent, because the ends to which reason shows certain actions to be most suitable, are ends which we have previously felt to be worthy of our moral choice; and we are virtuous in conforming our actions to these ends, not because our actions have a physical relation to the end, as the wheels and pullies of a machine have to the motion which is to result from them; but because the desire of producing this very end has a relation, which has been previously felt, to our moral emotion. The moral truth, in like manner, which reason is said to show us, consists in the agreement of our actions with a certain frame of mind which nature has previously distinguished to us as virtuous; without which previous distinction the actions of the most ferocious tyrant, and of the most generous and intrepid patriot, would be equally true, as alike indicative of the real nature of the oppressor of a nation, and of the assertor and guardian of its rights.

The fitness and the truth, then, in every case, presuppose virtue as an object of moral sentiment, and do not constitute or evolve it.

The moral use of reason, in influencing our approbation and disapprobation, is, as I before remarked, to point out to us the remote good, which we do not perceive, or the elements of mixed good and evil, which also, but for the analytic power of reason, we should be incapable of distinguishing with accuracy in the immediate compound result. If the mere discovery of greater

* Religion of Nature Delineated, p. 18. London, 1738, 4to.

utility, however, is sufficient to affect our approbation, utility must, it is evident, have a certain relation to virtue. Utility, it is said, is the measure of virtue. Let us consider what meaning is to be attached to this phrase.

LECTURE LXXVII.

OF HUME'S SYSTEM, THAT UTILITY IS THE CONSTITUENT OR MEASURE OF VIRTUE.

In my last Lecture, Gentlemen, I examined, at as great a length as a doctrine so false in its principles requires, the system of Dr. Mandeville with respect to virtue; a system in which the actions that commonly go under that honourable name are represented as, in every instance, where any seeming sacrifice is made to the happiness of another, the result of a calculating vanity that, in its love of praise, consents to barter, for a suitable equivalent of commendation, the means of enjoyment which it would not give without a due equivalent, but which it values less than the applause that is to be offered in purchase of them. The pretender to generosity, who is a speculator in this species of traffic, is of course a hypocrite by the very quality of the moral ware in which he jobs; and the applauders of the ostensible generosity, who are as little capable of unpaid admiration as he of gratuitous bounty, are hypocrites of equal skill, in the supposed universal cheat of social life. All are impostors, or all are dupes, or rather, all are at once impostors and dupes, dupes easily deceived by impostors whom it is easy to deceive. On a system, of which, I may safely take for granted, that every one of you has in the delightful remembrances of his own breast innumerable confutations, I should not have thought it necessary to dwell, if there had been less peril in the adoption of it to happiness and virtue. As a philosophic system, it is scarcely worthy of discussion. It is an evident example of an error that is very common in hypothetical systems; the error of supposing, notwithstanding the most striking seeming contrarieties, that what is true of a few cases out of many is, therefore, necessarily true of all. Some men are hypocrites, therefore all men are hypocrites. It is not absolutely impossible, that he whom the world honours as virtuous for a life, which, from youth to old age, has had the uniform semblance of regard for the happiness of others, may have no virtue whatever at heart; therefore, it may be affirmed, with certainty, that he has no virtue whatever. Such are the two propositions, which, though not expressed in these precise terms, constitute truly the whole logic of Mandeville. They are the very essence of his system; and unless we admit them as logically just, we must reject his system as logically false. But it is in his rhetoric that he trusts far more than in his defective logic; and if he have given us a few lively picturings of hypocrisy, he flatters himself that we shall not pause to inquire, whether pictures so lively are representations of a few only, or of all mankind.

What should we think of a moral theorist who, after painting some coarse debauch in the midnight profligacy of the lowest alehouse, or the wider drunkenness and riot of a fair or an election, should seriously exhibit to us those pictures as evidence of an universal conclusion, that all men are drunkards? We might admire the verbal painting, indeed, as we admire the pictures of Hogarth; but we should admire as little the soundness of the philosophy as we should have admired the accuracy of one of Hogarth's pictures, if he had exhibited to us the interior of a brothel as a representation of domestic life; a faithful sketch of one of those virtuous and smiling groups, that around a virtuous and delighted father, at his own parlour fire, seem to inclose him, as it were, within a circle of happiness! It is certainly not more absurd to argue that, because some men are drunkards all men are drunkards, than to contend that all men are, in every action of their life, indifferent to the happiness of every other being, because some may be hypocrites in affecting to regard any happiness but their own; and he who, in adopting this theory, can seriously believe that there is not a single parent, or wife, or child, who has any other view than the selfish one of acquiring praise, in any one office of seeming kindness to those whom they would wish us to regard as dear to them, may certainly believe with equal reason, and admire as ingenious and just, the wildest absurdity which the wildest propounder of absurdities can offer to his assent and admiration.

This system, by a little extension to all the sources of selfish enjoyment, and by a little purification of the selfishness, as the enjoyment is rendered less prominently selfish by being more remote and more connected by many direct or indirect ties with the happiness of others, assumes the form of the more general theory of selfish morals, in which the most refined virtue is represented only as disguised self-love; though the veil, which is thin in itself, so as often to afford no disguise to the passion which glows through it, is sometimes thickened in so many folds, that it is scarcely possible to guess what features of ugliness or beauty are beneath. Before considering, however, this finer system of moral sefishness, which is founded on views of remote personal advan-

tage, and therefore in a great measure on the skill that detects those elements of distant good, I conceived that we might derive some aid to our inquiry, by considering first the relations which reason, the great analyser and detecter of those elements of distant good, bears to morality; and consequently, as in their fittest place, those systems which would reduce all our moral feelings to intellectual discoveries made by that power, which is supposed, in these systems, to determine the very nature of vice and virtue, in the same way as it extracts roots, measures angles, and determines specific gravities or affinities, or quantities of motion.

We considered, then, two celebrated systems of this sort that found morality on reason; one which supposes virtue to consist in the accommodation of our actions to the fitnesses of things, and another which supposes it to consist in actions that are conformable to truth. In both cases I showed you, that the systems, far from accounting for our moral feelings, or showing them to be the result of a process of ratiocination, proceed on the susceptibility of these feelings, as an essential part of our mental constitution, independent of every thing that can be resolved into reasoning. If we were not formed to love previously the happiness of others, and to have a moral approbation of the wish of producing happiness, in vain would reason tell us, after tracing a thousand consequences, that an action will be more generally beneficial than, but for this analytic investigation, we should have supposed. If we were not formed to love certain ends of moral good rather than certain other ends of moral evil, the mere fitnesses, or means of producing these ends, must be as indifferent to us as that indifferent good or evil which they tend to produce. If we have formed no previous moral conception of certain duties, as forming that truth of character to which vice is said to be false, there will be as little falsehood; and, therefore, if vice be only a want of conformity to truth, as little vice, in the most cruel and unrelenting malignity, as in the most generous benevolence. In every case in which we suppose reason to be thus morally exercised, we must, as I said, presuppose certain feelings of love and approbation that constitute all which is truly moral in our sentiments of actions; or the discovery of mere consequences of general good, mere fitnesses, mere truths, will be as powerless to affect us with moral regard, as a new combination of wheels and pullies, or a new solution of a geometric problem.

But, though the discovery of certain fitnesses or congruities, such as those of which Clarke speaks, or of a certain conformity to truth, such as that of which Wollaston speaks, or of the beneficial and injurious consequences of certain actions, considered as a mere series of consequences, discoverable by the understanding, like any other series of physical effects, may not be capable of giving birth to moral feeling, without some peculiar and previous susceptibility in the mind of being so affected; may they not at least indirectly give birth to it, by presenting to this original susceptibility of moral emotion its peculiar objects? Whatever may be the principle that develops it, does not the approving sentiment arise, on the contemplation of actions that are in their tendency beneficial to individuals, and thus to society in general, and only on the contemplation of actions that are thus beneficial? Is not utility, therefore, since it appears to be essential, in some greater or less degree, to the whole class of actions that are termed virtuous, the constituent or the measure of virtue itself?

The doctrine of the utility of actions, as that which constitutes them virtuous, has been delivered, with all the force of which the doctrine seems capable, by the genius of Mr. Hume, who has formed it into an elaborate system of morals. It has ever since entered largely into the vague speculations on the principles of virtue, in which minds that are rather fond of theorizing than capable of it, are apt to indulge; and we seldom hear in familiar discussion any allusion to the principle or principles of moral sentiment, without some loose reference to this relation, which that moral sentiment is supposed to bear to the utility of the actions approved. That it does bear a certain relation to it is unquestionable, though a relation which is not always very distinctly conceived by those who are in the frequent habit of speaking of it. It will be the more important, then, to endeavour to separate what is true in the common language on the subject, from the error which frequently accompanies it.

Benevolence, as the very name implies, is always a wish of good to others; and every benevolent action, therefore, must be intended to be of advantage to somebody. But if by the measure of virtue, when utility is said to be the constituent or measure of the actions that are denominated virtuous, be meant that to which the virtue is in exact proportion, increasing always as the mere physical advantage increases, and decreasing always as the mere physical advantage decreases; and if it be said that such actions only are felt to be meritorious, in which the agent is supposed to have willed directly that which appeared to him at the moment of his willing it most useful, and to have willed it with moral approbation for this reason only, because it appeared to him most useful; utility, in this general sense, is so far from being the measure of virtue, that there is comparatively but a very small number of virtu-

ous actions to which the measure can be applied, and very few, indeed, in which the proportion will be found to hold with exactness.

That virtuous actions do all tend in some greater or less degree to the advantage of the world, is indeed a fact, with respect to which there can be no doubt. The important question, however, is, whether the specific amount of utility be that which we have in view, and which alone we have in view, in the approbation which we give to certain actions; since this approbation is the direct feeling of virtue itself, without which, as intervening, it will be allowed that even the most useful action could not be counted by us as virtuous; whether we love the generosity of our benefactor, with an emotion exactly the same in kind, however different it may be in degree, as that with which we love the bank-bill, or the estate which he may have given us; in short, to use Dr. Smith's strong language, whether "we have no other reason for praising a man, than that for which we commend a chest of drawers."

It may be necessary in this discussion, to remind you once more, that virtue is nothing in itself, any more than our other general terms, which we have invented to express a number of particulars comprehended in them; that what is true of virtue, then, must be true of all the particular actions to which we give that name; and that all which we have to consider in the present argument, is not the vague general term, but some particular action, that is to say, some particular agent, in certain circumstances, willing a certain effect; since the feeling which rises in the mind, on the contemplation of this particular action, is that which leads us to class it with other actions that may have excited a similar vivid sentiment, and to employ for the whole the common term virtue. The question then is, whether it be necessary to the rise of this vivid sentiment, the moral emotion of approbation or disapprobation, that we should have in immediate contemplation, as the sole object of the emotion, the utility or inutility of the action; and whether the emotion itself be always exactly proportioned by us to the quantity of usefulness which we may have found, by a sort of intellectual calculation or measurement in the action itself, or in the principle of the action. It is the vivid feeling of moral approbation alone, which leads us to distinguish actions as virtuous or vicious; and the supposed measure or standard of virtue, therefore, must relate to this vivid feeling in all its degrees, or it cannot have any relation to the virtue that in all its degrees is marked by that vivid feeling only.

If the utility of actions be their moral standard, then, it must be present to the contemplation of the agent himself, when he morally prefers one mode of conduct to another; and to the contemplation of others, when they morally approve or disapprove of his action.

In every moral action that can be estimated by us, these two sets of feelings may be taken into account; the feelings of the agent when he meditated and willed the action; and the feelings of the spectator, or of him who calmly contemplates the action at any distance of space or time. Let us consider, then, in the first place, the agent himself. The agent, indeed, may be under the influence of passions, from which the spectator is free, and may thus have his moral discernment less clear, so as to be hurried perhaps into actions which, with better moral vision, he would have shunned. But the principle of approbation itself is not essentially different in his mind, when the action which he contemplates is one which he meditates himself, and when he contemplates the action of another already performed; and, if it be not according to any measurement of exact utility, that the approbation and consequent moral will or resolution of the most virtuous agent is formed, it must be allowed to be a powerful presumption at least, or more than a mere presumption, that the approbation of the spectator, arising from the same principle is not the result of such a measurement of the good that is to be added, by that particular action, to the general good of the world, or of the general utility of the principle from which it flows. With respect to the views of the agent, however, there seems to be little ground for dispute. His views, even when he seems to ourselves most commendable, but rarely extend to such general interests. The exact scale of utility of an action, in short, or of the principle of the action, is not present to his mind as the standard by which he regulates his conduct. Does the mother, when she hangs sleepless, night after night, over the cradle of her sick infant, think, even for a single moment, that it is for the good of the society of mankind, that she should labour to preserve that little being which is so dear to her for itself, and the abandonment of which, though no other being in the universe were to be affected by it, would seem to her a crime of scarcely conceivable atrocity; and are we to refuse to her patience and tenderness, and watchfulness of regard, the name of virtue, because she has thought only of some little comfort that might possibly flow to the individual, and has not measured her own personal sacrifices with that general good, to which they should have been exactly adapted, nor estimated the general advantage of maternal love, as a principle of conduct which operates, and is continually to operate, in all the families of mankind? When we enter some wretched

hovel, and see that wretchedness, which is so much more dreadful to the eye of him who beholds it, than to the ear of him who is told in his splendid apartment, that there is misery upon the earth,—and who thinks that in pitying it, with the very idleness of pity, he has felt as a good man should feel; when we look through the darkness, to which there is no sunshine, on some corner, darker still,—where the father of those who have strength only to hang over him and weep, is giving to them his last blessing, which is all that remains to him to give; do we feel, on looking at this mixture of death, and sickness, and despair, and want, in dreadful assemblage, that it would be well for the world if a little relief were given to miseries so hopeless; or that compassion, as a principle of conduct, is of the highest usefulness, where there are so many sufferers on the earth, who may be objects of compassion? Of the principle of the action in its relation to general utility, we never think. We hasten to do what it is in our power to do; and we have already obtained looks of as much gratitude, as could be felt in a moment of such affliction, long before we have thought of any thing more than what was before our very eyes. In all the small courtesies of society, as well as in these higher duties, we act, not from any estimate of the principle of courtesy as a general principle, but from the temporary views of individual gratifications to those who mingle with us; and we act well. The amount of general good, which a philosopher might estimate, or attempt to estimate, by considering the relation of these particular actions to the advantage of the community, never occurs as an object of contemplation to the multitude of mankind, when they approve or disapprove, with feelings at least as vivid, as those of him who measures every action by its remotest consequences. It occurs but seldom, even to philosophers themselves, who may derive, indeed, an additional enjoyment from tracing that relation, and an additional reason to adore the goodness of him who has established it; but who, in the common transactions of life, act from the same immediate feelings of approvableness, the same immediate impulses of virtuous emotion, as those to whom ethical and political generalizations are absolutely unknown. The immediate virtuous impulse is the mere feeling of rapid approbation, that becomes still more rapidly choice or determination; a feeling which has relation only to the particular case, and which, far from pausing for any extensive view and measurement of remote consequences of utility, has arisen in the instant, or almost in the very instant in which the action was conceived.

But the feelings of the agent himself, whom alone we have yet considered, it may perhaps be said, furnish no decisive confutation of the supposed moral measurement of the virtue of actions, by the feeling of their precise degrees of general utility; they may afford a presumption, but nothing more; and it is in the calm contemplation of the indifferent spectator, or reader, or hearer of an action only, that we are to look for the grounds of a just moral estimate of the virtue or vice which the action itself involves.

The exclusion of the feelings of the agent himself, in the moral estimate of the propriety or impropriety of the actions, which circumstances call on him to perform, and on account of which he is to be ranked with the virtuous or the guilty, may seem a very bold use of the privilege of unlimited supposition, which a theorist assumes. Let the assumption, however, be admitted. Let the feelings of the agent be left wholly out of account, and let us think only of the feelings of him who contemplates the action of another. Is the approbation of virtue, in this case, the feeling of mere utility; our indignation, disgust, abhorrence of vice, in its aspects of greatest atrocity, a feeling of nothing more than of the uselessness, or physical incumbrance and detriment to society, of that profitless thing which we call a tyrant or a parricide? The doctrine of utility, as the felt essence of virtue, is, in this case, as little in agreement with the moral facts which it would explain, as in the case of the feelings of the agent himself; as little accordant with them as any false hypothesis in mere physics, with the stubbornly resisting physical facts, which it would vainly endeavour to reconcile, or at least to force together.

If the approbation which we give to virtue be only the emotion excited in us by the contemplation of what is useful to mankind, it is very evident that such utility is to be found, not in the actions only of voluntary agents, and in the general principles of conduct from which the particular actions flow, but in inanimate matter also; and indeed, on earth at least, it is only by the intervention of matter, that one mind can indirectly be of any utility whatever to any other mind. Let us imagine, then, not a mere chest of drawers before us,—for that may be counted of too trifling convenience,—but the most useful machine which the art of man has been able to devise,—a loom, for example, a ship, a printing-press, instruments which have certainly contributed to the happiness of the world a far greater amount of good, than any moral action of any generous benefactor, whose voluntary production of a little limited good, perhaps to a single individual only, may yet have excited in us the liveliest emotions of a regard that is almost venera-

tion, or more than mere veneration. When we think of any one of these noble instruments, as placed before our eyes, or when any one of them is actually before our eyes, and when we trace all the contrivances of its parts, and think of the good which has for many ages resulted, and will still continue to result from the whole; does it seem to us possible that any one should assert, or almost that any one should imagine, for a moment, the sameness in kind of the intellectual admiration, if I may so express it, which we feel in such a case, with the moral admiration that is excited in us by the patriot or the martyr; or even by the humblest of those who, in their little sphere of private life, in the ordinary circumstances of peaceful society, exert, for the good of the few who are around them, an energy of active benevolence, as powerful as that which, in a more elevated station, and in a tumultuous age, ennobles the leader and the sufferer in the cause of nations and of the world? Our admiration of a steam-engine, our admiration of an heroic sacrifice of personal comfort, or of life itself, are feelings that can scarcely be said to have any greater resemblance than the brightness of scarlet and the shrillness of a trumpet; and the blind man who asserted the similarity of these two sensations, was, I cannot but think, (if our consciousness is to decide on the comparative merit of the theories,) at least as sound a theorist, as he who would convince us of the similarity of the two emotions. Indeed, if we were to strive to conceive all the possibilities of extravagant assertion, it would not be easy to imagine one less warranted by fact, than that which would affirm that we love a benefactor exactly with the same feelings as those with which we regard a house or a loaf of bread; or at least that there is no difference, but as one or the other may have been in degree more or less useful to us or to the world in general.

If, indeed, mere matter could, by the most beautiful subserviency to our happiness, become a reasonable object of moral admiration, by what means have we been able to escape an universal idolatry? How is it that we are not, at this moment, all adorers of that earth on which we dwell, or of that great luminary which renders our earth not habitable merely, but delightful? The ancient worshippers of the universe at least supposed it to be animated with a soul. It was the soul of the world which they adored. The savage, who trembles at the thunder, and bends before the whirlwind that knee which does not bow to man, believes that there is some being greater than man who presides over the awful darkness. But, according to the system of utility, the belief of a soul of the world, or of a ruler of the lightning and the storm, which even the savage thinks necessary, before he deign to worship, is superfluous for our more philosophic veneration. The earth, whether animated or inanimate, is alike that which supports and feeds us. The sun, whether animated or inanimate, is alike to us the source of warmth and light, and of all that infinity of blessings, which these simple words involve. The earth and the sun, then, if mere utility were to be considered as virtue, the sole standard on the contemplation of which certain moral emotions arise, and by which we measure their vividness, are the most virtuous beings that come beneath our view; and love, respect, veneration, such as we give to the virtues of the most virtuous human beings, are far too slight an offering of the heart to utilities so transcendent.

It is evidently, then, not mere utility which constitutes the essence of virtue, or which constitutes the measure of virtue; since we feel, for the most useful inanimate objects, even when their usefulness is to continue as long as the whole race of beings that from age to age are to be capable of profiting by them, no emotions of the kind which we feel, when we consider the voluntary actions of those who are capable of knowing and willing the good which they produce. A benevolent man and a steam-engine may both be instrumental to the happiness of society; and the quantity of happiness produced by the unconscious machine may be greater perhaps than that produced by the living agent; but there is no imaginary increase or diminution of the utility of the one and of the other, that can make the feelings with which we view them shadow into each other, or correspond in any point of the scale.

Though it is impossible for the theorist not to feel the irresistible force of this argument, when he strives in vain to think of some infinite accession of utility to a mere machine, which may procure for it all the veneration that is given to virtue, he can yet take refuge in the obscurity of a verbal distinction. Utility, he will tell us, is not in every instance followed by this veneration: it is only utility in the action of living beings that is followed by it; and when even all the useful actions of living beings are shown not to produce it, but only such actions as had in view that moral good which we admire, he will consent to narrow his limitations still more, and confine the utility, which he regards as the same with virtue, to certain voluntary actions of living beings. Does he not perceive, however, that in making these limitations he has conceded the very point in question? He admits that the actions of men are not valued merely as being useful, in which case they must have

ranked in virtue, with all things that are useful, exactly according to their place in the scale of utility, but for something which may be useful, or rather which is useful, yet which merely as useful never could have excited the feelings which it excites when considered as a voluntary choice of good. He admits an approvableness then, peculiar to living and voluntary agents, a capacity of exciting certain vivid moral emotions which are not commensurable with any utility, since no accession of mere utility could produce them. In short, he admits every thing for which the assertor of the peculiar and essential distinctions of virtue contends; and all which he gains by his verbal distinction of utilities is, that his admission of the doctrine which he professes to oppose, is tacit only, not open and direct.

It is indeed, by a verbal distinction of this sort that Mr. Hume himself, the most ingenious and liberal supporter of this system, endeavours to obviate the force of the objection, which may be drawn from inanimate matter, as useful and yet incapable of exciting moral emotion. He does, for the purpose of saving his theory, what is not easy to be reconciled with the acuteness of a mind so subtile as his, and so well practised in detecting, or at least so fond of detecting, what he considers as illogical in the speculations of other writers, or in the general easy faith of the half-reasoning multitude. He fairly takes for granted, as independent of any measurement of mere utility, those very moral feelings which he yet wishes us to believe to arise from the perception of mere utility; thus adandoning his theory as false in order that we may admit it as true. The utility of inanimate things, he says, does not seem to us virtuous, because it is not accompanied with esteem and approbation which are peculiar to living beings; and he states this distinction of the two utilities, without seeming to be at all aware that, in supposing a moral esteem and approbation distinct from the feeling of usefulness, he is thus presupposing the very feeling for which he professes to account; and denying that strict relation of utility to virtue, which his theory would hold out as the only standard, or rather as the only constituent of virtue. The passage is too important not to be quoted in his own words. "We ought not to imagine," he says, "because an inanimate object may be useful as well as a man, that therefore it ought also, according to this system, to merit the appellation of virtuous. The sentiments excited by utility are in the two cases very different; and the one is mixed with affection, esteem, approbation, &c. and not the other." Now it is obviously of these very sentiments alone, which are said by Hume to be mixed with the feeling of utility, and not produced by it, that the moral theorist has to trace the origin. If the sentiments excited by the utility in the two cases be, as he most justly observes, very different, even when the amount of mere utility may be the same in both; then, most indubitably, it is not as being useful that actions are counted virtuous, and rated in different degrees of virtue according to their different degrees of usefulness; but on account of something that must be superadded to this usefulness: and if, independently of the sum of good which they may produce, and equally produce, one utility and not the other be attended with esteem and approbation, is not this a proof that the moral esteem and approbation are not commensurable with mere physical usefulness; that they are feelings of a peculiar class, which even he, who would represent actions as felt to be virtuous only because they are regarded as physically useful, is obliged to presuppose; and that there is in virtue, therefore, an independent and peculiar approvableness, or capacity of exciting "esteem and approbation," which utility is incapable either of constituting or of measuring?

In this argument, I have opposed to the actions which we feel immediately as virtuous, the utility only of inanimate matter, because this furnishes a more striking contrast; but the same argument, as you cannot fail to have perceived, might have been extended to many qualities of the mind itself, in all those varieties of original genius, or the rich endowments of science, that have progressively raised us from barbarism to civilization, with an influence on the happiness of the world, to which it is scarcely possible in our conception to fix a limit; of talents which we admire indeed, and honour with a respect of a peculiar kind; but our respect for which, even when they exist in their highest order of excellence, we feel to be of a species very different from the moral esteem which we give to an act of virtue. The inventors of the printing-press certainly did more good to the world by that mere invention, than the Man of Ross himself by all his charities; yet how different are the the moral emotions with which we view them!

The mere usefulness of certain actions, then, I repeat, is not that which, as felt by us at the moment of our approbation, constitutes to us or measures their virtue; it is not that which is immediately felt by the agent; it is not that which is immediately felt by the spectator or hearer of the action; and yet utility and virtue are related, so intimately related, that there is perhaps no action generally felt by us as virtuous, which it would not be generally beneficial that all mankind in similar circumstances should imitate. This general relation, however, is one which we discover only on reflection,

and of which multitudes have perhaps never once thought during the whole course of their life; yet these have esteemed and hated like other people. The utility accompanies, indeed, our moral approbation; but the perception of that utility does not constitute our moral approbation, nor is it necessarily presupposed by it,

I may remark, by the way, as a circumstance which has probably contributed, in a great degree, to this misconception of the immediate object of moral approbation, that in cases of political legislation, the very end of which is not to look to the present only, but to the future, we estimate the propriety of certain measures by their usefulness. That which is to be injurious we do not enact; and those who contend that we should enact it, think it necessary to show that it will be for general advantage. Expediency being thus the circumstance on which the debates as to the propriety or impropriety of public measures in almost every case depend, we learn to consider it very falsely as the measure of our moral approbation in the particular cases that are constantly occurring in domestic life. We forget that the legislator is appointed for the express purpose of consulting the general good, and of looking to the future, therefore, and distant, as well as to the present or the near. His object is to see *ne quid detrimenti respublica capiat.* His relation is to the community, not to any particular individual; and in neglecting the general good for the good of a few, he would be guilty of a breach of trust, as much as the possessor of a deposit, if he were to give to the wants of some indigent sufferer the money which another had intrusted to his care.

In the general transactions of ordinary life, then, our feeling of approbation or disapprobation, we may conclude, does not depend on the mere perception of utility. The virtuous, by the very constitution of heaven, which has pre-established the connexion of virtue and happiness, will, indeed, that which is useful; but they will it, in each particular case, without regard to the general utility of the principle of conduct to which their action conforms; and, in considering the actions of others, we approve of that which is useful, but we do not approve of it because we have estimated, according to a scale of specific value, the mere usefulness of the general principle. We perceive a moral excellence, as something very different from the amount of physical advantage that flows from the particular action, or from all the similar actions of the same class; an excellence which, of itself, constitutes the approvableness; a virtue which is independent of every thing but the breast of him who conceived it; which is not ennobled by success, and which becomes more interesting to us by the very misfortunes to which it may have led.

The coincidence of general good, with those particular affections which are felt by us to be virtuous, is, indeed, it must be admitted, a proof that this general good has been the object of some being who has adapted them to each other. But it was of a being far higher than man—of him who alone is able to comprehend the whole system of things; and who allots to our humbler faculties and affections those partial objects which alone they are able to comprehend, giving us still, however, the noble privilege

> To join
> Our partial movements with the master-wheel
> Of the great world, and serve that sacred end,
> Which he, the unerring reason, keeps in view.*

By this relation, of which few think or are capable of thinking, of particular good with public good, of general utility and private virtue, the public good is as effectually insured as if all were every moment thinking of the relation, and is insured with a still greater accession and profusion of delight.

"Happiness," it has been truly said, "is best provided for by the division of affection, as wealth by the division of labour. Were all men to measure their actions by utility," the same writer justly remarks, "that variety of sentiments and passions which at present renders human society so interesting, and, like a happy combination of notes in music, produces an enchanting harmony, must be reduced to the dull monotony of one tranquil sentiment. Every man, it is true, would meet his neighbour with the mild aspect of calm philosophy, and with the placid smile of perfect benevolence; but no eye must be seen sparkling with rapture or melting with tenderness, no tongue must utter words of kindness, which have not first been exactly measured on the scale of universal benevolence. In short, the moral world would become one flat unvaried scene, resembling the aspect which the natural world would assume, were all its mountains and valleys levelled, and its whole surface converted into a smooth and grassy plain."

That virtue is useful, is indeed true then; so useful that, without it, existence would not have been a blessing, but a source of misery; and a society of mankind but a combination of the miserable, labouring to become individually more wretched, by making each other more wretched. Yet it is not more true, that virtue is useful, than that this utility of the general principles of virtuous conduct is not the ground of our immediate approbation. It is not the standard of our approbation; for we have approved, long before we think of that which is

* Pleasures of Imagination, book ii.

said to have been the measure according to which we have approved. This priority of the approbation in all its degrees, to any thought of specific utility, is true even of philosophers, who know that there is such a coincidence of the relations of virtue and usefulness; but of all who feel virtue, who love and hate, who esteem, and honour, and despise, how few are they who know that there is any such relation. They do not approve or disapprove the less, however, but it is because God has willed the happiness of the world, which, as a great whole, they are unconsciously promoting, not because they individually have thought of it. He, indeed, who fixed the relations of things, before the system of things itself was formed by him, established this paramount relation of our generous desires, to an aggregate of happiness far greater than that momentary benefit which was their particular aim. The good of the universe was the gracious object of his will,—his object, not more in the physical enjoyments which he has poured upon us, than in the virtues of which he gave us the noble capacity. But though it was for that universality of happiness, which the eternal Author of the universe alone could fully comprehend in his conception and design that man was rendered virtuous, our limited virtues themselves have their particular objects, which they are better able to embrace. By their joint operation, they produce that great result, of which they do not think even while they are most busy in promoting it; intent perhaps only on courtesies and kindnesses, which appear to terminate in the individual who receives them; like the sunshine, that seems to be only flowing around the blossom in soft and brilliant varieties of light, while it is slowly and silently maturing fruits that are yet unseen; or like the breeze, which seems only to flutter in the sail, or to dimple the wave before the prow, but which is at the same time wafting along the majestic vessel that is to mingle the treasures of every clime, to carry plenty to the barren soil, and the richer stores of science to the still more desolate barrenness of the mind.

LECTURE LXXVIII.

EXAMINATION OF HUME'S SYSTEM CONCLUDED; OF THE SELFISH SYSTEM.

My last Lecture, Gentlemen, was employed in considering the relation which the utility of actions bears to our approbation of them as virtuous.

That in acting, the agent himself, in cases in which no one would hesitate for a moment in terming him virtuous, except those who deny every distinction of vice and virtue, performs the action which is approved, without any regard to the amount of general good which would flow to society, if all men were to act as he acts, that is to say, without any regard to the specific utility of such actions, is evident from the slightest examination of human conduct. Of all the virtuous actions which are performed at any one moment on the earth, from the slightest reciprocation of domestic courtesies, to the most generous sacrifices of heroic friendship, there is perhaps scarcely one, in which this thought of the supposed scale of utility, according to which his action is to be measured, is present to the mind of the agent, and is the influencing circumstance in his choice, the immediate motive which confers on his conduct the character of virtue. He is useful to the world, indeed, when he relieves the sufferings even of a single individual being. But he relieves that suffering, not because the world, if he gives the relief, will, as a whole, have less misery; or because it would be for the advantage of the world that others should imitate him in similar cases; but that the individual before him may have less misery; or, if he thinks of any thing but that particular misery and its relief, he thinks only of the manner in which he would appear to himself, if he were to abstain from giving the relief which is in his power. He bears sufferings of his own, in like manner, without lamentation; not because a single groan from him, in any case of bodily anguish, would increase the misery of the world, or lessen its happiness, but because a single groan, though it might leave the happiness of the world precisely the same as before, would degrade him in his own estimation. Whether in doing or in suffering, therefore, his virtue, if any virtue be allowed to him, does not depend on his views of the general utility which the world derives from a frame of mind like that which his conduct displays. That comprehensive usefulness is not present to his mind, as a scale or measure of his virtue.

But though it be not the precise measure of approbation and preference in his own mind, it may perhaps be the precise and sole measure of approbation, when his actions or patient sufferings are considered by other minds. In this case, too, we found that the supposed standard is far from being the real standard. We approve, not from any wide calculation of probable consequences to the world, if all were to act as the individual has acted; but from an instant feeling of moral excellence, which makes it impossible for us not to approve, as soon as the action, in all its circumstances, is known to us. If we think of the general utility of such a general mode of conduct, it is not before, but after the approbation; and it is no paradox to say,

that our approbation has, in truth, least reference to general conduct and general consequences, in cases in which the virtue of which we approve is greatest; because, in such cases, the moral excellence produces an emotion so vivid, as to preclude the consideration of every remote circumstance. The hero himself, bearing what he bore, or doing what he did, is all which our mind can see. Who is there, that, in the contemplation of Thermopylæ, and of the virtues that have made that desolate spot for ever sacred to us, can think of Leonidas and his little band, without any emotion of reverence, till the thought occur, how useful it must be to nations to have defenders so intrepid! Our admiration is not so tardy a calculator. It is instant in all its fervour; and, indeed, when we begin to think of the exact point in the scale of utility at which the action may be ranked, this very thought is itself a proof that our emotion has already become less vivid. The question, indeed, is one which our consciousness may decide in a moment, if we only trust to the evidence of our consciousness a sort of trust which, simple as it may seem, is no slight intellectual effort, when our consciousness is opposed to errors that are brilliant, and that have the authority of any great name. Our consciousness, if we appeal to it, will tell us, that to admire what is useful, and to revere what is virtuous, are feelings as different as any two feelings which are not absolutely opposite; and that, if we class them as the same, we may, with as much reason, class as the same, and reduce under a singleterm, our moral veneration and our sensation of fragrance, because they are both pleasing; or our admiration of what is useful, and our notion of a circle, because they are both states or feelings of the mind. Who ever looked on his conscience precisely in the same manner as he looked upon his estate; and felt not regret merely, but all the agonies of remorse, because his acres were less productive than the richer fields of his neighbour? We may respect the inventor of a machine, but we certainly do not respect the machine itself; though it is only in reference to the instruments which he invents that the inventor, as an inventor, has any utility; and, even in respecting his intellectual talents as an inventor, though he may have contributed more by this one exercise of them, to the permanent happiness of the world, than all the virtues of all the multitude that existed around him at the time, do we feel for his new and beautiful application of the physical powers, the moral emotion which we feel for the humblest of those virtues? It is enough, as I have said, to appeal to your consciousness on this point. If your reverence for virtue appear to you, as it cannot but appear to you, a feeling essentially different from your mere admiration of what is useful; if, in short, you perceive, that no addition of useful properties to any piece of inanimate matter could so alter it, as to make it an object of moral love; that the philosopher's stone itself, if it really existed, though capable of conferring inexhaustible wealth, and eternal youth on its possessor, would yet be incapable of producing one feeling of cordial regard; that all the stores of knowledge, and all the talents of the most vigorous intellect, unless accompanied with a generous desire of the happiness of those who profit by them, cannot excite the moral emotions that are excited so readily by the humblest benevolence; then, surely you cannot hesitate for an instant, in rejecting the theory, which supposes virtue to be felt as virtue only from its utility, from that utility which may be greater or less than the usefulness of external things or of qualities of the understanding; but which, as mere utility, is precisely the same in its relation to our emotions, as the intellectual qualities of memory or judgment; or as the house which shelters us, the coat which keeps us warm, or the watch which tells us the hour and minute of the day.

The approbation which we give to actions as virtuous, then, whether we be ourselves the agents, or merely consider the actions of others, is not given to them simply as useful. Utility, in either case, is not the measure of moral approbation, the measure to which we must previously have adjusted the particular action, before any approbation of it can have arisen; and with which, in all its exact gradations, the feeling of the rank of virtue exactly corresponds.

It may be said, indeed, that it is not mere utility which excites moral approbation, but the utility only that results from the actions of living agents. This latter species of usefulness may be verbally distinguished from the other, as being that which is accompanied with esteem and approbation; and, indeed, this very distinction we find to be that which is made by Mr. Hume, the most acute defender of the theory which we have been examining; yet it is surely very evident, that the verbal distinction thus made is an abandonment of the theory, an admission that there is, in certain actions of voluntary agents, something more than utility which is morally admired by us; since, in degrees of utility, they may be strictly commensurable with other objects of thought that excite in us no such emotion. The esteem and approbation, which Mr. Hume finds it so easy to presuppose, are all which it is of much consequence, in any theory of virtue, to consider. They are in truth the very feeling of virtue itself under another name; the very feeling, therefore, which he should have shown, not to be mixed only with our

perception of utility, but to arise from it, or to be reducible to it; and if, in accounting for our moral approbation of certain actions, as distinguished from our admiration of any useful contrivance in mechanics, or any useful qualities of natural inanimate objects, or any excellence of mere intellect,—he say, that, together with our feeling of the utility of the actions, there is a feeling of esteem and approbation, which distinguishes this usefulness from every other usefulness of the same amount; he admits, in this very supposition, that there is in certain actions an approvableness which has not its source in the feeling of utility,—an approvableness which is independent, therefore, of the mere quantity of physical good produced; and that, when an action has been useful, is still necessary to convert utility itself into virtue.

It is true, indeed, as we have seen in our review of such actions, that actions which are virtuous are actions of which the general principle is useful; but they are virtuous and useful; not felt by us to be virtuous, merely because they are of a certain rank of usefulness, as innumerable objects in external nature are in like manner useful, or many valuable qualities of the understanding. The coincidence in this respect, which the Deity, who adapted our emotions to the happiness designed by him, has, from his own universal goodness established, may be compared in some measure to that pre-established harmony of which the foollowers of Leibnitz speak. According to that hypothesis, of which I gave you a sketch in the early part of this course, the body and mind, you will remember, have an exact correspondence of motions and feelings, but are absolutely independent of each other, even when they seem most exactly to correspond; the limbs running of themselves when the mind wishes them to run, and running faster or slower exactly as the mind wishes them to be more or less fleet; but having, in consequence of their own peculiar mechanism, a tendency to run so independent of the volition of that mind which longs to escape from the enemy, that, if the soul of the coward were, by a sudden miracle, to be annihilated, his legs would not run the less. Such a harmony the Deity has established of virtue and utility. That of which we approve as virtuous is, as a general mode of conduct, useful; though it is not on account of our estimate of its general useful tendency that we give it our immediate approbation. That of which we disapprove as vice, is, as a general mode of conduct, injurious to society; though it is not on that general account we regard it with instant contempt, or indignation, or horror. By this adaptation of our emotions, however, the same advantage is obtained, as if we approved of virtue directly as useful to the world, in the same manner as we approve of any useful mechanical contrivance; while it leaves us the enjoyment of all that far greater delight, which arises from the contemplation of the moral excellence of the individual, and from the love so infinitely surpassing every preference of mere utility, which moral excellence, and moral excellence only, can excite.

It is this independent pre-established relation of virtue and utility, which, as I conceive, has rendered less apparent the error of the theory that would reduce moral approbation itself, to the perception of this mere usefulness; and the illusion has certainly been aided in a great degree, by the circumstance which I pointed out in my last lecture; the reference to the public advantage, in the enactments of laws, and the discussion of national measures of external or internal policy. These measures, to be virtuous, must indeed always have the public good in immediate view; because the legislative and executive functions of the state are either expressly or virtually trusts for this very purpose; and a neglect of the public good in those who exercise such functions has, therefore, all the guilt of a breach of trust in addition to any other partial delinquencies that may have been added to the crime. It is not very wonderful, however, that we should thus learn to extend to all particular actions, what is true of those actions of general delegated power, which are the great subjects of temporary debate; and should erroneously suppose all men in their little sphere to be swayed, when they are virtuous, by the motives which alone we recognise as giving virtue to the actions of legislators, judges, or sovereigns, those actions about which all men speak, and which furnish so much nice casuistry to the political discourse of every day.

Though it is not from calculations of general happiness, then, that we approve or disapprove in estimating the conduct of others, or our own; in many cases it will still be admitted that general happiness bears, not an indirect relation only, but a direct relation to our moral sentiments. The good of the world is not our only moral object, but it is a moral object. The sacrifices of mere personal advantage that are made to it, excite our regard; the wilful violation of it, for purposes of personal gain, would excite our scorn or detestation; but they excite these moral feelings not in any peculiar manner, as if primary and paramount. They excite them precisely in the same manner as sacrifices to parental, or filial, or conjugal affection, made without the slightest consideration of public advantage, give immediate rise to our delightful sympathies; or, as the breach of any of the domestic duties, with circum-

stances of cruelty to the individuals injured, but without any intention of injuring the community of the world, awakes a wrath or a disgust almost as instant as the very knowledge of the injury. We should have loved our parents and our friends, though public utility had never been an object of our thought; it is not quite so certain, at least it is not so manifest, that we should have loved the good of the world, if we had never known what it is to love a parent or a friend. For my own part, indeed, I do not doubt that even in this case, if our mental constitution in other respects had remained as at present, the happiness of mankind would have been an object of our desire; and that we should have felt a moral disapprobation of any one who wilfully lessened that sum of general happiness for the mere pleasure of giving pain. But still the passion for universal utility is not so manifest in every individual, certainly not so vivid in every individual, as the private affections; and if we were to judge from the feelings alone, therefore, it would seem a juster theory to derive our love of the happiness of the world from our love of the friends who first surrounded us in life, than to suppose that our early essential notions of virtue and vice, in the observance or neglect of the filial or fraternal duties, are measured by a scale of general utility which has never been present to our mind; that general utility and virtue in our estimates of actions, are in truth convertible terms; and that we should have felt no wonder or dislike, even of parricide itself, if we had not previously been enamoured of public usefulness,—enamoured of that good of the universe of which the good of a parent is a small elementary part.

When the political moralist is said to correct our moral sentiments, as he unquestionably does often correct our views of particular actions, by pointing out to us general advantages or disadvantages, which flow more or less immediately from certain actions; and when he thus leads us to approve of actions of which we might otherwise have disapproved, to disapprove of actions of which otherwise we should have approved, he does not truly alter the nature of our moral feelings; he only presents new objects to our moral discrimination. From the mixture of good and evil, in the complicated results of almost every action, and from the innumerable relations which our actions bear in their results, not to the individuals alone, of whom alone we may have thought, but to others whose interest was unknown to us at the time, or unremembered in the eager precipitancy of our benevolence; we may approve at times of actions of which we disapprove at other times, not because we hate the good which we loved before, or love the evil which before we hated; but because the action, though seemingly the same, is truly to our conception different. It is varied, to our mental view, with every nicer analysis of its results; and, in estimating the same apparent action, the new-discovered compound of good and evil which we now love, is as different from that semblance of mere evil which we before hated, as our love itself, as a present emotion, differs from our former emotion of hatred or disgust.

Reason, then, even in analyzing compound results of good and evil, and showing us the relation which actions that are truly virtuous bear to the good of the world, is not the source from which our moral sentiments flow, that have admired and loved the virtue before its political advantages were pointed out, or even suspected. The conclusion to which we are led, therefore, with respect to utility, is, that it is not the scale which is present to the mind whenever we approve or disapprove, and according to which our moral emotions are in every case exactly graduated; that though the good of the world is an object which we cannot consider, without feeling that the wish to promote it is a moral wish, it is not the only object which it is virtuous to desire, but one of many virtuous objects; and that, if we are virtuous once, in acting with this single object in view, we are virtuous a thousand times, in acting without the slightest reference to it, with regard only to the happiness or distress of individuals, which we cannot consider without a wish to preserve the happiness, or to lessen the distress,—a wish which we should have felt in like manner, though, with the exception of the individuals of whom we think at the moment, there had been no world to be benefited by our wishes and our aid, or by the aid of those who, in similar circumstances, may act as we have done.

The most important circumstance, however, with respect to the theory of utility as the essence of virtuous actions, is that which I remarked before, in entering on this discussion,—that it does not profess to account for the origin of our moral feelings, but proceeds on our susceptibility of these as an undoubted principle of the mind. Why should I love that which may be productive of benefit to all the individuals of the world, more than that which would be productive of similar benefit only to one individual? or to put a question still stronger, why should I love that which would be of advantage even to one individual, more than that which would be of injury to every being but myself? The only answer which can be given, even according to the theory which supposes all virtue to consist in utility, is, that it is impossible for me, by my very nature, not to feel approbation of that which

is generally useful; disapprobation of that which is in its general consequences hurtful. There is a moral principle—a susceptibility of moral emotion—that is a part of my constitution, with which I can as little abstain from approving or disapproving, when I hear of certain actions, as I can abstain from simply hearing the words of that voice which relates them to me.

The error which we have been considering at so much length, as to the identity of virtue and the general utility of actions,—though I must confess that it appears to me, notwithstanding the high authorities by which it has been sanctioned, an error of no slight kind, is yet an error which is not inconsistent with the most generous virtue; since, though it assert utility to be the measure of our approbation, it does not confine this utility to our own individual advantage; but gives to us, as a great object of regard, whatever can be useful to the community of mankind. It is a very different doctrine that makes the utility according to which we measure virtue, in every case our own individual advantage. To the consideration of this doctrine, which is in truth only an extension of the principles of Mandeville, allowing less to the mere love of praise, and more to our other passions,—you may remember that I was about to proceed, after treating of the system of that licentious satirist of our nature, when I suspended this progress to make you acquainted with the general doctrines of the influence of reason on moral sentiment, and of the relation of virtue and usefulness; as I conceived that my remarks on those doctrines would render more apparent to you the futility of the selfish system of morals.

Virtue, according to this system, is the mere search of pleasure. It gives up one pleasure, indeed, but it gives it up for a greater. It sacrifices a present enjoyment; but it sacrifices it only to obtain some enjoyment which, in intensity and duration, is fairly worth the sacrifice. In every instance in which it seems to pursue the good of others as good, it is its own gratification, and nothing but its own gratification, which it seeks.

To this system which, from the days of Aristippus, has, both in ancient and modern times, been presented in various forms, the remarks which I made on the system of general utility are equally applicable. We do unquestionably love our own well-being, our bodily ease, and that pleasure which is still dearer than ease; but, loving ourselves, we as unquestionably love others; and, loving them, we cannot fail to desire their happiness, since the desire may be considered as the natural consequence of the love. In such cases, the immediate object of our desire—and it is this immediate object alone which we have theoretically to consider—is as truly the good of others, as our own good is our immediate object, when we wish for freedom from any bodily pain, or for the possession of any object which appears to us productive of positive pleasure. All of which we think, at the moment of the action, is purely benevolent; and the action, therefore, if justly designated, must itself be regarded as purely benevolent.

There is, indeed, as I remarked in a former lecture, one very simple argument by which every attempt to maintain the disinterested nature of virtue is opposed. If we will the happiness of any one, it is said, it must be agreeable to us that he should be happy, since we have willed it; it must be painful to us not to obtain our wish; and with the pleasure of the gratification before us, and the pain of failure, can we doubt that we have our own happiness in view, however zealously we may seem to others, and even perhaps to ourselves, to have in view only some addition to another's happiness? This argument, though often urged with an air of triumph, as if it were irresistible, is a quibble, and nothing more. The question is not, whether it be agreeable to act in a certain manner, and painful not to act in that manner; but whether the pleasure and the pain be the objects of our immediate contemplation in the desire? and this is not proved by the mere assertion that virtue is delightful, and that, to be restrained from the exercise of virtue, if it were possible, would be the most oppressive restraint under which a good man could be placed. There is a pleasure, in like manner, attending moderate exercise of our limbs; and to fetter our limbs, when we wish to move them, would be to inflict on us no slight disquietude. But how absurd would that sophistry seem, which should say, that, when we hasten to the relief of one who is in peril, or in sorrow, whom we feel that we have the power of relieving, we hasten because it is agreeable to us to walk; and because, if we were prevented from walking, when we wished thus to change our place, the restraint imposed on us would be very disagreeable. Yet this is the very argument, under another form, which the selfish philosophers adduce, in support of their miserable system. They forget, or are not aware, that the very objection which they thus urge, contains in itself its own confutation,—a confutation stronger than a thousand arguments.

Why is it that the pleasure is felt in the case supposed? It is because the generous desire is previously felt; and if there had been no previous generous desire, there could not be the pleasure that is afterwards felt in the gratification of the desire. Why is it, in like manner, that pain is felt, when the

desire of the happiness of others has not been gratified? It is surely because we have previously desired the happiness of others. That very delight, therefore, which is said to give occasion to the selfish wish is itself a proof, and a convincing proof, that man is not selfish; unless we invert all reasoning, and suppose that it is in every instance the effect which gives occasion to the cause, not the cause which produces the effect. The virtuous man feels delight in the sacrifices which he makes! unquestionably he does feel this delight; a delight which he would not yield for any thing but for the knowledge that his sacrifice has been of the advantage which he desired to the friend for whom it was made,—if the loss of the pleasure which he feels could have been made a part of the sacrifice. The virtuous man is happy; and if it were necessary for proving that he is not selfish, that we should show him to be miserable for having done his duty, the cause of disinterested virtue, I confess, must be given up; and, perhaps, in that case, if the attending pleasure or pain, and not the motive, is to be considered, the name of absolute disinterestedness might be appropriated to those whom we now count selfish—to him who deceives, and plunders, and oppresses, and finds no satisfaction in his accumulated frauds and villanies of every kind. Why does it seem to us absurd to say, that a wretch, who is incapable of any generous feeling, and who never acts but with a view to some direct personal enjoyment, is not to be counted selfish, because he derives no actual enjoyment from the attainment of his sordid wishes? If it be absurd to say, that, in thinking only of his own good, he is not selfish, because no happiness has attended his selfishness; it is just as absurd to say, that the virtuous man, in thinking of the good of others, is selfish, because happiness has attended the very sacrifices which he has made. The one is selfish, though not happy, because his immediate and sole motive was his own happiness; the other is disinterested though happy, because, in acting, his immediate motive was the happiness of others. The more the benevolent live for others, the more, there can be no doubt, they live for themselves; but they live for themselves in this case without thinking of themselves. Their great object is to make man happy, wherever the happiness of a single individual is in their power; and their own happiness they safely leave to him who has not forgotten the virtuous, in the distribution which he has made of enjoyment. It comes to them without their seeking it; or rather, it does not come to them; it is for ever within their heart.

Even if virtue were as selfish as it is most strangely said to be, I may observe that it would be necessary to form two divisions of selfish actions; one of those selfish actions, in which self was the direct object, and another of those very different selfish actions, in which the selfish gratification was sought in the good of others. He who submitted to poverty, to ignominy, to death, for the sake of one who had been his friend and benefactor, would be still a very different being, and ought surely therefore, to be classed still differently, from him who robbed his friend of the scanty relics of a fortune which his credulous benevolence had before divided with him; and, not content with this additional plunder, calumniated perhaps the very kindness which had snatched him from ruin.

> A self there is,
> Of virtue fond, that kindles at her charms.
> A self there is, as fond of every vice,
> While every virtue wounds it to the heart;
> Humility degrades it, Justice robs,
> Blest Bounty beggars it, fair Truth betrays,
> And godlike Magnanimity destroys.*

By what perversion of language is the same term to be given to affections so different? The foreigner of whom Dr. Franklin speaks, who, on seeing the tragedy of Othello, conceived that all the emotion which the actor exhibited was for the loss of a handkerchief, did indeed form a theory as just as that of many very ingenious philosophers, when they would labour to convince us, that a little personal gratification was the only object of those who, in the dreadful ages of Roman tyranny, followed their friend into exile or imprisonment; or who, after he had nobly perished, still dared to proclaim that innocence, the very assertion of which was a crime, which the tyrant, who knew only how to pardon what was atrocious, and not what was virtuous, was, by the habits which he had wrought into the dreadful constitution of his nature, incapable of forgiving.

If virtue be nothing but personal gain, what is it which we individually can hope to acquire from the virtues of others! We surely cannot hope that all the virtues of all mankind will give us more wealth than is possessed by the wealthiest individual existing; more power than is possessed by the most powerful; more vigour of body and intellect than is possessed by the healthiest and the wisest. Let us imagine, then, all these promised to us, on the condition of our admiration; let us conceive that some human demon, a Nero, a Tiberius, a Caligula, were to show to any one of us all the kingdoms of the world, and to say, "All these thou shalt have, if thou wilt but esteem me,"—would our esteem arise at all more readily? Should we feel, in that case, for the guilty offerer of so many means of happiness, a single emotion like that which we feel for the humblest virtue of one who,

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* Young's Night Thoughts, Night viii.

we know, never can be of any aid to our worldly advancement? If a virtuous action be in itself nothing, except as a source of personal gain, why, in such a case as that which I have supposed, does not our heart feel its sentiments of esteem and abhorrence vary with every new accession of happiness which is promised to us? At first, indeed, we may feel a loathing for the tyrant, not because tyranny is in itself less worthy of approbation than the mildest benevolence, but because it may be more injurious to our interest. It would require no trifling equivalent; but still, as it is only a quantity of injury which is dreaded, an equivalent may be found; and, with every new bribe for our esteem, there is of course a nearer approach to this equivalent. Our abhorrence should gradually subside into slight indignation, and this into very slight dislike, and this, again, when the bribe is increased, become at length some slight emotion of approbation, which may rise, with the still increasing bribe, through all the stages of love, through esteem, respect, veneration, till we feel ultimately for the tyrant, whose power is to us a source of so much happiness, all that devotion of the heart which we so readily yield to power that is exerted for the benefit of mankind. When we labour to think of this progressive transmutation of moral sentiment, while the guilty object of it continues the same, in every respect, but as he offers a greater or less bribe for our affection, do we not feel, by the inconsistency which strikes us at every supposed stage of the progress, that affection—the pure affection which loves virtue and hates vice—is not any thing which can be bought but by that noble price, which is the virtue itself, that is honoured by us; and that to bribe us to love what is viewed by us with horror, or to hate what is viewed by us with tenderness or reverence, is an attempt as hopeless as it would be to bribe us to regard objects as purple which are yellow, or yellow which are purple? We may, indeed, agree, by a sacrifice of truth, to call that purple which we see to be yellow, as we may agree, by a still more profligate sacrifice of every noble feeling, to offer to tyranny the homage of our adulation,—to say to the murderer of Thrasea Pætus, "Thou hast done well,"—to the parricide who murdered Agrippina, "Thou hast done more than well." As every new victim falls, we may lift our voice in still louder flattery. We may fall at the proud feet, we may beg, as a boon, the honour of kissing that bloody hand which has been lifted against the helpless; we may do more; we may bring the altar, and the sacrifice, and implore the god not to ascend too soon to heaven. This we may do, for this we have the sad remembrance, that beings of a human form and soul have done. But this is all which we can do. We can constrain our tongue to be false; our features to bend themselves to the semblance of that passionate adoration which we wish to express; our knees to fall prostrate; but our heart we cannot constrain. There virtue must still have a voice which is not to be drowned by hymns and acclamations; there the crimes which we laud as virtues are crimes still; and he whom we have made a god is the most contemptible of mankind; if, indeed, we do not feel perhaps that we are ourselves still more contemptible. When is it, I may ask, that the virtue of any one appears to us most amiable? Is it when it seems attended with every thing that can excite the envy even of the wicked,—with wealth, with power, with all which is commonly termed good fortune; and when, if its influence on our emotions depend on the mere images of enjoyment which it suggests, these may surely be supposed to arise most readily? It is amiable, indeed, even in such circumstances; but how much more interesting is it to us, when it is loaded with afflictions from which it alone can derive happiness. It is Socrates in the prison of whom we think—Aristides in exile, and perhaps Cato, whatever comparative esteem he might have excited, would have been little more interesting in our eyes than Cæsar himself, if Cæsar had not been a successful usurper.

It is in describing the retreat and disasters to which that last defender of Roman freedom was exposed, that Lucan exclaims, with a sympathy almost of exultation,

Hunc ego per Syrtes, Lybiæque extrema, triumphum
Ducere maluerim, quam ter Capitolia curru
Scandere Pompeii, quam frangere colla Jugurthæ.*

What proof can be imagined stronger than this, that virtue and the source of personal gain are not identical phrases; since no accession of personal interest can make that a virtue which was before a vice; nor any loss of personal interest make that a vice which was before a virtue? If, in any physical science, a similar error were maintained, there is not a philosopher who would not instantly reject it. Let us conceive, for example, some one ignorant enough, or bold enough to affirm, that the gravity of bodies depends on their quantity of heat. We should think that we had nothing more to do, for showing the absurdity of such an opinion, than to try the effect of increasing and diminishing the warmth of the gravitating bodies; and, if we found the weight to remain the same during all these changes; if we found one body to be warmer than another, and yet heavier, colder than a third body and yet heavier, we should think ourselves fairly entitled to infer, that warmth

* Lib. ix. v. 598—600.

and gravity were not the same; that a body might gravitate and be warm, as, indeed, every body which gravitates may be said to have some heat, as every substance which is warm has some weight; but that the gravity did not depend on the warmth, and bore no measurable proportion to it. This, in external physics, we should think a sufficient demonstration. But, in morals, the sophist finds a sort of shelter in the indistinct conceptions of those to whom he addresses himself. It is proved, as indubitable, that our admiration of virtue has no measurable proportion to our feeling of personal profit which may be reaped from it; that the profit may be increased, indefinitely, without the slightest diminution of our abhorrence of vice; and the loss increased indefinitely without any diminution of our admiration of virtue. But, notwithstanding this demonstration, that virtue is conceived by us as something more than a mere source of personal enjoyment to us, he still asserts that they are strictly synonymous; and renews, with as brilliant ingenuity as before, that sly logic, which would be irresistible if an epigram were an argument, and a series of epigrams a perfect demonstration.

We have seen, then, that the admiration of actions as virtuous, is not affected by calculations of loss and gain, and must, therefore, be something more than that loss or gain which, in our calculation, we perceive to be manifestly increased or diminished. There is another demonstration which seems not less irresistible. If what we admire in the virtue of others be nothing more than its tendency, more or less direct, to our individual advantage, the relations on which this tendency depends must be perceived by us before we admire; and the discernment of these is not a simple and easy intellectual effort. The mind that is matured by long observation of society, and by profound reflection on those ties which make the action of one man a source of profit or injury to remote individuals, may, indeed, look with esteem on certain actions, and with indignation on others. Our love of virtue and hatred of vice, if they arise from such knowledge, must be in every case progressive as the knowledge itself, from infancy to old age. To relate to a child some action of cruelty, must be to speak to an indifferent heart,—to a heart which cannot have made these nice reflections, and which cannot, therefore, feel what is not to be felt without the knowledge which those reflections give. Every nursery, then, exhibits a fair field for an experiment that may be said to be decisive; and will the selfish moralist submit his theory to the test? Will he take upon his knee that little creature which has, perhaps, scarcely felt a pain since it entered into life, which knows only that it has a friend in every living being that has met its eye, and which has never thought of its own misery as a thing that is possible? Will he watch that listening countenance, every look of which is fixed on his own, as he repeats verse after verse of the ballad which describes some act of injustice and atrocious cruelty, and will he expect to see no tear in those eyes, to hear no sobbings when the misery is extreme, to discover no demonstrations of an indignant wrath, that thinks not of itself at the time, but thinks only of the oppressed whom it would gladly succour, of the oppressor on whom it would gladly inflict vengeance? It will be well for that child if, in the corruption of the world, he retain a sympathy with the good and the wretched, and a hatred of guilt, as ardent as he feels in those years of ignorance; if, on learning the relations of virtue to his own happiness, he love it merely as he loved it when he had never thought of the relation.

The love of virtue, then, I conclude, is different, and essentially different, from the mere love of selfish gain. It is an affection which leads us to esteem often what is directly injurious to us; which makes it impossible for the good man not to honour in his heart, as well as in the praise which might seem forced from him, the virtues of that rival by whom he is outstripped in the competition of public dignity, which gains from the commander of an army a respect which nothing can suppress, for the valour, and all the military virtues of the commander opposed to him; though these very virtues have disquieted him more than the vices of half a nation, though they have robbed him of repose, and, which is still worse, have robbed him of the glory, which was his great object, by bringing on the army which he has led in vain to successive fields, disaster after disaster. It is an affection which can find objects in lands the most remote; which makes us feel delight in the good qualities of those who lived in ages of which the remembrances of their virtues are the only relics; and which preserves to our indignation and abhorrence, the crimes of those whom the tomb itself, already in ruins, has rendered powerless to injure us. It is an affection which is itself the truest prosperity of him who feels it; and which, when the virtuous man does truly seem to suffer what the world calls adversity, endears to him in his very afflictions, still more, that virtue, without which he might have been what the world terms prosperous.

LECTURE LXXIX.

EXAMINATION OF THE SELFISH SYSTEM AND ITS MODIFICATIONS CONTINUED.

A GREAT part of my last Lecture, Gentlemen, was employed in considering that theory

of morals which would represent all the feelings that appear to us most disinterested, as only the results of selfish calculation; the generous sacrifices of friendship as the barter of some good which we value less for a good which we value more, without any regard to the happiness of those whom it is our policy to distinguish by the flattering term of friends, but who are merely the purchasers and sellers of the different wares of wealth, or power, or honour, or sensual pleasures, which it is our trade, as human beings, to sell and buy. In that wretched exhibition which is made to us of the social intercourse of the world, the friendship of any one, as implying, in every instance, some stratagem or invention of deceit on his part, is, therefore, in every instance, to be dreaded and shunned far more than absolute indifference, or even perhaps than avowed enmity. Nor is it only common friendship which this system would represent as the simulation, and nothing more than the simulation of the generous feelings that are professed. The virtues which gather us under the domestic roof in delightful confidence of affection, of which we never question the sincerity in others, because we feel it to be sincere in ourselves, when it prompts in us the kindnesses which we delight to receive, because we have known the delight of conferring them; these gentle virtues, which almost consecrate to us our home,—as if, in the midst of that wide scene in which the anxieties and vices of the world may rage, it were some divine and sacred place, which distrust and fear cannot enter,—would be driven, by this cold and miserable sophistry, from the roof under which they delighted to repose,—if human folly could prevail over an influence so celestial, and if man could, indeed, become that wretched thing which he would so laboriously represent himself to be. In the tenderness of connubial love, which years of affection have only rendered more vivid, how many are there who, in their chief wishes of happiness, scarcely think of themselves; or, at least, think of themselves far less as objects of exclusive interest, than as beings whose happiness is necessary to the enjoyment of those whom they delight to render happy! This seeming devotion, we are told, may indeed be a selfishness a little more refined; but it is not less the growth or development of absolute and exclusive self-regard. It is a selfishness which sees and seeks its own individual good at a little greater distance; but, since it is its own individual good which alone, at whatever distance, it is incessantly wishing to see, and as incessantly labouring to obtain, it is still selfishness, as much when it pursues the distant as when it grasps the near;—a selfishness to which the happiness of those who appear to be loved, is as the mere happiness of another,—if we analyze our desires with sufficient subtlety,—far more uninteresting than the acquisition of the idlest gewgaw which vanity, with all its covetous eagerness, would scarcely stoop to add to its stores.

The fallacy of this system, as I endeavoured to show you, arises chiefly from the pleasure which truly attends our virtuous affections, but which, though universally attending them, it seems to require no very great nicety of discrimination to distinguish, as their consequence, not their cause. We have pleasure, indeed, in conferring a kindness; but it is because we confer the kindness, and have had the previous desire of conferring it, that we feel this pleasure of being kind; not because we feel this pleasure, that we confer the kindness; and if we had never been beneficent, we should as little have known the delight of beneficence, as we should have known what external beauty is, without the previous perception of the forms and colours of the objects which we term beautiful. It would, indeed, have been as just a theory of the primary sensations of vision, to say, that it is because we have a pleasing emotion in beholding the proportions and colours of certain forms, we see those forms and colours which excite in us the pleasing emotion, as, of our moral approbation or disapprobation, to say, that it is because we have pleasure in the performance and contemplation of virtuous actions, and pain in the contemplation and performance of vicious actions, we perceive that very virtue and vice, and form those very desires, virtuous or vicious, to which, as previously existing, we owe the pleasure and the pain that have resulted from them, not produced them, and that cannot even be conceived as pleasure and pain, without necessarily presupposing them. In acting virtuously, we do what it is pleasant to do; but it is not on account of the pleasure that we perform the action, which it is delightful for us to do, and almost as delightful to us to have done. Indeed, to destroy our pleasure altogether, nothing more would be necessary, than to impress us with the belief, that the actions were performed by us, with no other view than to the selfish gratification which we might feel in thinking of them; and with a total carelessness as to the happiness of those to whose welfare the world conceived us to be making a generous sacrifice. If conformity to selfish gain were all which constitutes virtue, why should our pleasure in this case cease? It ceases for the best of all reasons, that it arises from virtue, and can arise only from virtue; and that in such a case, as there would no longer be any virtue, there would, therefore, no longer be any thing to be contemplated with satisfaction. Such is that gross and revolting system which would

represent all the seeming moral excellences of the world,—every generous exertion, every magnanimous forbearance,—as one universal deceit,—one constant unwearied search of personal good, in which not a single wish ever wanders beyond that personal enjoyment of the individual.

There is another form in which the selfish system may be presented to us, less unjust to our nature than that which we have been considering. It may be said, that we now do truly wish for the happiness of others, without any regard to our own immediate interest; but that we have become thus disinterested, by the very influence of selfishness, only because our own interest has formerly been felt to be connected with the interest of others; diminishing and increasing with theirs in so many instances, that the love which was originally confined, and confined in the strictest sense of exclusion to ourselves, is now diffused in some measure to them, as if almost parts of ourselves; that we have learned to value their happiness, however, only on account of the relation which it has been found to bear to ours; but for which relation, as evolved to us more and more distinctly in the whole progress of social life, we should be absolutely incapable of a single wish for their happiness, of a single wish for their freedom from the severest agony, even when their agony was beneath our very view, and could be suspended by our utterance of a single word of command to him who waited in dreadful ministry on the rack or on the stake; or at least, if, in such circumstances, we could have wished any relief to their torture, it must have been merely to free our ears from the noise of groans or shrieks, that, like any other noise, might be a little too loud to be agreeable to us. According to this system, the happiness of others is loved as representative of our own, in the same way as any object with which our own pleasure has been associated, becomes itself an object of pleasure to us. Our virtues, therefore, arising in every case from the discovery of some relation which the happiness of others bears to our own physical happiness, are not so much the causes of enjoyment, as the results of it; they depend, then, on circumstances that are accidental, varying as the accidental relations to our pleasure vary; and, if they seem to us to have any uniformity, it is only because the circumstances of pleasure, on which they depend, may be regarded as nearly uniform in all the nations of the earth. Everywhere the parent, the wife, the child, must have been useful to the son, the husband, the father; everywhere, therefore, these relations, as productive of happiness, or protection, or comfort, in some degree, are relations of love; and everywhere, in consequence of this factitious love, there are corresponding factitious feelings of duty, filial, connubial, parental.

This modification of the selfish system, as distinguished from the former, has at least the comparative merit of not being in absolute opposition to almost every feeling of our nature; and since it allows us to be at present disinterested, and refers us for the period of absolute moral indifference, to a time, antecedent to that which our remembrance can reach, it is not so easy to expose its falsehood, as to expose the gross and obvious falsehood of the system which ascribes to us one lasting selfishness,—a selfishness so unremitting as to be, not for the first years of our life only, but in infancy, in youth, in mature manhood, in the last sordid wishes of a long age of sordid wishes, absolutely incompatible with any affection that is directly and purely benevolent. But though it may be less easy to show the inaccuracy of the view of the great principles of our moral nature, which such a modification of the doctrine of general selfishness presents, the view, which even this modification of the doctrine presents, is false to the noble principles of a nature that, even in the sophist himself, is far nobler than that which his degrading sophistries would represent him as possessing. There are feelings of moral approbation, independent of all views of personal interest. The happiness of others is to us more than the representation of our own; and the way in which it contributes most powerfully to our own, is by the generous disinterested wishes which it has previously excited in our breast.

I trust it is superfluous for me to say, that, in contending for the independence and originality of our moral feelings, I do not contend that we are capable of these feelings at a period at which we are incapable of forming any conception of the nature and consequences of actions; that, for example, we must feel instant gratitude, to our mother or our nurse, for the first sustenance or first cares, which we receive, before we are conscious of any thing but of our momentary pleasure or pain; and, far from knowing the existence of those kind hearts which watch over us, scarcely know that we have ourselves an existence which is capable of being prolonged. This blind virtue, it would indeed be manifestly absurd to suppose; but this no philosopher has maintained. All which a defender of original tendencies to the emotions that are distinctive of virtue and vice, can be supposed to assert, is, that when we are capable of understanding the consequences of actions, we then have those feelings of moral approbation or disapprobation, which, in their various relations to time, as present, past, or future, I suppose to constitute our moral notions of virtue, merit, obligation. It then becomes impossible for

us not to feel, that in giving pain, for the mere pleasure of giving pain, to one whose delight it has been to contribute to our happiness, we should do that which we could not contemplate without a feeling of self-reproach,—as we should have an opposite feeling of self-approbation, in every sacrifice which we might make of our own convenience, to the happiness or the comfort of a person, to whom our mutual services were so justly due. An action, I have already frequently repeated, is, as a moral object, not the mere production of good or evil, but the intentional production of good or evil. It has no moral meaning whatever, but as it is significant of the frame of mind of the agent himself, willing and producing a particular result; and where the frame of mind of the agent cannot be supposed to be known, or even guessed, it is not to be supposed that any moral feeling should arise, whatever susceptibility the mind may possess of being affected with certain moral emotions, by the contemplation of certain frames of mind of the voluntary producers of good or evil. There is a knowledge then of intention on which our moral sentiments unquestionably depend; but it is only on this knowledge they do depend; and it would be as absurd to refuse to them the appellation of original feelings, on this account, as it would be to refuse to the mind any original susceptibility of the sensations of vision, because there can be no vision till a luminous object be present, nor even then any distinct perception till we have opened our eyelids. There was, indeed, a period at which we had no moral feelings, as there was a period at which we had no sensations of colour; but though we had not the actual feelings, from the absence of the circumstances which are necessary for producing them, we could as little be said to be blind to morality in the one case, as blind to all the splendour and beauty of light in the other.

To return, however, to that form of the selfish system of morals, which is under our review, I may remark, in the first place, that, as this theory of our affections admits them to be at present disinterested, and refers us for the period of exclusive self-regard, to a time of which the consciousness is absolutely lost to our memory, it would not be entitled to the praise of certainty, even though no objection could be urged against it. It would still be only an hypothesis,—and an hypothesis which, even by the confession of those who maintain it, supposes a state of our feelings absolutely opposite to that which they have continued to display, during all that long period of our consciousness which we are capable of remembering. It is an hypothesis, all the burthen of the proof of which must rest with the assertors of it,—an hypothesis which, even though it were just, it would be impossible to verify,—and an hypothesis which affirms the mind to have been, with respect to the very feelings that are attempted to be explained by it, the reverse of what is at present. But is there no other objection which can be made to this system, than that it is an hypothesis only, which may, if we consent to admit it without proof, be made to tally with the phenomena; but which the phenomena themselves do not at least very obviously appear to warrant us to frame? There is still another very important inquiry: Does it correspond, even as an hypothesis, with the moral appearances, which it is invented to illustrate?

We have moral affections, it is allowed, at present which are disinterested; but they have become so, it is said, in consequence of the association of our own past pleasures with their objects; and our experience that the safety, and in some measure the comfort of others,—for whom, on their own account, we should be perfectly indifferent whether they be in health or disease, joy, or misery,—are necessary to enable them to contribute most effectually to our happiness. We at last seek their happiness for their sake, because we have been accustomed to seek it for our own; and the wilful violations of their pleasure or ease, which were regarded by us at first as inexpedient, because they might be hurtful to ourselves, are at last regarded by us as immoral, when we have been so perfectly selfish, for a sufficient length of time, as to cease to be selfish, from the very force of our habits of selfishness.

In opposition to this hypothesis, I need not repeat arguments which have been already urged by me against other false views of our moral nature; and which, as not less applicable to this view of it, I flatter myself that you will have no difficulty in remembering and applying for yourselves. The nursery, to which I referred in my last lecture as the scene of an experiment that might be considered as decisive with respect to the theory of universal selfishness, would be equally valuable for a similar experiment in the present instance, as to that selfishness, which, though not universal during the whole course of life, is said to be universal at least during childhood. Such an experiment, indeed, would be still more valuable in the present instance, as allowing us the nearest approach which we can make to the time at which the mysterious transmutation of selfishness into disinterested affection is supposed to begin to take place. If all actions which do not immediately affect our own means of physical well-being be originally indifferent to us, and if we learn only by the relations of certain actions to this physical well-being, to regard one species of conduct as virtuous, and another species of conduct as vicious, the child, whose never-failing en-

joyments have seemed to him to form a regular part of the day, almost like the hours which compose it, who expects to find to-morrow what he found yesterday, and who as little thinks that he is indebted to any one for the regular food which gratifies his appetite, or the garments which keep him warm, or the little couch on which he lies down, happy to awake happy next morning, as he thinks that he is indebted to any one of those around him for the sunny radiance which shines on him, or for the air which he breathes without knowing that he is breathing it; while he lives among smiles and caresses, and regards even these, not as marks of indulgence, but only as proofs of the mere presence of those whose very countenance is love. The little reasoner on his own comforts, and disregarder of all comforts but his own, may indeed be beginning to form the inductions which are to terminate in the belief, that the happiness of others may be instrumental to his happiness; and that the universe would suffer, and consequently himself, as a part of the universe, be in danger of suffering by the spreading and multiplying relations of guilt to guilt, if an instance of rapacity or cruelty were to occur in some obscure cottage in a distant kingdom. But though he may be beginning to make this philosophic analysis and generalization of the remote relations of things, by which crimes perpetrated in the most remote part of the world, and of a kind from which he has never suffered, may be conceived by him to have ultimately some relation to his own selfish enjoyment, he is surely only beginning to make them. His selfishness is not of sufficient growth to have ceased to be selfish; and his morality, therefore, if morality be the result of fine inductions, which show the good of others to be in some measure representative of our own, cannot have begun to be developed. When he quits his sport, therefore, to listen to the tale which his nurse has promised him, suspending not this particular exercise only, but the very activity that would be every moment urging him to new exercise, as he remains fixed at her knee in a state of quiet of every limb, that, but for the delightful horrors which he hears and expects to hear, would be too powerful to be borne; if there be no disinterested affection then, or at least only the faint dawning of such affections, the tale which is related to him, however full it may be of injustice and cruelty, cannot have any powerful influence on his feelings. His love of novelty, indeed, may be gratified by the adventures of the generous warrior, who, at the peril of his own life, attacked the castle of the giant, and opened at last, to give liberty to a hundred trembling prisoners, those dungeon gates which had never before been opened but to fling some new wretch to the living heap of wretchedness, or out of the heap already gathered, to select some one for torture and death. He may listen to such a marvellous tale as he would listen to any thing else that is equally marvellous; but it is only as marvellous that he can be supposed to listen to it. There is no generous interest in virtue to be gratified in his little heart, because, in his state of secure and tranquil enjoyment, he has had too little experience of the relations of things to know that vice and virtue have that great difference —their only difference—which consists in their likelihood of being of greater or less advantage or disadvantage to him. In hearing of the deliverance of the good, and of the punishment of the wicked, he should have no thought but of the wonderful things which he is to hear next. In short, according to the system which would represent all virtue to be of selfish growth, he should be that cold and indifferent creature which no nursery has ever seen; and which, if every nursery saw in those who are to furnish the mature population of other years, the earth would soon be an unpeopled waste, or, at best, a prison-house of the rapacious and the cruel.

If, without having heard of any hypotheses on the subject, we were told that there is a period of the life of man in which a tale of cruelty may be related to him, and understood without exciting any emotion, and in which the intentional producer of misery, who produces it in the mere wantonness of power, only that he may have the delight of thinking that he has produced it, and the mild and unrepining sufferer whom he has made his victim, are regarded with equal indifference, is it to his early years that we all should look in making our reference? or, rather, is there not reason to think, that, at least an equal number of the estimators of different ages would look to years, when, if generous affections were the result of experience, and grew more purely disinterested, as the experience of the relations of things extended over a larger portion of life, there could not be one sordid and selfish wish remaining with its ancient dominion in the heart?

But, omitting every objection that may be drawn from the appearances of lively moral feeling, at a time when, according to the hypothesis of original insensibility to every distinction of virtue and vice, there could be no moral feeling of any kind, what, I may ask, is the nature of the change which is supposed to take place in this purification of selfish desires, and are the circumstances assigned as the cause of the purification sufficient to produce it? We are absolutely regardless of the happiness or misery of others; and the actions that would lead to their happiness or misery seem to us to have those different

physical tendencies, but are regarded by us only as physically different. Such is said to be the state of the mind at one period. Afterwards we learn to look on others with regard, in consequence of the pleasure which has flowed from them, or attended their presence; and not to look on them with disinterested regard only, and to wish their happiness, but, which is a much more important circumstance, to feel that the neglect or violation of their happiness would be attended with feelings of self-reproach on our part, essentially different from mere regret. The explanation proposed might, perhaps, be thought to account for the affection which we acquire for persons as well as for things that were previously indifferent to us; and even for our wish to add to the happiness of those whom we love, since there scarcely can be affection without such a wish. But the sense of duty is something more than this consciousness of mere affection and of kind wishes. When we have failed to act in conformity with it, we have not a mere feeling of misfortune, as when we have failed in any wish, the success of which did not depend on ourselves; but a moral feeling of self-disapprobation, for which the growth of mere affection, and of all the wishes to which affection can give rise, is insufficient to account. Here, then, is the important transition which should be explained, that by which we pass from love that is factitious, to a feeling of duty that is factitious. It is this feeling of moral approbation or disapprobation,—the difference of common regret from remorse,—of common joy from the delightful complacencies of virtue,—which is the real subject in controversy; and this feeling the selfish system, even in that best modification of it which we are considering, leaves wholly unexplained. It asserts us to be selfish, but it does not show, nor even profess to show, how we are thus selfish with notions of morality.

It must never be forgotten, in estimating any theory of morals, that it is not a mere quantity of pleasure or pain, love or dislike, for which the theorist has to account; but an order of moral notions, pleasant, indeed, in certain references to ourselves or others, painful in certain other references, yet essentially distinct from any varieties of mere physical delight or uneasiness. It is not the joy of a prosperous man for which he has to give a reason, but the complacency of a good conscience; not the regret of one who has formed wishes of dignified station or wealth that are ungratified, but the remorse of one who has formed guilty wishes, and whose chief misery, perhaps, arises from the gratification of the very wishes which he had formed. It is not the mere wish of contributing to the happiness of those whom we love, but the feeling of obligation to contribute to their happiness,—and often even to contribute to the happiness of individuals for whom we feel no peculiar tenderness of regard. For these peculiar feelings, however, for all that can strictly be said to be moral in love, or even in morality itself, the assertors of the selfish system do not think it necessary to assign any reason, though it is of these only that any explanation is required: and yet they speak of their system as if it were a theory, not of mere pleasure or pain, love or dislike, but of all the phenomena of moral sentiment. They think that they have shown enough, if they have shown how we may love our friends that live around us as we love our house or our estate; and if they can account for this mere affection, they take for granted that our feelings of duty, virtue, obligation, and all the moral feelings of conscience follow of course.

Even with respect to mere affection, unimportant as this is, in a theory of morals, when considered as mere affection, exclusively of all feeling of duty or moral approbation,—the cause assigned for the production and extension of this regard is far from being shown to be adequate. It is a cause which connects us only with a few individuals, and which is yet adduced as explanatory of feelings that are extended in vivid diffusion to all mankind. The associating principle is the cause to which we are directed,—that principle, which, in a former part of the course, we found to be capable of attaching a very high interest to objects that might be considered as in themselves almost indifferent,—a snuff-box, a cane, or any other inanimate thing, which had long been our companion. But though this sort of companionship may render our own cane important to us, as if it were a symbol of our happiness, like the white wands and gold sticks that are symbols of the dignity of office, this love of our own cane does not render every other walking-stick, which we may see in a shop, or in the hands of others, of much greater value, in our conception, than if we had been in the habit of walking without any support. If then it be, as is asserted, precisely in the same manner, that we acquire our affection for the living beings around us,—who, otherwise, would have been as indifferent to our regard, as it is possible for a snuff-box or a cane to be,—why is not the effect confined, or nearly confined, to those immediately around us, with whom the associations of pleasure have been formed? Beyond the circle to which the magic of association spreads, every thing should be as before, or at least very nearly as before. For the stranger, whom we have never seen, in the same manner as for the snuff-box of another, we should retain feelings that scarcely pass beyond indifference; and should

as little look with affection on all mankind, in consequence of the pleasure which has attended our intimacy with a few—if affection be in itself foreign to our nature, and the result of factitious circumstances,—as we should look with a covetous eye on every walking-stick, because we should feel sorrow, far beyond its intrinsic worth, on the loss of our own. If, indeed, man be naturally more precious to our affection than the paltry baubles of a toyshop, we may suppose, in his case, a more extensive diffusion of every feeling of regard. But to ascribe to man any original title to our love, independent of the use which we may learn to derive from him, as from a machine that may be instrumental to our convenience, would be to abandon the very principle on which the whole strange system of moral selfishness is founded.

Even as a theory, then, of mere affection, the selfish theory is inadequate. But however widely affection may be supposed to be spread, in consequence of the association and ready suggestion of pleasures received from a few individuals only—though it were admitted, that, by the remembrance of these, we might be led to love all the individuals of mankind, and loving them, to wish their happiness, it must still be remembered, that the only influence of affection, as mere affection, is to render the happiness of others desirable, like the attainment of any other object of desire. Instead of wishing merely the gratification of our sensual appetites, of our intellectual curiosity, of our ambition, we have now other wishes to mingle with these that relate to the happiness of others; and we may regret that the happiness of others has not been produced by certain actions, in the same way as we may regret that we have not attained the objects of any of our other wishes,—that we are not the possessors of a fortunate ticket in the lottery, or have not had the majority of votes in an election to some office of honour or emolument. But joy and regret are all which we can feel, even in love itself; and obligation, virtue, merit, the self-complacency or remorse of conscience, are as little explained by the growth of mere love and hatred, as if every object of these affections had remained indifferent to us.

We have considered, then, the selfish system in two aspects: first, as it represents mankind as universally, in every hour and minute of their waking existence, intent on one sole object, their own convenience, incapable of feeling any disinterested affection for another; and therefore, when appearing to wish the happiness of a father, or wife, or son, or friend, wishing at heart only their own. We have afterwards considered that less sordid modification of the system, which supposes us, indeed, to have been originally as selfish as the other represents us to be for the whole course of our life; but which does a little more justice to the feelings of our maturer years, by admitting that we become susceptible of affections that prompt us to act, even when our own convenience is not the immediate object before our eyes; and in our examination of both forms of the doctrine, we have seen how incapable it is of explaining those notions of obligation, virtue, merit, that constitute the moral phenomena, which a theory that professes to be a theory of morals, ought as little to omit, as a theory of light to omit all notice of the radiant fluid, the properties of which it professes to examine, while it confines its attention to the forms of the mirrors or lenses which variously reflect or transmit it.

After these two lights, in which the system commonly distinguished by the name of the Selfish System of morals has been considered by us, there remains still one other light, in which it is to be viewed; that in which the obligation of virtue is supposed to consist merely in an exclusive regard to our own individual eternity of happiness in another life; and virtue itself to consist in obedience to the will of the Supreme Being; not on account of the moral excellence of that Supreme Being, or of his bounty to us, which might seem of itself to demand compliances, that are the only possible expressions of the gratitude of dependent creatures, to him from whom their power as well as their happiness is derived, but without any such views of reverence or gratitude, at least without any such views as are in the slightest degree necessary to the virtue of their motives, merely on account of the power which the Ruler of the universe possesses, to give or withhold the happiness which is our only object. This form of the selfish system, which has been embraced by many theological writers of undoubted piety and purity, is notwithstanding, I cannot but think, as degrading to the human character, as any other form of the doctrine of absolute selfishness; or rather, it is in itself the most degrading of all the forms which the selfish system can assume; because, while the selfishness which it maintains is as absolute and unremitting, as if the objects of personal gain were to be found in the wealth or honours or sensual pleasures of this earth; this very selfishness is rendered more offensive, by the noble image of the Deity which is continually presented to our mind, and presented in all his benevolence, not to be loved, but to be courted with a mockery of affection. The sensualist of the common system of selfishness, who never thinks of any higher object in the pursuit of the little pleasures which he is miserable enough to regard as happiness, seems to me, even in the brutal stupidity in which he is sunk, a

being more worthy of esteem than the selfish of another life; to whose view God is ever present, but who view him always only to feel constantly in their heart, that in loving him who has been the dispenser of all the blessings which they have enjoyed, and who has revealed himself in the glorious character of the diffuser of an immortality of happiness, they love not the giver himself, but only the gifts which they have received, or the gifts that are promised. Yet, such is the influence of the mere admission of the being of a God, and of the images of holiness and delight which that divine name is sufficient to suggest, that while the common system of the universal selfishness of virtue has been received by the virtuous themselves, with an indignant horror, that was itself almost a confutation of the system, the equally universal selfishness of the doctrine of these theological moralists has been received, not merely without any emotion of disgust, but with the approbation and assent of no small portion of those who, in opposition to the very doctrine which they have embraced, are truly in their hearts disinterested lovers of man, and equally disinterested lovers and worshippers of God.

The doctrine of the absolute selfishness of our homage to God, and of our social virtues, considered as the mere conformity of our wills to the command of him who is the dispenser of eternal happiness and eternal misery, for the sole reason of his power of thus dispensing happiness or misery, and not on account of his own transcendent excellence, that of itself might seem to demand such a conformity, is a doctrine of very old date. But the writer who in modern times has led to the widest diffusion of this doctrine, is Archdeacon Paley, the most popular of all our ethical writers; and one of the most judicious in the mere details of ethics, however false and dangerous I consider his leading doctrines to be. Virtue, he defines to be, "the doing good to mankind, in obedience to the will of God, and for the sake of everlasting happiness."* The last part of the definition is the most important part of the whole; for, the knowledge of this everlasting happiness he supposes to be all which constitutes moral obligation; meaning by obligation, not any feeling of moral love, but the influence of happiness as an object of physical desire, and of pain as an object of physical aversion; one or other of which is to follow our obedience or disobedience to the command of the Power who is the supreme dispenser of both. The will of God is our rule, he says, but "private happiness is our motive," and therefore our obligation. In short, the inducement or temptation to be virtuous, which is all that constitutes our obligation to be virtuous, is precisely of the same kind with the inducements or temptations to vice, which may be said in like manner to constitute an obligation to be vicious. The only difference is, that a good man—that is to say, a person whom we distinguish by the flattering title of good—is more prudent than those whom we have chosen to denominate wicked. Both act from an obligation which may be said to be moral in one case as much as in the other; since in neither is disinterestedness of affection necessary to virtue; and in both there is that desire of pleasure which is sufficient to constitute an inducement, and therefore, in his acceptation of the word, which he regards as synonymous with inducement, an obligation.

That we have a moral sentiment of obligation, virtue, merit, which is very different from the mere inducements of pleasure near or remote, I surely need not attempt to demonstrate to you, after the remarks already made on the selfish system in general. The doctrine of Paley differs, as you perceive, from the general selfish system, only by the peculiar importance which it very justly gives to everlasting happiness and misery, when compared with the brief pains or pleasures of this life. In the scale of selfish gain, it is a greater quantity of physical enjoyment which it has in view. It is a sager selfishness, but it is not less absolute selfishness which it maintains; and it is therefore subject to all the objections which I urged before at great length, and which it would now therefore be idle to repeat.

One great answer obviously presents itself to all those selfish systems which convert the whole of virtue into prudence; and make the differences of virtue and vice in every respect precisely the same in kind, as those of speculators in the market of commerce, who have employed their capital more or less advantageously, in the different bargains that have been offered to them. All those systems are, of course, intended to be faithful pictures of our feelings. The virtue which they profess to explain is the virtue which we feel; and if we felt no moral approbation of certain actions, no moral disapprobation of certain other actions, it would be manifestly absurd to speak of virtue or of vice. It is to our consciousness, then, that we must look for determining the fidelity of the picture; and what features does our consciousness exhibit? If two individuals were to expose themselves to the same peril, for the same common friend,—and if we could be made to understand, that the one had no other motive for this apparently generous exposure, than the wish of securing a certain amount of happiness to himself, at some time, either near or remote—on earth, or after he has quitted earth; the other no mo-

* Moral and Political Philosophy, book i. chap. vii.

tive but that of saving a life which was dearer to him than his own; in which case would our feeling of moral approbation more strongly arise? Is it the more selfish of the two whom alone we should consider as the moral hero; or rather, is it not only in thinking of him who forgot every thing but the call of friendship, and the disinterested feeling of duty which prompted him to obey the call, that we should feel any moral approbation whatever? It is precisely in proportion as selfish happiness is absent from the mind of the agent, or is supposed to be absent from it, in any sacrifice which is made for another, that the moral admiration arises; and what then can we think of a theory of this very moral admiration, which asserts it to arise only when it does not arise, and not to arise only when it does arise? We should not hesitate long in rejecting a theory of fluidity which should ascribe congelation to an increase of heat, and liquefaction to a diminution of it; and as little ought we to hesitate in rejecting a theory of virtue that supposes the moral approbation which gives birth to our very notion of virtue, to arise only when the immediate motive of the agent has been the view of his own happiness in this or any other world; and to be precluded, therefore, by the very generosity of the agent, in every case in which he thought only of the happiness of others which he could increase, of the misery of others which he could relieve.

That part of the system of Dr. Paley, then, which makes the sole motive to virtue the happiness of the agent himself, is false as a picture of the feelings of moral approbation and disapprobation for which it professes to account. The other part of his system of virtue, however, which resolves it into conformity to the will of God, as obeyed from this motive of personal gain, may merit a little fuller investigation.

LECTURE LXXX.

EXAMINATION OF THE SELFISH SYSTEM CONCLUDED; EXAMINATION OF DR. SMITH'S SYSTEM.

Gentlemen, in the close of my last Lecture, after examining different modifications of the selfish system, I proceeded to consider one form of it which has not usually been ranked with the others, but which is not less absolutely selfish; since it supposes the sole motive to virtue to be the view of our own personal advantage; the only difference being, that instead of fixing its desires on the quantity of pleasure which can be enjoyed in this life, it extends them to the greater quantity of pleasure which may be enjoyed by us in the everlasting life that awaits us; having still, however, no other motive than the desire of this personal enjoyment, and the corresponding fear of pain, in the actions which may seem, but only seem, to arise from a disinterested love of God, or a disinterested love of those whom God has committed to our affection.

The greater or less quantity of pleasure, however, which is coveted by us, either in intensity or duration, does not alter the nature of the principle which covets it; if the perception of the means of gratifying our own individual appetite for enjoyment, whether the pleasure be great or slight, near or remote, brief or everlasting, be all which constitutes what is in that case strangely termed moral obligation: and the system of Paley, therefore, to which I particularly alluded,—a system which defines virtue to be "the doing good to mankind, in obedience to the will of God, for the sake of everlasting happiness," and which makes, not the love of God, nor the love of mankind, but this love of everlasting happiness the motive and sole obligation to the good which otherwise We should have had as little moral desire of producing or promoting, as of producing an equal or greater amount of evil, must be allowed to be, in its very essence, as truly selfish, as if it had defined virtue to be the pursuit of mere wealth, or fame, or of the brief dignities, or still briefer pleasures of this mortal existence.

"There is always understood to be a difference between an act of prudence and an act of duty. Thus, if I distrusted a man who owed me money, I should reckon it an act of prudence to get another bound with him; but I should hardly call it an act of duty. On the other hand, it would be thought a very unusual and loose kind of language to say, that, as I had made such a promise, it was prudent to perform it; or that, as my friend, when he went abroad, placed a box of jewels in my hands, it would be prudent in me to preserve it for him till he returned."*

If the most prudent labourer after his own selfish interest, without the slightest regard for the happiness of others, unless as that happiness may be instrumental to his own, be constantly actuated by the same moral motive which influences the most generous lovers of mankind, how strange an illusion is all moral sentiment, which views with such different feelings objects that are in every moral respect precisely the same. But it is in our emotions alone that our notions of morality have their rise: and how illusive, therefore, and radically false I should rather say, must be that system which is founded on

* Paley's Moral Philosophy, book ii. chapter iii.

the absolute similarity of feelings that are recognised by every bosom as absolutely dissimilar.

Though, I trust then, it is sufficiently evident to you, from the results of the long discussion in which we have been engaged, that the moral obligation to virtue is not, as Paley says, the mere inducement of pleasure held out to us by power which we cannot disobey, without losing the pleasure, and encountering pain, but an inducement of a nobler kind, since pleasure, though it may lead us to be virtuous, may surely, as mere pleasure, if there be no essential distinction of it, as pure or impure, right or wrong, often lead us into what we are at present accustomed to denominate vice; and though I shall therefore not repeat, in application to this enlarged selfishness, which extends its interested view through immortality, the objections previously urged against that more limited selfishness which looks only to the surface of the earth, and to the few years in which we are to be moving along it, it may be of importance to make a few remarks on that other part of the doctrine of this celebrated moralist, which makes conformity to the will of God the rule of virtue.

That virtuous actions—those actions which excite in us the feeling of moral approval, are conformable to the will of God, there can be no reason to doubt; since the very universality of this approval may be regarded as a sort of expression of the divine approbation. As little can we doubt that when the declared will of God is present to our mind, and we think of certain actions as commanded by him, of certain other actions, as prohibited by him, and when, in designing or meditating any action, we feel that it is one of those which he has prohibited, there would arise in our mind an instant feeling of disapprobation, that is to say, of vice or demerit, in the performance of the prohibited action. But the question is not, whether it be virtue to conform our will to that of the Deity, when that will is revealed to us, or clearly implied; for of this there can be no doubt. It is, whether there be not in our nature a principle of moral approbation, from which our feelings of obligation, virtue, merit, flow; and which operates, not independently of the divine will indeed, for it was the divine will which implanted in us this very principle; but without the necessary consideration, at the time, of the expression of the divine will, and consequently without any intentional conformity to it or disobedience, or which in our obedience itself, as often as we think of the divine will, is the very principle by which we feel the duty of such conformity. The mother, though she should, at the moment, forget altogether that there is a God in nature, would still turn with moral horror from the thought of murdering the little prattler who is sporting at her knee, and who is not more beautiful to her eye by external charms and graces, than beautiful to her heart by the thousand tendernesses which every day and almost every hour is developing; while the child, who perhaps has scarcely heard that there is a God, or who at least is ignorant of any will of God, in conformity with which virtue consists, is still in his very ignorance developing those moral feelings which are supposed to be inconsistent with such ignorance, and would not have the same feeling of complacency in repaying the parental caresses with acts of intentional injury, as when he repays them with expressions of reciprocal love. Of all the mothers who, at this moment, on the earth, are exercised, and virtuously exercised, in maternal duties, around the cradles of their infants, there is perhaps not one who is thinking that God has commanded her to love her offspring, and to perform for them the many offices of love that are necessary for preserving the lives which are so dear to her. The expression of the divine will, indeed, not merely gives us new and nobler duties to perform; it gives a new and nobler delight also to the very duties which our nature prompts, but still there are duties which our nature prompts, and the violation of which is felt as moral wrong, even when God is known and worshipped only as a demon of power, still less benevolent than the very barbarians who howl around his altar in their savage sacrifice.

But for the principle of moral approbation which the divine being has fixed in our nature, the expression of his will would itself have no moral power, whatever physical pain or pleasure it might hold out to our prudent choice. It may be asked, why should we obey the divine command, with as much reason as it may be asked, why should we love our parents or our country? and our only answer to both questions, as far as morality can be said to be concerned, or any feeling different from that of a mere calculation of physical loss or gain, is, that such is our nature; that, in considering the command of God, our greatest of benefactors, or in considering the happiness of our parents, our country, mankind, which it is in our power to promote, we feel that to act in conformity with these, will be followed by our moral approbation; as to act in opposition to them will be followed by inevitable self-reproach. There is a principle of moral discrimination already existing in us, that, even when we conform our conduct to the divine will, is the very principle by which we have felt the duty of this delightful conformity; and if there be no such principle in our nature, by which we discover the duty of the conformity, it is surely very evident that there can be no such duty to be felt, any more than there can be colour to the blind, or melody to the deaf.

God may be loved by us, or feared by us. He may be loved by us as the source of all our blessings, conferred or promised. He may be feared by us as a being who has the power of inflicting on us eternal anguish. In one of these views, we may, when we obey him, act from gratitude; in the other, from a sense of the evils which we have to dread in offending him. But if it be a duty of gratitude to obey God, we must previously have been capable of knowing that gratitude is a virtue, as much as we must have been capable of knowing the power of God, before we could have known to fear his awful dominion. We consider the Deity as possessing the highest moral perfection: but in that theological view of morality which acknowledges no mode of estimating excellence beyond that divine command itself, whatever it might have been, these words are absolutely meaningless; since if, instead of what we now term virtue, he had commanded only what we now term vice, his command must still have been equally holy. If indeed the system of Paley, and of other theological moralists, were just, what excellence beyond the excellence of mere power, could we discover in that divine being whom we adore as the supreme goodness, still more than we fear him as the omnipotent? God has, indeed, commanded certain actions, and it is our virtue to conform our actions to his will; but if the virtue depend exclusively on obedience to the command, and if there be no peculiar moral excellence in the actions commanded, he must have been equally adorable, though nature had exhibited only appearances of unceasing malevolence in its author; and every command which he had delivered to his creatures had been only to add new voluntary miseries to the physical miseries which already surrounded them. In the system of Hobbes, which considers law itself as constituent of moral right, a tyrant, if his power of enacting law be sufficiently established, is not to be distinguished, in his very tyranny, from the generous sovereign of the free; because the measure of right is to be found in his will alone. In the system of Paley, in like manner, if virtue be conformity to the will of God, whatever that will may be, and there be no moral measure of the excellence of that will itself, God and the most malignant demon have no moral difference to our heart, but as the one and not the other is the irresistible sovereign of the universe.

The will of God, then, though it is unquestionably the source of virtue, in the most important sense—as it was his will that formed all the principles of our constitution, of which the principle of moral approbation is one—is not the source of virtue in the sense in which that phrase is understood by some theological writers as limited to the mere declaration of his will, sanctioned by punishment and reward. There is an earlier law of God, which he has written in our hearts; and the desire of our mere personal happiness or misery, in this or in another world, is truly an object of our approbation, not the source of it, since the love of mere selfish enjoyment is at least as powerfully the motive to vice, in some cases, as it is in other cases the motive to virtue. We do not merely submit to the will of God as we submit to any power which it is impossible for us to resist. We feel that it would be not imprudence only, but guilt, to wish to disobey it. We seek, in the constitution of our nature, the reason which leads us to approve morally of the duty of this conformity of our will to his beneficent and supreme will; and we find, in one of the essential principles of our nature, the moral reason which we seek.

After this examination of the various systems, which may be considered as more or less directly opposed to the belief of that principle of moral feeling—the original susceptibility of moral emotion on the contemplation of certain actions—for which I have contended, there is still one system which deserves to be considered by us, in relation to this belief, not as being subversive of morality, in any one of its essential distinctions, but as appearing to fix morality on a basis that is not sufficiently firm; with the discovery of the instability of which, therefore, the virtues that are represented as supported on it, might be considered as themselves unstable; as the statue, though it be the image of a god, or the column, though it be a part of a sacred temple, may fall, not because it is not sufficiently cohesive and firm in itself, but because it is too massy for the feeble pedestal on which it has been placed.

The system to which I allude, is that which is delivered by Dr. Smith, in his Theory of Moral Sentiments,—a work unquestionably of the first rank in a science which I cannot but regard, as to man, the most interesting of sciences. Profound in thought, it exhibits, even when it is most profound, an example of the graces with which a sage imagination knows how to adorn the simple and majestic form of science, that is severe and cold, only to those who are themselves cold and severe, as in those very graces it exhibits, in like manner, an example of the reciprocal embellishment which imagination receives from the sober dignity of truth. In its minor details and illustrations, indeed, it may be considered as presenting a model of philosophic beauty, of which all must acknowledge the power, who are not disqualified by their very nature for the admiration and enjoyment of intellectual excellence; so dull of understanding as to shrink with a painful consciousness of incapacity at the

very appearance of refined analysis, or so dull and cold of heart, as to feel no charm in the delightful varieties of an eloquence that, in the illustration and embellishment of the noblest truths, seems itself to live and harmonize with those noble sentiments which it adorns.

It is chiefly in its minor analyses, however, that I conceive the excellence of this admirable work to consist. Its leading doctrine I am far from admitting. Indeed it seems to me as manifestly false, as the greater number of its secondary and minute delineations appear to me faithful, to the fine lights, and faint and flying shades, of that moral nature which they represent.

According to Dr. Smith, we do not immediately approve of certain actions, or disapprove of certain other actions, when we have become acquainted with the intention of the agent, and the consequences, beneficial or injurious, of what he has done. All these we might know thoroughly, without a feeling of the slightest approbation or disapprobation. It is necessary, before any moral sentiment arise, that the mind should go through another process, that by which we seem for the time to enter into the feelings of the agent, and of those to whom his action has relation in its consequences, or intended consequences, beneficial or injurious. If, by a process of this kind, on considering all the circumstances in which the agent was placed, we feel a complete sympathy with the passions or calmer emotions that actuated him, and with the gratitude of him who was the object of the action, we approve of the action itself as right, and feel the merit of the agent; our sense of the propriety of the action depending on our sympathy with the agent, our sense of the merit of the agent on our sympathy with the object of the action. If our sympathies be of an opposite kind, we disapprove of the action itself as improper, that is to say, unsuitable to the circumstances, and ascribe not merit but demerit to the agent. In sympathizing with the gratitude of others, we should have regarded the agent as worthy of reward; in sympathizing with the resentment of others, we regard him as worthy of punishment.

Such is the supposed process in estimating the actions of others. When we regard our own conduct we in some measure reverse this process; or rather, by a process still more refined, we imagine others sympathizing with us, and sympathize with their sympathy. We consider how our conduct would appear to an impartial spectator. We approve of it, if it be that of which we feel that he would approve; we disapprove of it if it be that which we feel by the experience of our own former emotions, when we have ourselves, in similar circumstances, estimated the actions of others, would excite his disapprobation. We are able to form a judgment as to our own conduct, therefore, because we have previously judged of the moral conduct of others, that is to say, have previously sympathized with the feelings of others; and but for the presence, or supposed presence, of some impartial spectator, as a mirror to represent to us ourselves, we should as little have known the beauty or deformity of our own moral character, as we should have known the beauty or ugliness of our external features without some mirror to reflect them to our eye.

In this brief outline of Dr. Smith's system, I have of course confined myself to the leading doctrine, of which his theory is the development. If this doctrine of the necessary antecedence of sympathy to our moral approbation or disapprobation be just, the system may be admitted, even though many of his minor illustrations should appear to be false. If this primary doctrine be not just, the system, however ingenious and just in its explanation of many phenomena of the mind, must fail as a theory of our moral sentiments.

To derive our moral sentiments, which are as universal as the actions of mankind that come under our review, from the occasional sympathies, that warm or sadden us with joys and griefs and resentments which are not our own, seems to me, I confess, very nearly the same sort of error as it would be to derive the waters of an ever-flowing stream from the sunshine or shade which may occasionally gleam over it. That we have a principle of social feeling, which, in its rapid participation of the vivid emotions of others, seems to identify us in many cases with the happy or the sorrowful, the grateful or the indignant, it is impossible to deny. But this sympathy, quick as it truly is to arise, in cases in which the primary feelings are vivid and strongly marked, is not a perpetual accompaniment of every action of every one around us. There must be some vividness of feeling in others, or the display of vividness of feeling, or at least such a situation as usually excites vivid feeling, of some sort, in those who are placed in it, to call the sympathy itself into action. In the number of petty affairs which are hourly before our eyes, what sympathy is felt either with those who are actively or those who are passively concerned, when the agent himself performs his little offices with emotions as slight as those which the objects of his actions reciprocally feel? Yet, in these cases, we are as capable of judging, and approve or disapprove, not with the same liveliness of emotion indeed, but with as accurate estimation of merit or demerit, as when we consider the most heroic sacrifices which the virtuous can make, or the most atrocious crimes of which the sordid and the cruel can be

guilty. It is not the absolute vividness of our emotion, however, but its mere correspondence in degree with the emotion of others, which affects our estimates of the propriety of their actions; and it must be remembered, that it is not any greater or less vividness of our sympathetic feeling, but the accuracy of our estimation of merit and demerit, whether great or slight, by the sympathetic feelings supposed, which is the only point in question. There is no theory of our moral distinctions, which supposes that we are to approve equally of all actions that are right, and to disapprove equally of all actions which are wrong; but it is essential to one theory—that theory which we are considering—that there should be no feeling of right or wrong, merit or demerit, and consequently no moral estimation whatever, where there is no previous sympathy in that particular case. The humblest action, therefore, which we denominate right, must have awakened our sympathy as much as those glorious actions which we are never weary of extolling, in the very commendation of which we think not of the individual only with thankfulness, but with a sort of proud delight of ourselves, of our country, of the common nature of man, as ennobled by the virtue, that, instead of receiving dignity from the homage of our praises, confers dignity on the very gratitude and reverence which offer them. If we were to think only those actions right in which our sympathy is excited, the class of indifferent actions would comprehend the whole life, or nearly the whole life, of almost all the multitude of those around us, and indeed of almost all mankind. A few great virtues and great iniquities would still remain in our system of practical ethics, to be applauded or censured; but the morality of the common transactions of life, which, though less important in each particular case, is, upon the whole, more important from its extensive diffusion, would disappear altogether as morality, as that which it is right to observe, and wrong to omit, and though it might still be counted useful, would admit of no higher denomination of praise. The supposed necessary universality then, in our moral sentiments, of that which, however frequent, is surely far from universal, would of itself seem to me a sufficient objection to the theory of Dr. Smith.

Even if the sympathy for which he contends were as universal as it is absolutely necessary for the truth of his theory that it should be, it must still be admitted that our sympathy is, in degree at least, one of the most irregular and seemingly capricious of principles in the constitution of the mind; and on this very account, therefore, not very likely to be the commensurable test or standard of feelings so regular, upon the whole, as our general estimates of right and wrong. But though it would be very easy to show the force of this objection, I hasten from it, and from all objections of this kind to that which seems to me to be the essential error of the system.

This essential error, the greatest of all possible systematic errors, is no less than the assumption, in every case, of those very moral feelings which are supposed to flow from sympathy, the assumption of them as necessarily existing before that very sympathy in which they are said to originate.

Let us allow, then, every thing which we can suppose it possible for the author of the theory to have claimed, let us admit that the sympathy of which he speaks, instead of being limited to a few cases of vivid feeling, is as universal as he contends, that it is as little variable in kind, or in degree, as our notions of right and wrong, and, in short, that it is in perfect accordance with our moral sentiments; even though, with all these admissions, we were to admit also the very process which Dr. Smith supposes to take place exactly in the manner which he supposes, it would be very evident, that still, after so many important concessions, the moral sentiments could not be regarded as having their source in the sympathy, but as preceding it; or, if no moral sentiments of any kind preceded it, the sympathy itself could not afford them more than a mirror, which reflects to us, from the opposite landscape, the sunny hill, the rock, and the trees, gleaming through the spray of the waterfall, could of itself, without any external light, produce all that beautiful variety of colours with which it delights our vision, as if it were the very scene on which we have loved to gaze.

Let us consider, then, with a little nicer analysis, the process of which Dr. Smith speaks, admitting the sympathy for which he contends, and admitting it in the fullest extent which can be conceived necessary to his theory.

In this theory, as you have seen, he has separated our feeling of the propriety or impropriety of the action from our feeling of the merit or demerit of the agent, ascribing the one to our sympathy with the emotions of the agent in the circumstances in which he was placed, the other to our sympathy with the gratitude or resentment of those who have been affected by the action. I have already endeavoured to show you, that we have only one feeling of approvableness, arising on the contemplation of an action, which, as variously referred to the agent or to the action considered abstractly, is at once the felt propriety of the action, and the felt merit of the agent. Indeed, it seems to me as absurd to suppose that we can conceive an action to be wrong, in the moral sense of that word, without any notion of the demerit of the voluntary agent,

or conceive the demerit of the voluntary agent, without any notion of the impropriety of his action, as it would be to suppose that we can imagine a circle without a centre, or a centre without a circle. But let us adopt, without objection, the supposed analysis which Dr. Smith has made of our moral sentiments, and admit, that, in the constitution of these, there are two distinct feelings that give occasion to corresponding moral notions of propriety and merit, which one of these feelings alone could not have produced; in short, let us admit, that we might have conceived an action to be morally wrong, without any demerit on the part of the agent, or have conceived the greatest demerit on his part, without any moral impropriety in his action.

The first supposed sympathy which we have to consider, is that which is said to give occasion to our moral estimates of actions as proper or improper, without regard to the merit or demerit of the agent, that are felt by us only through the medium of another sympathy.

This notion of moral propriety or impropriety, we are told, could not have been produced in us by the most attentive consideration of the action, and of all its circumstances; another process must intervene. We feel the propriety of the action, only because we sympathize with the agent. We make his circumstances our own, and, our passion being in unison with his, we regard it as suitable to the circumstances, and therefore as morally proper.

If we have, indeed, previous notions of moral right and wrong, or some other source in which they may be found, this belief of the propriety of certain feelings that accord with ours, might be sufficiently intelligible; but the most complete sympathy of feelings, the most exact accordancy, is not sufficient to constitute or give rise to the moral sentiments of which we are treating; when there is nothing more than a sympathy of feelings, without that previous moral sentiment, which, in Dr. Smith's system, we must always tacitly presuppose. In the very striking emotions of taste, for example, we may feel, on the perusal of the same poem, the performance of the same musical air, the sight of the same picture, or statue, a rapture or disgust, accordant with the rapture or disgust expressed by another reader, or listener, or spectator; a sympathy far more complete than takes place in our consideration of the circumstances in which he may have had to regulate his conduct in any of the common affairs of life; in which our secondary emotion, if it be at all excited, is excited but faintly. If mere accordance of emotion, then, imply the feeling of moral excellence of any sort, we should certainly feel a moral regard for all whose taste coincides with ours; yet, however gratifying the sympathy in such a case may be, we do not feel, in consequence of this sympathy, any morality in the taste that is most exactly accordant with our own. There is an agreement of emotions, a sort of physical suitableness that is felt by us of the emotions, as effects to the works of art as causes, but nothing more; and if we had not a principle of moral approbation, by which, independently of sympathy, and previously to it, we regard actions as right, the most exact sympathy of passions would, in like manner, have been a proof to us of an agreement of feelings, but of nothing more. It proves to us more, because the emotions, which we compare with our own, are recognised by us as moral feelings, independently of the mere agreement. We do not merely share the sentiments of the agent, but we share his moral sentiments, the recognition of which, as moral sentiments, has preceded our very sympathy.

Why is it that we regard emotions which do not harmonize with our own, not merely as unlike to ours, which is one view of them; but as morally improper, which is a very different view of them? It must surely be, because we regard our own emotions which differ from them as morally proper; and, if we regard our own emotions as proper, before we can judge the emotions which do not harmonize with them to be improper on that account, what influence can the supposed sympathy and comparison have had, in giving birth to that moral sentiment which preceded the comparison? They show us only feelings that differ from ours, and that are improper because ours are proper. The sympathy, therefore, on which the feeling of propriety is said to depend, assumes the previous belief of that very propriety; or, if there be no previous belief of the moral suitableness of our own emotions, there can be no reason, from the mere dissonance of other emotions with ours, to regard these dissonant emotions as morally unsuitable to the circumstances in which they have arisen. We may, perhaps, conceive them to be physically unsuitable, in the same manner as we regard the taste as erroneous, which approves of poetry as sublime that to us appears bombastic or mean; but we can as little feel any moral regard in the one case as in the other, unless we have previously distinguished the one set of emotions as moral emotions, the other set as emotions of taste.

With respect to the former of the two sympathies, then, which Dr. Smith regards as essential to our moral sentiments, the sympathy from which he supposes us to derive our notions of actions, as right or wrong, proper or improper,—that is to say, as morally suitable or unsuitable to the circumstances in which the action takes place; we

have seen that it assumes, as independent of the sympathy, the very feelings to which the sympathy is said to give rise.

Let us next consider the latter of the two sympathies, to which we are said to owe our notion of merit or demerit in the agent, as distinct from the propriety or impropriety of his action.

These sentiments of merit or demerit arise, we are told, not from any direct consideration of the agent and of the circumstances of his action, but from our sympathy with the gratitude or resentment of those who have derived benefit or injury, or at least whom he is supposed to have wished to derive benefit or injury, from that good or evil which he purposed. If, on considering the circumstances of the case, we feel that our emotions of this sort would, in a similar situation, harmonize with theirs; we regard the agent in the same light in which they regard him, as worthy of reward in the one case, or of punishment in the other, that is to say, as having moral merit or demerit.

If our sense of merit were confined to cases in which the action had a direct relation to others, with whose gratitude we might be supposed to sympathize, this theory of merit would at least be more distinctly conceivable. But what are we to think of cases in which the action begins and terminates, without a thought of the happiness of others, in the amelioration of the individual himself; of sacrifices resolutely but silently made to the mere sense of duty; the voluntary relinquishment of luxurious indulgences; the struggle, and at last the victory over appetites and passions that are felt to be inconsistent with the sanctity of virtue; and over habits, still more difficult to be subdued than the very appetites or passions which may have given them their power? In such cases, our sense of the merit of the victor in this noble strife, when we do not think of the gratitude of a single individual, because there is, in truth, no gratitude of which to think, is, notwithstanding, as vivid as if we had around us whole families and tribes of the grateful to excite our sympathy, and to continue to harmonize with it. The world, indeed, the great community of individuals, it may be said, is truly benefited by every increase of virtue in any one of the individuals who compose it; and it may be possible, in this way, to invent some species of gratitude of the whole multitude of mankind, that may be supposed to awake our sympathy, and thus to make us feel a merit even in such cases, which otherwise we should not have felt. But, though it may be possible for us, with due care and effort of thought, to invent this abstract or remote gratitude with which ours may be supposed to harmonize, can it be imagined by any one but the most obstinate defender of a system, that this strange sympathy, of which no one perhaps has been conscious in any case, truly and constantly takes place whenever we thus approve; that we do not feel any merit whatever in the voluntary privations which virtue makes, till we have previously excited ourselves to admire them, by reflecting on a grateful world? Such a reflex thankfulness, if it occur at all, does not occur to one of many thousands, who require, for their instant perception of the merit, only the knowledge of the sacrifices of present enjoyment which have been made, and of the pure motives which led to the sacrifices. It is not only the Hercules who freed the world from robbers and monsters that we admire. We admire, at least, as much, in the beautiful ancient allegory, the same moral hero when he resisted the charms and the solicitations of Pleasure herself. The choice of Hercules, indeed, is fabulous. But the choice which he is fabled to have made, has been the choice of the virtuous of every age; and, in every age, the sacrifices internally and silently made to duty and conscience, have been ranked in merit with the sacrifices which had for their direct object the happiness of others, and for their immediate reward the gratitude of the happy. Why is it that we look with so much honour on the martyr in those early ages of persecution, which, collecting around the victim every instrument of torture, required of him only a few grains of incense to be thrown before a statue, more noble, indeed, than the imperial murderer whom it represented, but still only a statue, the effigy of a being of human form, who, under the purple which clothed him, with the diadem and the sceptre and the altar, far from being a god, was himself one of the lowest of the things which God had made! When placed thus between idolatry and every form of bodily anguish, with life and guilt before him, and death and innocence, the hero of a pure faith looked fearlessly on the cross or on the stake, and calmly and without wrath on the statue which he refused to worship, and on all the ready ministers of cruelty, that were rejoicing in the new work which they had to perform, and the new amusement which they were to give to the impatient crowd,—do we feel that there was no merit in the magnanimity, because we cannot readily discover some gratitude which we may participate? or, if we do feel any merit, is it only on account of some gratitude which we have at last succeeded in discovering? We do not think of any thankfulness of man. We think only of God and virtue, and of the heroic sufferer, to whom God and virtue were all, and the suffering of such a moment nothing.

That our feeling of merit, then, is not a reflected gratitude, but arises from the direct

contemplation of the meritorious action, might, if any proof were necessary, appear sufficiently evident from the equal readiness of this feeling to arise in cases in which it would be difficult to discover any gratitude with which we can be supposed to sympathize, and in which the individual himself, and the circumstances of his action, are all that is before us. But though this and every other objection to Dr. Smith's theory of our feeling of merit were to be abandoned, there would still remain the great objection, that the sympathy which he supposes in this case, as in that formerly examined by us, proceeds on the existence of that very moral sentiment which it is stated by him to produce.

We discover the merit of the agent in any case, it is said, by that sympathetic tendency of our nature, in consequence of which, on considering any particular action, we place ourselves in the situation of those who are benefited by the action, when, if we feel an emotion of gratitude like theirs, we of course consider the agent himself as meritorious, worthy of the reward of which they consider him to be worthy; and, in like manner, on considering any action of injustice or malevolence, we feel the demerit of the agent by sympathizing with the resentment of those whom the action has injured.

Such is the process asserted. But what is it that is truly supposed in this process, as distinguishing the sympathetic and secondary feelings, from the primary feelings of those who were directly concerned?

We place ourselves in the situation of others, or, rather, without willing it, or knowing the change till it is produced, we feel ourselves, by some sudden illusion, as if placed in their situation. In this imaginary sameness of circumstances we have feelings similar to theirs. They view their benefactor as worthy of reward. We, therefore, considering for the moment the benefit as if conferred on us, regard him likewise as worthy of reward: or if they consider him worthy of punishment, we too consider him worthy of punishment. Their gratitude or resentment is founded on real benefit received, or real injury. Our gratitude or resentment is founded on the illusive momentary belief of benefit or injury. But this difference of reality and illusion in the circumstances which give occasion to them, is the only difference of the feelings; unless, indeed, that as the illusion cannot be of very long continuance, and is, probably, even while it lasts, less powerful than the reality, our sympathetic feelings, however similar in kind, may be supposed to be weaker in degree.

The effect of the sympathy, then, being only to transfuse into our breasts the gratitude or resentment of those who have been immediately benefited or injured by any generous or malevolent action, if the original gratitude imply belief of merit in the object of the gratitude, and the original resentment imply belief of demerit in its object, we may, by our sympathy with these direct original feelings, be impressed with similar belief of merit or demerit. But, in this case, it is equally evident that if our reflex gratitude and resentment involve notions of merit and demerit, the original gratitude and resentment which we feel by reflection must in like manner have involved them; and must even have involved them with more vivid feeling, since the difference of vividness was the chief or only circumstance of difference in the direct and the sympathetic emotions. The sympathy, then, to which we are supposed to owe our moral sentiments of merit and demerit, presupposes those very sentiments; since the feelings which arise in us by sympathy, only from the illusion by which we place ourselves in the situation of others, must, in those who were truly in that very situation, have arisen directly with at least equal power. It is some previous gratitude with which we sympathize; it is some previous resentment with which we sympathize; and merit is said to be only that worthiness of reward which the gratitude itself implies, and demerit that worthiness of punishment which is implied in the primary resentment. If the feeling of gratitude implied no notion of any relation of worthiness, which our benefactor's generosity bears to the reward which we wish that we were capable of bestowing on him, and our resentment, in like manner, implied no notion of a similar relation of the injustice or cruelty of him who has injured us, to that punishment of his offence which we wish and anticipate, we might then, indeed, be obliged to seek some other source of these felt relations. But if the actual gratitude or resentment of those who have profited or suffered imply no feelings of merit or demerit, we may be certain, at least, that in whatever source we are to strive to discover these feelings, it is not in the mere reflection of a fainter gratitude or resentment that we can hope to find them.

After admitting to Dr. Smith, then, every thing which he could be supposed to claim, or even to wish to claim, with respect to the universality, the steadiness, and the vividness of our sympathetic feelings, we have seen, that in both the sympathies which he supposes to take place, that from which we are said to derive our moral sentiments of the propriety or impropriety of actions, and that from which we are said, in like manner, to derive our moral sentiments of merit or demerit in the agent, the process to which he ascribes the origin of these mo-

ral sentiments cannot even be understood without the belief of their previous existence. The feelings with which we sympathize are themselves moral feelings or sentiments; or if they are not moral feelings, the reflection of them from a thousand breasts cannot alter their nature.

LECTURE LXXXI.

EXAMINATION OF DR. SMITH'S SYSTEM CONCLUDED; RECAPITULATION OF THE DOCTRINES OF MORAL APPROBATION.

My last Lecture, Gentlemen, was chiefly employed in considering a theory of our moral sentiments which has been stated and defended with great eloquence by one of the profoundest philosophers whom our country and our science can boast; a theory which founds our moral sentiments, not on the direct contemplation of the actions which we term virtuous, but on a sympathy, which it is impossible for us not to feel, with the emotions of the agent in the circumstances in which he has been placed, and with the emotions also of those to whom his actions have been productive of benefit or injury; our direct sympathy with the agent giving rise to our notion of the propriety of his action, our indirect sympathy with those whom his actions have benefited or injured giving rise to our notions of merit or demerit in the agent himself. Both these supposed sympathies I examined with a more minute review than that to which they have usually been submitted; and, in both cases we found, that even though many other strong objections to which the theory is liable were abandoned, and though the process for which the theorist contends were allowed to take place to the fullest extent to which he contends for it, his system would still be liable to the insuperable objection, that the moral sentiments which he ascribes to our secondary feelings of mere sympathy, are assumed as previously existing in those original emotions with which the secondary feelings are said to be in unison. If those to whom an action has directly related are incapable of discovering, by the longest and minutest examination of it, however much they may have been benefited by it or injured, and intentionally benefited or injured, any traces of right or wrong, merit or demerit, in the performer of the action, those whose sympathy consists merely in an illusory participation of the same interest, cannot surely derive, from the fainter reflex feelings, that moral knowledge which even the more vivid primary emotions were incapable of affording, any more than we can be supposed to acquire, from the most faithful echo, important truths that were never uttered by the voices which it reflects. The utmost influence of the liveliest sympathy can be only to render the momentary feelings the same, as if the identity of situation with the object of the sympathy were not illusive, but real; and what it would be impossible for the mind to feel, if really existing in the circumstances supposed, it must be impossible for it also to feel, when it believes itself to exist in them, and is affected in the same manner, as if truly that very mind with whose emotions it sympathizes.

If, indeed, we had previously any moral notions of actions as right or wrong, we might very easily judge of the propriety or impropriety of the sentiments of others, according as our own do or do not sympathize with them; and it is this previous feeling of propriety or impropriety which Dr. Smith tacitly assumes, even in contending for the exclusive influence of the sympathy, as itself the original source of every moral sentiment. The sentiments of others could not fail, indeed, in that case to appear to us proper, if they coincided with sentiments which we had before, in our own mind, recognised as proper, or morally suitable to the circumstances; improper if they differed from these. But if we have no previous moral notions whatever, the most exact sympathy of feelings can tell us only that our feelings are similar to the feelings of some other person, which they may be as much when they are vicious as when they are virtuous, or when they are neither virtuous nor vicious; the most complete dissonance, in like manner, can tell us only that our feelings are not similar to those of some other person. When another calls scarlet or green what we have previously felt to be scarlet or green, we think that his vision and ours agree; but we presuppose, in him as in ourselves, that visual sensibility which distinguished the colours, and we do not consider him an object of moral regard, because his vision coincides with ours. When he is affected with a delightful emotion similar to ours, on the contemplation of a work of art, we acknowledge mentally, and are pleased perhaps with this coincidence of taste. But the coincidence does not seem to us to be that which constitutes the emotion of taste. On the contrary, it presupposes in both an independent susceptibility of these emotions, by which we should, individually, have admired what is beautiful, and distinguished from it what is ugly, though no one had been present with us to participate our sentiments. When, in like manner, we admire, with vivid approbation, some generous action,—that is to say, according to Dr. Smith's language, when we sympathize with the feelings of any one in the circumstances in which he has been

placed, we have a coincidence of feelings, indeed, as exact, though probably not more exact, than in a case of simple vision or admiration of some work of art, in which no moral sentiment was felt; and this very coincidence, in like manner, presupposes a capacity of distinguishing and admiring what is right, without which there would have been a similarity of feelings and nothing more, precisely as in the other cases. It is not a mere coincidence of feeling, however, which we recognise in our moral sentiments, like that which we recognise in the most exact coincidence of taste. We feel not merely that another has acted as we should have done, and that his motives, in similar circumstances, have been similar to ours. We feel that, in acting as he has done, he has acted properly; because, independently of the sympathy which merely gives us feelings to measure with our own, as we might measure with our own any other species of feelings, we are impressed with the propriety of the sentiments, according to which we trust that we should ourselves have acted; so thoroughly impressed with these previous distinctions of right and wrong, that, in the opposite case of some act of atrocious delinquency, no sympathy in vice of one villain with another can make the common crime seem a virtue in the eyes of his accomplice, who is actuated by similar motives, and, therefore, by similar feelings, in a sympathy of the finest unison, when he adds his arm to the rapine and afterwards to the murder which is to conceal and to consummate the guilt.

The moral sentiments which we have as yet considered, are those which relate to the conduct and feelings of others. The same inconsistency which we found in the theory of these, is to be found, as might be supposed, in the application of the principle to other species of supposed sympathy which we have still to consider, in the sentiments which we form of our own moral conduct. That we should be capable, indeed, of forming a moral estimate of our own actions, from the direct contemplation of the circumstances in which we may have been placed, and of the good or evil which we may have intentionally produced, would evidently be subversive of the whole theory of sympathy; since, with the same knowledge of circumstances and of intention, if we could form any moral judgment of our own actions, we might be equally capable of forming some moral judgment of the actions of others. It was absolutely necessary, therefore, for Dr. Smith to maintain, that we have no power of judging of our own actions directly,—that, knowing the choice which we have made, and all the circumstances which led to our choice, and all the consequences of benefit or injury to individuals and to the world, which our choice may have produced, it is yet absolutely impossible for us to distinguish, without the aid of the real or supposed sentiments of others, any difference of propriety or impropriety, right or wrong, merit or demerit, or whatever other names we may use to express the differences of vice and virtue; though our vice had been the atrocious fury plunging a dagger in the heart of her who had been our happiness in many connubial years, and who was slumbering beside us on the same pillow, in the calmness of unsuspecting love; or our virtue the clemency of drawing back from the bosom of the assassin whom we had laid at our feet, the dagger which we had wrenched from his murderous hand. Even of actions so different as these, it would be absolutely impossible for us, we are told, to form any moral distinction, if we were to look on them only with our own eyes, and measure them by the feelings of our own heart. Before the one can appear to us less virtuous than the other, we must imagine some witnesses or hearers of what has been done, and sympathize with their sympathy. Such is the process which Dr. Smith believes to take place. But surely, if our original feelings, on the consideration of all the circumstances of an action, involve no notion of right or wrong, the sympathy with our feelings, or our sympathy with that sympathy, or even an infinite series of reciprocal sympathies, if these should be thought necessary, cannot afford the moral notions of which the original feelings, themselves more vivid, afforded no elements. If the impartial spectator be able to discover merit or demerit, by making our case his own, and becoming conscious as it were of our feelings; our feelings, which he thus makes his own, must speak to us with the same voice of moral instruction with which, during his temporary illusion, they speak to him. If, considering our action and all its consequences, we cannot discover any merit or demerit, they, considering our action in all its circumstances as theirs, must be alike insensible of any merit or demerit: or, if they have feelings essentially different from ours, they have not made our case their own, and what is misnamed sympathy has not been sympathy. Unless we presuppose, as I before said, on their part some moral notions of what is right or wrong, meritorious or worthy of punishment, by which they may measure our conduct and feelings, all the knowledge which the most complete sympathy can afford, is merely that they have certain feelings, that we have had certain feelings, and that these feelings are similar to each other, as our feelings have coincided before in various other emotions, perceptions, judgments that involved or suggested no moral notion whatever.

We have now then considered, both in its relation to our sentiments of our own moral conduct and in its relation to our sentiments of the conduct of others, the very celebrated theory of Dr. Smith, a theory which I cannot but regard as involving in morals the same error that would be involved in a theory of the source of light, if an optician, after showing us many ingenious contrivances, by which an image of some beautiful form may be made to pass from one visible place to another, were to contend that all the magnificent radiations of that more than ethereal splendour which does not merely adorn the day, but constitutes the day, had their primary origin in reflection, when reflection itself implies, and cannot be understood but as implying the previous incidence, and therefore the previous existence of the light which is reflected. A mirror presents to us a fainter copy of external things; but it is a copy which it presents. We are in like manner, to each other, mirrors that reflect from breast to breast joy, sorrow, indignation, and all the vivid emotions of which the individual mind is susceptible; but though, as mirrors, we mutually give and receive emotions, these emotions must have been felt before they could be communicated. To ascribe original moral feelings to this mental reflection, is truly, then, as much an error, in the theory of morality, as the doctrine of the production of light by reflection without the previous incidence of light, would be an error in the theory of catoptrics.

The argument, after the fuller views of it which I have given, may be recapitulated in very brief compass.

There are only two senses in which sympathy can be understood; one having immediate relation to the feelings, the other to the situation, of him with whom we are said to sympathize. We partake his emotions directly, as if by instant contagion; or we partake them indirectly, by first imagining ourselves in the circumstances in which he is placed; the emotion, in this latter case, being similar merely because the situation, in which we imagine ourselves for the moment, is similar, and arising in us when the situation is imagined to be ours, precisely in the same manner, and according to the same principles, as it arose in the mind of him who truly existed in the circumstances in which our imagination only has placed us. In either case it is equally evident, that sympathy cannot be the source of any additional knowledge; it only gives a wider diffusion to feelings that previously exist, or that might have previously existed. If it reflect to us the very emotions of others, as if by contagion, without any intervening influence of imagination on our part, it reflects feelings that have been directly excited in them, the primary subjects of the feelings, by their real situation; and which they would not the less have had, though no one had been present to sympathize with them, or even though the tendency to sympathy had not formed a part of the mental constitution. If, on the other hand, sympathy do not reflect to us the very emotions of others, but make us first enter, by a sort of spiritual transmigration, into their situation, and thus indirectly impress us with their feelings; it still, in making their situation ours, while the illusion lasts, excites in us only the feelings which we should have had, if the situation had been really ours; and which the same tendencies to emotion that produce them now would then have produced, though no sympathy whatever had been concerned in the process. All which is peculiar to the sympathy is, that instead of one mind only, affected with certain feelings, there are two minds affected with certain feelings, and a recognition of the similarity of these feelings; a similarity which, far from being confined to our moral emotions, may occur as readily and as frequently in every other feeling of which the mind is susceptible. What produces the moral notions, therefore, must evidently be something more than a recognition of similarity of feeling which is thus common to feelings of every class. There must be an independent capacity of moral emotion, in consequence of which we judge those sentiments of conduct to be right which coincide with sentiments of conduct previously recognised as right, or the sentiments of others to be improper, because they are not in unison with those which we have previously distinguished as proper. Sympathy, then, may be the diffuser of moral sentiments, as of various other feelings; but if no moral sentiments exist previously to our sympathy, our sympathy itself cannot give rise to them.

Such in outline, is the great objection to Dr. Smith's theory, as a theory of our moral sentiments. It professes to explain, by the intervention of sympathy, feelings which must have existed previously to the sympathy, or at least, without the capacity of which, as original feelings, in the real circumstances supposed, the illusive reality which sympathy produces would have been incapable of developing them. It is on a mere assumption then, or rather on an inconsistency still more illogical than a mere assumption, that the great doctrine of his system is founded; yet notwithstanding this essential defect, which might seem to you inconsistent with the praise that was given when I entered on the examination of it, the work of Dr. Smith is, without all question, one of the most interesting works, perhaps I should have said the most interesting work, in moral science. It is valuable, however, as I before remarked, not for the leading doctrine of which we have

seen the futility, but for the minor theories which are adduced in illustration of it, for the refined analysis which it exhibits in many of these details, and for an eloquence which, adapting itself to all the temporary varieties of its subject, familiar with a sort of majestic grace, and simple even in its magnificence, can play amid the little decencies and proprieties of common life, or rise to all the dignity of that sublime and celestial virtue which it seems to bring from heaven indeed, but to bring down gently and humbly to the humble bosom of man.

That his own penetrating mind should not have discovered the inconsistencies that are involved in his theory, and that these should not have readily occurred to the many philosophic readers and admirers of his work, may in part have arisen, as many other seeming wonders of the kind have arisen, from the ambiguities of language. The meaning of the important word sympathy is not sufficiently definite, so as to present always one clear notion to the mind. It is generally employed, indeed, to signify a mere participation of the feelings of others; but it is also frequently used as significant of approbation itself. To say that we sympathize with any one in what he has felt or done, means often that we thoroughly approve of his feelings; and in consequence of this occasional use of the term as synonymous with approbation, the theory which would identify all our moral approbation with sympathy, was, I cannot but think, more readily admitted, both by its author, and by those who have followed him; since what was not true of sympathy, in its strict philosophic sense, was yet true of it in its mixed popular sense. Indeed, if the word had been always strictly confined to its two accurate meanings, as significant either of the mere direct participation of feelings previously existing, or of the indirect participation of them in consequence of the illusive belief of similarity of circumstances, it seems to me as little possible that any one should have thought of ascribing to sympathy original feelings, as, in the analogous cases which I before instanced, of ascribing to an echo the original utterance of the voices which it sends to our ear, or the production of the colours which it sends to our eye to the mirror which has only received and reflected them.

Of all the principles of our mixed nature, sympathy is perhaps one of the most irregular, varying not in different individuals only, but even in the same individual in different hours or different minutes of the same day, and varying, not with slight differences, but with differences of promptness and liveliness, with which only feelings the most capricious could be commensurable. If our virtue and vice, therefore, or our views of actions as right or wrong, varied with our sympathy, we might be virtuous at morning, vicious at noon, and virtuous again at night, without any change in the circumstances of our action, except in our greater or less tendency to vividness of sympathy, or to the expectation of more or less vivid sympathies in others. How absurd and impertinent seems to us, in our serious hours, the mirth that in more careless moments would have won from us not our smile only, but our full sympathy of equal laughter; and how dull, when our mind is sportive, seems to us the gravity of the sad and serious, of the venerable moralizers on years that are long past, and years that are present,—to whose chair, under the influence of any sorrow that depressed us, we loved to draw our own, while we felt a sort of comfort as we listened to them, in the slow and tranquil tone, and the gentle solemnity of their fixed but placid features. What is true of our sympathy with mere mirth or sadness, is true of every other species of sympathy. Original temperament, habit, the slightest accident of good or bad fortune, may modify in no slight degree the readiness, or at least the liveliness of moral sympathy with which we should have entered into the feelings of others, into their gratitude or anger, or common love or hate; and if, therefore, our estimate of the propriety or impropriety of actions had been altogether dependent on the force of our mere sympathetic emotion, it would not have been very wonderful if the greater number of mankind had regarded the very propriety or impropriety, as not less accidental than the sympathies from which they flowed.

Having now, then, examined all the systems of philosophers which may be considered as more or less directly opposed to the simple view which I gave you of our moral constitution, in which our notions of moral obligation, virtue, merit, were traced to a single feeling of the mind, and the susceptibility of this feeling found to be as truly original in the mind as any of its other powers or susceptibilities—its capacity, for example, of memory, judgment, love, hate, hope, fear—I flatter myself, that the evident inadequacy of every system which professes to account for the moral phenomena, without this original distinctive principle, will be regarded as at least a strong corroboration of the positive evidence of the theory which has been submitted to you. The review in which we have been engaged may, therefore, I hope, be of double value, both as giving you a sketch of the opinions of the most eminent philosophers who have written on this most interesting subject, and an exposition of the errors of those opinions, which in many instances it requires considerable minuteness of analysis to detect, and as enabling you at the same time, better to appreciate the truth of those original distinctions

of moral good and evil, the belief of which seems to me as just in philosophy as it is salutary in its practical tendencies, and delightful to the heart that loves virtue, and that, feeling in itself all the blessings which virtue diffuses, perceives with joy that the principle which gives to life all its happiness, is a principle that does not depend for its development on accidents of worldly station, or time or place, but in all regions, and ages, and circumstances of fortune, is coeval with the race of man, and present with its joys or consolations, which it is always ready to offer to our very wishes, wherever a human being exists.

The review itself, however—important as it may have been in its relation to the history of moral science, and to the great truths which it is the object of moral science to develop and illustrate—has presented to your attention so many explanations, or rather so many attempted explanations, of the same moral phenomena, that the rapid succession of these different opinions may have tended, perhaps—at least in the minds of such of you as are not accustomed to consider together and compare many discordant systems—to perplex and obscure the notions which you had derived from the view of the subject as it was originally presented to you. It may be of advantage, therefore, to take a short retrospect of our original speculation.

In surveying either our own conduct, or the conduct of others, we do not regard the actions that come under our review as merely useful or hurtful, in the same manner as we regard inanimate things, or parts even of our living mental constitution, that are independent of our will. There is a peculiar set of emotions, to which the actions of voluntary agents in certain circumstances give rise, that are the source of our moral sentiments, or rather which are themselves our moral sentiments, when considered in reference to the actions that excite them. To these emotions we give the name of moral approbation or moral disapprobation, feelings that are of various degrees of vividness as the actions which we consider are various. The single principle upon which these feelings depend, is the source of all our moral notions; one feeling of approbation, as variously regarded in time, being all which is truly meant when we speak of moral obligation, virtue, and merit, that in the works of ethical writers are commonly treated as objects of distinct inquiry; and that, in consequence of the distinct inquiries to which they have led, and the vain attempts to discover essential differences where none truly exist, have occasioned so much confusion of thought and verbal tautology as to throw a sort of darkness on morality itself. Instead, then, of inquiring first, what it is which constitutes virtue, and then what it is which constitutes merit, and then what it is which constitutes our moral obligation to do what we have seen to be right and meritorious, we found that one inquiry alone was necessary—what actions excite in us, when contemplated, a certain vivid feeling—since this approving sentiment alone, in its various references, is all which we seek in these different verbal inquiries. If a particular action be meditated by us, and we feel, on considering it, that it is one of those which, if performed by us, will be followed in our own mind by the painful feeling of self reproach, and in the minds of others by similar disapprobation; if a different action be meditated by us, and we feel that our performance of it would be followed in our own mind and the minds of others by an opposite emotion of approbation, this view of the moral emotions that are consequences of the actions is that which I consider as forming what is termed moral obligation, the moral inducement which we feel to the performance of certain actions, or to abstinence from certain other actions. We are virtuous if we act in conformity with this view of moral obligation; we are vicious if we act in opposition to it; virtuous and vicious meaning nothing more than the intentional performance of actions that excite, when contemplated, the moral emotions. Our action, in the one case, we term morally right, in the other case morally wrong; right and wrong, like virtue and vice, being only words that express briefly the actions which are attended with the feeling of moral approbation in the one case, of moral disapprobation in the other case. When we speak of the merit of any one, or of his demerit, we do not suppose any thing to be added to the virtue or vice; we only express, in other words, the fact, that he has performed the action which it was virtuous or vicious to perform; the action which, as contemplated by us, excites our approval, or the emotion that is opposite to that of approval. Moral obligation, virtue, vice, right, wrong, merit, demerit, and whatever other words may be synonymous with these, all denote then, as you perceive, relations to one simple feeling of the mind, the distinctive sentiment of moral approbation or disapprobation, which arises on the contemplation of certain actions; and which seems itself to be various, only because the action of which we speak or think, meditated, willed, or already performed, is variously regarded by us, in time, as future, present, past. There are, in short, certain actions which cannot be contemplated without the instant feeling of approval, and which may therefore be denominated morally right. To feel this character of approvableness in an action which we have not yet performed, and are only meditating on it as future, is to feel the moral obligation or moral, inducement to perform it;—

when we think of the action in the moment of volition, we term the voluntary performance of it virtue; when we think of the action, as already performed, we denominate it merit; in all which cases, if we analyze our moral sentiment, we cannot fail to discern, that it is one constant feeling of moral approval, with which we have been impressed, that is varied only by the difference of the time, at which we regard the action as future, immediate, or past.

A great part of the confusion which has prevailed in the theory of morals, has arisen, I have little doubt, from indistinctness of conception with respect to the identity or the difference of these moral notions of obligation, virtue, merit. Much of the confusion also, I have as little doubt, has arisen from the abuse of one very simple abstraction—that by which we consider an action as stripped of circumstances peculiar to an individual agent, and forming, as it were, something of itself, which could be an object of moral regard, independently of the agent. We thus learn to speak of actions that are absolutely right and relatively wrong, or absolutely wrong and relatively right; that is to say, of actions which are right when the agent, with his particular views, is wrong; and of agents that continue as meritorious as before, when their actions, in ordinary circumstances, would have been ranked in some degree of delinquency. Convenient as these distinctions may verbally have been in some cases, where brevity was the only advantage desired, they have had an injurious tendency, in other more important respects, by leading the inconsiderate to suppose, that of actions which are thus at once right and wrong, the morality cannot be very stable and definite. I was careful, therefore, to point out to you the nature of the abstraction, and the futility of any distinction more than what is purely verbal, of absolute and relative rectitude. What is absolutely right is relatively right, what is relatively right is absolutely right. An action cannot excite feelings different from those which an agent excites, for it is itself the agent, or it is nothing. It is the brief expression of some agent, real or supposed, placed in certain circumstances, willing and producing certain effects; and when an action, which in one set of circumstances is right, is said to be wrong in other circumstances, the action of which we speak, in the new circumstances supposed, is truly, as I showed you, a different action, in the only sense in which an action has any meaning, as significant of a living being, having certain definite views, and producing certain definite effects. A clear view of this definition of an action, as uniformly comprehending in it the notion of some agent, without whom it would be nothing—though, but for the general misconception on the subject, it would seem to me so obvious as scarcely to require to be pointed out—is, in consequence of that general misconception, one of the most important views in the philosophy of morals which you can make familiar to your mind. It is no small progress in Ethics, as in Physics, to have learned to distinguish accurately abstractions from realities, to know that an action is only another name for an agent in certain circumstances; virtue, vice, only briefer expressions of an agent virtuous or vicious, that is to say, of an agent performing actions of which we and mankind in general approve or disapprove. Indeed, I scarcely know a single ethical writer, to whose mind the nature of these and other similar abstractions has been duly present; and who does not sometimes think, or at least speak, of virtue and vice, as beings that have certain properties, independently of all the virtuous and vicious in the universe.

Though there is not vice or virtue, however, there are virtuous or vicious agents. Certain actions, as soon as considered, excite a feeling of approbation, which leads us to class them together as virtuous; certain other actions excite a feeling of moral disapprobation, which leads us to class them together as vicious. There is, then, in the mind of each individual, a principle which leads him thus to divide actions into two great classes. But if, in the minds of different individuals, this distinction were very differently formed, so that the actions which seemed virtues to one were the very actions which seemed vices to another, it is evident that the social happiness, and even the social union of mankind, could not be preserved in this strange mixture of love and hate, of crimes and virtues, rewarded or punished, as the admirers of truth or deceit, of cruelty or benevolence, chanced to obtain a precarious superiority in numbers or power. It is necessary for general peace, even though no other relation were to be considered, that there should be some great rules of conduct, according to which all may direct their actions in one harmonious course of virtue; or according to which, at least, in any partial discord of the actions of individuals, the moral sentiment of the community may be harmoniously directed, in checking what would be generally injurious, and furthering what would be generally beneficial. There is, therefore, we found, such an accordance of sentiment—of sentiment that is directed by the provident benevolence of God to the happiness of all who live in the great social communion of mankind, even when the individual, acting in conformity with the sentiment, has no thought beyond the sufferer whose anguish he relieves, or the friend to whose happiness he feels it more than happiness to contribute, or the preservation of his own internal character of moral excellence, in cases in which pain is encoun-

tered or pleasure sacrificed with no other object than that moral excellence itself. Since the world was created there have indeed been myriads of human beings on the earth; but there has been only one God, and there is only one God. There is, therefore, only one great voice of approbation in all the myriads of mankind; because He, the great approver and the great former of our moral constitution, is one. We may refrain from virtue; we may persecute virtue; but, though our actions may be the actions of hatred, there is a silent reverence which no hatred can suppress. The omnipresent Judge of human actions speaks in the cause of the wicked as in the cause of the good, and has made it impossible for us, even in the wildest abuses of our power, not to revere, at least in heart, the virtue which he has honoured with his love.

In asserting the wide accordance of this moral voice, however, it was necessary to consider the objections to the harmony of sentiment which have been drawn from some practices and institutions that seem, at least as first considered, to be proofs of discord rather than harmony. That there are instances, and many instances of such apparent anomaly, it would have been absurd to endeavour to disprove. But it might still be inquired, whether even these instances are really anomalous, or only seem so, from erroneous opinions of the nature of that modified agreement which alone is necessary to the supporter of the original tendencies,—distinctive emotions of vice and virtue.

This consideration of the species of accordance which the moral phenomena might, from our knowledge of the general nature of the mind, be expected to indicate, on the supposition of an original principle of moral feeling, led us into some very interesting trains of inquiry; of which the result was the ascertainment of certain limits, within which remains, unaffected by the sophistries opposed to it, all that uniformity for which it is wisdom to contend,—limits that do not imply any defect of original tendency to certain moral emotions, but only the operation of other causes, that concur with this original influence; and that might, *a priori*, have been expected to have this modifying effect, if, without considering any of the objections urged, we had only reflected on the analogous phenomena of other principles of the mind, that are allowed to be essential to it and universal, and that are yet capable of similar modification.

The limitations to which we were led were of three kinds,—first, the temporary influence of every feeling that completely occupies the mind, especially of any violent passion, which blinds us at the moment to moral distinctions,—that is to say, prevents, by its own vividness, the rise of the less vivid feelings of approbation or disapprobation; in the same manner as, in similar circumstances, it would blind to the discernment even of the universal truths of science,—that is to say, would not allow us to perceive for the time the simplest and least mutable of all relations,—the proportions of number and quantity,—if an arithmetician or geometer, when we were under the influence of anger, sudden jealousy, or any other violent emotion, were to discourse to us calmly of square or cube roots, or of the properties of right angled triangles. These arithmetical or geometrical properties we discover readily, when our passion has subsided; and, in like manner, we discover readily, when our passion has wholly subsided, the moral distinctions which we were incapable of perceiving before.

A second limitation, which we found it necessary to form, arises from the complex results of good and evil, in a single action,—the difficulty of calculating the preponderance of good or evil, according to which felt preponderance alone, our approbation or disapprobation arises,—and the various degrees of importance attached, and justly attached, in different ages and nations, to parts of the complex result, which are most in harmony with the spirit of the nation or the age; that is to say, which tend, or are conceived to tend, most to the production of that particular national good, which it may have been an error in policy, indeed, to desire, but which still was the object of a policy, wise or unwise. What we esteem evil upon the whole, others may esteem good upon the whole; because there is, in truth, a mixture of good and evil, the parts of which may be variously estimated, but of which no one loves the evil as evil, or hates the good as good. It is some form of good, which is present to the mind of the agent, when he regards as morally right, that compound result of good and evil, of which we, with better discernment, appreciate better the relative amount. Even the atrocious virtues, if I may use that combination of words, of which voyagers relate to us instances in savage life, or which have sometimes prevailed even in nations more civilized, we found in our inquiry, might very naturally, without any defect, or inconsistency of moral emotion, arise from some misconception of this sort. Vices may everywhere be found prevailing as vices; but when they are generally revered as virtues, it is because there is in them something which is truly, in those circumstances, virtue, however inferior the amount of good may be to the amount of evil. It is for some prominent moral good, however, that they are approved; and the defective analysis, which does not perceive the amount of accompanying evil, is an error of judgment, not an approbation of that which is injurious to individuals or mankind, for the sake of that very injury.

The third limitation which we were led to form, is that which arises from the influence of the associating principle,—an influence that concurs with the former in almost every instance, and promotes it. When actions have complicated results, this principle may lead us to think more of one part of the result than of another part; and, by the remembrances which it yields of the virtues of those whom we have loved, adds all the force of its own lively impressions to the particular virtues that are so recommended to us, or to actions that might otherwise have been absolutely indifferent. This influence, however, far from disproving the reality of original tendencies to moral feeling, is, as I showed you, in many of the cases in which it operates most powerfully, one of the most interesting exemplifications of these very moral emotions. It is by loving those whom it is virtue to love, that we learn often to value too highly, what otherwise we should have valued with a juster estimate. The same principle we found too to operate strongly in exciting through the medium of general terms and general rules, a disproportionate emotion in some cases, in which we have learned to apply to individual cases, an emotion that has resulted from many previous analogous emotions.

Such are the limits within which alone the original tendency of our nature to certain moral emotions, and the consequent accordance of moral distinctions can be defended, —but, within these limits, it may safely be maintained. There is in our breast a susceptibility of moral emotion, by which we approve or condemn; and the principle which thus approves or condemns in us, is the noblest of the ties that connect us with the universal community of mankind.

LECTURE LXXXII.

OF THE USE OF THE TERM MORAL SENSE; ARRANGEMENT OF THE PRACTICAL VIRTUES.

Gentlemen, in my Lecture yesterday, after concluding my remarks on the theory of our moral sentiments, which Dr. Smith has proposed,—the last of the theories on this subject, which required our consideration, as differing in its principles from the view which I have given you, I briefly recapitulated the general doctrines which we had previously been led to form of the phenomena of moral approbation.

All our moral sentiments, then, of obligation, virtue, merit, are in themselves, as we have seen, nothing more than one simple feeling, variously referred to actions, as future, present, or past. With the loss of the susceptibility of this one peculiar species of emotion, all practical morality would instantly cease: for, if the contemplation of actions excited in us no feeling of approval, no foresight, that, by omitting to perform them, we should regard ourselves, and others would regard us, with abhorrence or contempt, or at least with disapprobation, it would be absurd to suppose that there could be any moral obligation to perform certain actions and not to perform certain other actions, which seemed to us, morally, equal and indifferent. There could, in like manner, be no virtue nor vice in performing, and no merit nor demerit in having performed an action, the omission of which would have seemed to the agent as little proper, or as little improper as the performance of it,—in that state of equal indiscriminate regard or disregard, in which the plunderer and the plundered, the oppressor and the oppressed, were considered only as the physical producers of a different result of happiness or misery.

It is by this one susceptibility, then, of certain vivid distinctive emotions, that we become truly moral beings, united, under the guardianship of Heaven, in one great social system, benefiting and benefited, and not enjoying the advantage of this mutual protection, only in the protection itself, that is constantly around us; but enjoying also the pleasure of affording the reciprocal benefit, and even a sort of pleasure of no slight amount, in the various wants themselves, which are scarcely felt as wants, when we know that they are to be remedied by the kind hearts and gentle hands, whose offices of aid we have before delighted to receive, and are in perfect confidence of again receiving. Such is the great system of social duties that connects mankind by ties, of which our souls do not feel the power less truly, because they are ties, which only the soul can feel, and which do not come within the sphere of our bodily perception. By that delightful emotion, which follows the contemplation of virtue, we can enjoy it, even while it is not exercised, in all its aspects as past, or future, as much as present. In our meditations on it, it is like some tranquil delight that awaits us, which, in the very act of virtue, comes like an immediate reward to actions that seem to need no other recompense, while they are thus rewarded; and to look back upon the generous toil, or the general self-privation, as among the things which have been, is at once to enjoy again the past delight, and to feel in it a sort of pledge of future returns of similar enjoyment, —increased trust of being able and worthy to perform again, whenever the opportunity of them shall recur, actions as worthy of delight, and as delightful.

It is by this unceasing delight, which Virtue is ever spreading out before us, not mere-

ly in the direct exercise of the actions which we term virtuous, but in the contemplation of them as future in our wishes, or as past, in the remembrances of a good conscience, that moral excellence is truly and philosophically worthy of the glorious distinction, by which the author of the Essay on Man would characterize it, of being what "alone is happiness below."

> The only point, where human bliss stands still,
> And tastes the good, without the fall to ill;
> Where only Merit constant pay receives,
> Is blest, in what it takes and what it gives;
> The joy unequall'd, if its end it gain,
> And, if it lose, attended with no pain;
> Without satiety, though e'er so blest,
> And but more relish'd, as the more distress'd;
> The broadest mirth unfeeling Folly wears,
> Less pleasing far, than Virtue's very tears;
> Good from each object, from each place acquir'd,
> For ever exercis'd, yet never tir'd;
> Never elated, while one man's opprest,
> Never dejected, while another's blest,
> And where no wants, no wishes, can remain,'
> Since but to wish more virtue is to gain.

In tracing to an original susceptibility of the mind our moral feelings of obligation in the conception of certain actions as future, of virtue, in the present performance or wish to perform certain actions, and of merit, in the past performance or past resolution to perform certain actions, we may be considered as arriving at a principle like that which Dr. Hutcheson, after Lord Shaftesbury, has distinguished by the name of the Moral Sense, and of which, as an essential principle of our constitution, he has defended the reality with so much power of argument, in his various works on morals. In our moral feelings, however, I discover no peculiar analogy to perceptions or sensations, in the philosophic meaning of those terms, and the phrase moral sense, therefore, I consider as having had a very unfortunate influence on the controversy as to the original moral differences of actions, from the false analogies which it cannot fail to suggest. Were I to speak of a moral sense at present, you would understand me as speaking rather metaphorically, than according to the real place which we should be inclined to give in our arrangement, to the original principle of our nature, on which the moral emotions depend. But by Hutcheson it was asserted to be truly and strictly a sense, as much a sense as any of those which are the source of our direct external perceptions; and though this difference of nomenclature and of arrangement on his part, evidently arose from a misconception, or, at least, a very loose meaning of the word sense, different from that in which it is commonly understood, as limited to the feelings which we acquire directly from affections of our bodily organs, still this loose meaning of the term which he intended it to convey, was, in some measure, mingled and confused in the minds of others, with the stricter meaning commonly assigned to it, and the assertion of a moral sense has been regarded almost as the assertion of the existence of some primary medium of perception, which conveys to us directly moral knowledge, as the eye enables us to distinguish directly the varieties of colours, or the ear the varieties of sounds; and the scepticism, which would have been just with respect to such an organ of exclusive moral feeling, has been unfortunately extended to the certain moral principle itself, as an original principle of our nature. Of the impropriety of ascribing the moral feelings to a sense, I am fully aware then, and the place which I have assigned to them among the moral phenomena is, therefore, very different. In the emotions, which the contemplation of the voluntary actions of those around us produces, there is nothing that seems to demand, for the production of such emotions, a peculiar sense, more than is to be found in any of our other emotions. Certain actions excite in us, when contemplated, the vivid feelings which we express too coldly when, from the poverty of language, we term them approbation or disapprobation, and which are not estimates formed by an approving or disapproving judgment, but emotions that accompany and give warmth to such estimates. Certain other objects of thought excite in us other vivid feelings that are in like manner classed as emotions,—hope, jealousy, resentment; and, therefore, if all emotions, excited by the contemplation of objects, were to be referred to a peculiar sense, we might as well speak of a sense of those emotions or of a sense of covetousness or despair as of a sense of moral regard. If sense, indeed, were understood in this case to be synonymous with mere susceptibility, so that, when we speak of a moral sense, we were to be understood to mean only a susceptibility of moral feeling of some sort, we might be allowed to have a sense of morals, because we have, unquestionably, a susceptibility of moral emotion; but, in this very wide extension of the term, we might be said, in like manner, to have as many senses as we have feelings of any sort; since, in whatever manner the mind may have been affected, it must have had a previous susceptibility of being so affected, as much as in the peculiar affections that are denominated moral.

The great error of Dr. Hutcheson, and of other writers who treat of the susceptibility of moral emotion, under the name of the moral sense, appears to me to consist in their belief of certain moral qualities in actions, which excite in us what they consider as ideas of these qualities, in the same manner as external things give us, not merely pain or pleasure, but notions or ideas of hardness, form, colour. Indeed, it is on this account that the great champion of this doctrine professes to regard the moral prin-

ciple as a sense; from its agreement, as he says, with this definition, which he conceives to be the accurate definition of a sense, "a determination of the mind to receive any idea from the presence of an object which occurs to us independent on our will." What he terms an idea, in this case, is nothing more than an emotion considered in its relation to the action which has excited it. A certain action is considered by us—a certain emotion arises. There is no idea in the philosophic meaning of that term, but of the agent himself and of the circumstances in which he was placed, and the physical changes produced by him; and our ideas or notions of these we owe to other sources. To the moral principle, the only principle of which Hutcheson could mean to speak as a moral sense, we owe the emotion itself, and nothing but the emotion.

In one use of the word, indeed, we may be said to owe to our susceptibility of moral emotion, ideas, because we owe to it, as the primary source, the emotions of this species which we remember; and remembrances of past feelings are often termed ideas of those feelings; but in this application of the word, as synonymous with a mere remembrance, every feeling, as capable of being remembered, may be a source of ideas independently of the will, and therefore, according to the definition which is given by Hutcheson, equally a sense.

There is yet another meaning of the word, however, and a still more important one, in relation to our present inquiry, in which our susceptibility of moral emotion is productive of what, in the general loose language of metaphysical writers, have been termed ideas; and it is by his defective analysis, of what is truly meant in the phrase, moral ideas, and of the process which evolves them, that I conceive Hutcheson to have been chiefly misled, in supposing us to be endowed with a sense of moral qualities of actions. The process to which I allude, is the common process of generalization, to which alone we owe the general notions of virtue, vice, right, and wrong, which he ascribes to a particular sense that affords us these ideas. If we had never contemplated more than a single virtuous or vicious action, we should have had only the particular emotion which followed that particular contemplation, and should as little have formed the general notions of virtue and vice, as we should have formed the notion which is expressed by the word quadruped, if we had seen only a single animal with four legs. It is not by one action only of one definite kind, however, that is to say, by an agent placed only in one set of circumstances, and producing only one particular effect, that our moral emotion is excited; nor is there only one unvarying feeling of the mind, of one exact degree of intensity, which we denominate a moral emotion, as excited by various moral actions. There are various analogous actions which excite various analogous moral feelings of approbation or disapprobation, and it is in consequence of the feeling of the similarity of these emotions, that we learn to class together the different actions that excite these similar emotions under a single word, virtuous or right, or proper, or vicious, wrong, improper. The ideas, of which Hutcheson speaks, are these general notions only. There are virtuous agents, not virtue, as there are minds that have certain feelings approving or disapproving, not approbation or disapprobation, as one simple state, in all the varieties of these feelings. Virtue, vice, right and wrong, are in short mere general terms, as much as any other mere general terms, which we have formed to express the similarities of particular things or particular qualities. The general notions, and consequently the general terms, that denote them, we derive indeed from our susceptibility of moral feeling, since we must have the moral emotions themselves, before we can discover them to be like or unlike, and invent words for expressing briefly their similarities; but what Dr. Hutcheson and other writers would term our ideas of virtue and vice, right and wrong,—though, in this sense, derived from our susceptibility of moral feeling, which gives us the emotions that are felt and classed as similar,—are derived from it, only as any other general notions of resemblances of any other feeling, or of the circumstances which induce in the mind certain similar feelings, necessarily presuppose the capacity of the feelings themselves whatever they may be, which are afterwards considered as having this relation of similarity. There are no two feelings, perhaps, which may not be found to have some relation to each other, as there are, perhaps, no two external things which may not be found to have some analogy; and if, therefore, we suppose that we have a particular internal sense for every general notion of agreement of any kind, which we are capable of framing, we may be said to have as many senses as we have pairs of feeling which we are capable of comparing. There are innumerable similarities which are felt by us every hour, and consequently innumerable general notions, though we may have invented names only for a few of them. Our moral emotions, like our other emotions, and our other feelings of every kind, impress us with certain resemblances which they mutually bear; and the importance of the actions which agree in exciting the analogous feelings of moral approbation or disapprobation, from the influence which they widely exercise on happiness as beneficial or injurious, has led, in every age and country, to the designation of them by certain general names, as virtuous

or vicious, proper or improper; but these general terms are not the less general terms, and only general terms, significant merely of the resemblance of various particular actions, which agree in exciting in the mind certain feelings that are analogous. This distinction of virtue, vice, right, wrong, merit, demerit, as mere general terms, expressive only of an analogous relation which certain actions bear to certain emotions, I conceive to be of the utmost importance for your clear understanding of the theory of morals; and I have dwelled on it, therefore, with the wish that it should become familiar to your minds. You are not to conceive, as Dr. Hutcheson's view of our moral feelings might lead you to imagine, that we discover a certain idea of right or wrong, virtue or vice, from the contemplation of any one particular action, as if there were a sense for the reception of such ideas, that flow from them like light from the sun, or fragrant particles from a rose. There is no right or wrong, virtue or vice, but there are agents whose actions cannot be contemplated by us without an emotion of approbation or disapprobation; and all actions, that is to say, all agents, that agree in exciting moral feelings which are thus analogous, we class together as virtuous or vicious, from this circumstance of felt agreement alone. The similarity of the emotions which we feel, in these particular cases, is thus all to which we owe the notions, or, as Dr. Hutcheson calls them, the ideas, of right and wrong, virtue and vice; and it is not more wonderful that we should form these general notions, than that we should form any other general notions whatever.

The error of Dr. Hutcheson with respect to qualities, in objects that excite in us what he terms moral ideas, is similar to that which led many ethical writers—as we saw in reviewing their different systems—to refer our moral sentiments to reason or judgment, as the principle which measures the fitnesses of certain actions for producing certain ends; and which approves or disapproves accordingly, as different actions seem more or less adapted for producing the desired end. The truth is, that moral approbation or disapprobation, though, from the common use of those terms, and the poverty of our language, I have been obliged to employ them in our past discussions, are terms that are very inadequate to express the liveliness of the moral feelings to which we give those names. The moral emotions are more akin to love or hate, than to perception or judgment. What we call our approbation of an action, inasmuch as the moral principle is concerned, is a sort of moral love when the action is the action of another, or moral complacency when the action is our own, and nothing more. It is no exercise of reason, discovering congruities, and determining one action to be better fitted than another action, for affording happiness or relieving misery. This logical or physical approbation may precede, indeed, the moral emotion, and may mingle with it, and continue to render it more and more lively while we are under its influence; but even when such approbation precedes it, it is distinct from the emotion itself; and we might judge and approve of the fitness, or disapprove of the unfitness, of certain actions to produce happiness, with the same precision as we now judge and approve, or disapprove, though we had not been, as we are, moral beings, desirous of the happiness of others, and feeling a vivid delightful emotion, on the contemplation of such actions as tend to produce that happiness. However our judgment, as mere judgment, may have been exercised before, in discerning the various relations of actions to the happiness of the world, the moral principle is the source only of the emotion which follows the discovery of such fitness; and not in the slightest degree of the judgment which measures and calculates the fitness, any more than it is a source of the fitness itself. When we speak of our moral approbation of an action, we may indeed, from the convenience of such brief expressions, have some regard to both feelings, to our judgment of the fitness of an action to produce good to an individual or to the world, and to our moral love of the beneficial action which follows this discovery. But still, it is not be forgotten, that it is the latter part only, the distinctive moral regard, that belongs to the principle which we have been considering; the discovery of the fitness is a common exercise of judgment, that differs no more from the other exercises of it than these differ from each other. It is in the order of our emotions, accordingly, that I have assigned a place to our moral feelings, in my arrangement of the phenomena of the mind; because, though we are accustomed to speak of moral approbation, moral judgments, or moral estimates of actions, the feelings which we thus comprehend under a single term are not the simple vivid feeling, which is all that truly constitutes the moral emotion, but a combination of this vivid feeling with the judgment as to the fitness or tendency of the action, which, as a mere judgment, preceded and gave rise to the emotion. What is strictly the moral part of the compound is, however, as I have already said, the emotion, and the emotion only.

There is, in this case, with respect to mere judgment, precisely the same error which we have traced in the reasons that led Dr. Hutcheson to the supposition of a moral sense. What are termed moral ideas of virtue, merit, obligation,—the consideration of which, as moral ideas, was, as his

definition and his general reasoning show, the very circumstance which led him into his error,—are merely, as I have repeatedly endeavoured to demonstrate to you, the one vivid moral emotion, referred to the actions which excite it. There are no ideas, therefore, which require the supposition of a peculiar sense for affording them, even if a sense were necessary for all those feelings which are termed simple ideas. There is only a particular emotion, indicating, of course, a peculiar susceptibility of this emotion in the mind; and, together with this vivid feeling, actions, or ideas of certain actions, and their consequences, which may be said, indeed, to be moral ideas, when combined with this vivid feeling, but which, as ideas, are derived from other sources. It is not the moral principle which sees the agent, and all the circumstances of his action, or which sees the happiness or misery that has flowed from it; but when these are seen, and all the motives of the agent divined, it is the moral principle of our nature which then affords the emotion that may afterwards, in our conception, be added to these ideas derived from other sources, and form with them compound notions of all the varieties of actions that are classed by us as forms of virtue or vice.

The reference of our moral love of certain actions and moral abhorrence of other actions to a peculiar sense, termed the moral sense, has arisen, then, we may conclude, from a defective analysis, or at least from a misconception of the nature of those moral ideas of which the defenders of this sense speak, and which seem to them falsely to indicate the necessity of such a sense for affording them. The ideas of which they speak are truly complex feelings of the mind. We have only to perform the necessary analysis, and all which we discover is a certain emotion of moral love, that, according to circumstances, is more or less lively, and the notion of certain actions, that is to say, of agents real or supposed, willing and producing certain effects. We may, for the sake of brevity, invent the general words virtue, right, propriety, as significant of all the actions which are followed in us by this emotion. But these are mere generalizations, like other generalizations; and there is no virtue in nature, more than there is quadruped or substance.

But, though Dr. Hutcheson may have erred in not analyzing with sufficient minuteness the moral ideas of which he speaks, and in giving the name of a moral sense to the susceptibility of a mere emotion akin to our other emotions, this error is of little consequence as to the moral distinctions themselves. Whether the feeling that attends the contemplation of certain actions admit of being more justly classed with our sensations or perceptions, or with our emotions, there is still a susceptibility of this feeling or set of feelings, original in the mind, and as essential to its very nature as any other of the principles or functions, which we regard as universally belonging to our mental constitution; as truly essential to the mind, indeed, as any of those senses among which Dr. Hutcheson would fix its place.

The sceptical conclusions which some writers have conceived to be deducible from the doctrine of a moral sense, might, if they could be justly drawn from that doctrine, be equally deducible from the doctrine of moral emotions for which I have contended; since the emotions may be regarded as almost the same feelings under a different name. A very slight notice, however, of the objection which these conclusions are supposed to furnish, will be sufficient for showing the radical error in which the objection has its source. You will find it stated and illustrated at great length in Dr. Price's elaborate, but very tedious, and not very clear, Review of the principal questions of morals. It is more briefly stated by Mr. Stewart in his Outlines.

"From the hypothesis of a moral sense, various sceptical conclusions have been deduced by later writers. The words Right and Wrong, it has been alleged, signify nothing in the objects themselves to which they are applied, any more than the words sweet and bitter, pleasant and painful; but only certain effects in the mind of the spectator. As it is improper, therefore, (according to the doctrines of modern philosophy,) to say of an object of taste, that it is sweet; or of heat, that it is in the fire; so it is equally improper to say of actions, that they are right or wrong. It is absurd to speak of morality as a thing independent and unchangeable: inasmuch as it arises from an arbitrary relation between our constitution and particular objects.

"In order to avoid these supposed consequences of Dr. Hutcheson's philosophy, an attempt has been made by some later writers, in particular by Dr. Price, to revive the doctrines of Dr. Cudworth, and to prove, that moral distinctions, being perceived by reason or the understanding, are equally immutable with all other kinds of truth."*

That right and wrong signify nothing in the objects themselves, is indeed most true. They are words expressive only of relation, and relations are not existing parts of objects, or things, to be added to objects, or taken from them. There is no right nor wrong, virtue nor vice, merit nor demerit, existing independently of the agents who are virtuous or vicious; and, in like manner, if there had been no moral emotions to arise

* Outlines of Moral Philosophy, 4th ed. 8vo. p. 132.

on the contemplation of certain actions, there would have been no virtue, vice, merit, or demerit, which express only relations to these emotions. But though there be no right nor wrong in an agent, the virtuous agent is not the same as the vicious agent, —I do not say merely to those whom he benefits or injures, but to the most remote individual who contemplates that intentional production of benefit or injury. All are affected, on the contemplation of these, with different emotions; and it is only by the difference of these moral emotions that these actions are recognised as morally different. We feel that it will be impossible, while the constitution of nature remains as it is,—and we may say, even from the traces of the divine benevolence which the universe displays, impossible, while God himself, the framer of our constitution, and adapter of it to purposes of happiness, exists,—that the lover and intentional producer of misery, as misery, should ever be viewed with tender esteem; or that he whose only ambition has been to diffuse happiness more widely than it could have flowed without his aid, should be regarded with the detestation, on that account, which we now feel for the murderer of a single helpless individual, or for the oppressor of as many sufferers as a nation can contain in its whole wide orb of calamity; and a distinction which is to exist while God himself exists, or at least which has been, and as we cannot but believe will be, coeval with the race of man, cannot surely be regarded as very precarious. It is not to moral distinctions only that this objection, if it had any force, would be applicable. Equality, proportion, it might be said, in like manner, signify nothing in the objects themselves to which they are applied, more than vice or virtue. They are as truly mere relations, as the relations of morality. Though the three sides of a right angled triangle exist in the triangle itself, and constitute it what it is, what we term the properties of such a triangle do not exist in it, but are results of a peculiar capacity of the comparing mind. It is man, or some thinking being like man, whose comparison gives birth to the very feeling that is termed by us a discovery of the equality of the squares of one of the sides to the squares of the other two; that is to say,—for the discovery of this truth is nothing more,—it is man who, contemplating such a triangle, is impressed with this relation, and who feels afterwards that it would be impossible for him to contemplate it without such an impression. If this feeling of the relation never had arisen, and never were to arise in any mind, though the squares themselves might still exist as separate figures, their equality would be nothing,—exactly as justice and injustice would be nothing, where no relation of moral emotion had ever been felt; for equality, like justice, is a relation, not a thing; and, if strictly analyzed, exists only, and can exist only, in the mind, which, on the contemplation of certain objects, is impressed with certain feelings of relation;—in the same manner as right and wrong, virtue, vice, relate to emotions excited in some mind that has contemplated certain actions, —without whose contemplations of the actions, it will readily be confessed, there could be no right nor wrong, virtue nor vice, as there could be no other relation without a mind that contemplates the objects said to be related. Certain geometrical figures cannot be contemplated by us without exciting certain feelings of the contemplating mind, —which are notions of equality or proportion. Is it necessary that the equality should be itself something existing in the separate figures themselves, without reference to any mind that contemplates them, before we put any confidence in geometry? Or is it not enough that every mind which does contemplate them together, is impressed with that particular feeling, in consequence of which they are ranked as equal? And, if it be not necessary, in the case of a science which we regard as the surest of all sciences, that the proportions of figures should be any thing inherent in the figures, why should it be required, before we put confidence in morality, that right and wrong should be something existing in the individual agents? It is not easy, indeed, to understand what is meant by such an inherence as is required in this postulate; or what other relations actions can be supposed to have as right or wrong, than to the minds which are impressed by them with certain feelings. Of this, at least, we may be sure, that, if any doubt can truly exist as to relations which we and all mankind have felt, since the creation of the very race of man,— because, though, with our present constitution, we feel it impossible to consider cruelty as amiable, and greater cruelty as more amiable, we might, if the frame of our mind were altered, love the ferocity which we now detest, and fly from freedom and general benevolence, to take shelter in some more delightful waste, where there might be the least possible desire of good, and the least possible enjoyment of it, among plunderers whom we loved much, and murderers whom we loved and honoured more—if any doubt of this kind could truly be felt, the reference which Dr. Price would make, of our moral sentiments to reason, would leave the difficulty and the doubt exactly where they were before; since reason is but a principle of our mental frame, like the principle which is the source of moral emotion, and has no peculiar claim to remain unaltered in the supposed general alteration of our mental constitu-

tion. What we term reason, is only a brief expression of a number of separate feelings of relation, of which the mind might or might not have been formed to be susceptible. If the mind of man remain as it is, our moral feelings, in relation to their particular objects, are as stable as our feelings of any other class; and if the mind of man be altered in all its functions, it is absurd for us to make distinctions of classes of feelings in the general dissolution of every thing which we at present know,—absurd even to guess at the nature of a state which arises from a change that is imaginary only, and that by our very supposition is to render us essentially different in every respect from the state with which we are at present acquainted.

It is a very powerless scepticism, indeed, which begins by supposing a total change of our nature. We might, perhaps, have been formed to admire only the cruel, and to hate only the benevolent; as in spite of an axiom, that now seems to us self-evident, we might all have been formed to think with the lunatic, that the cell in which he is confined is larger than the whole earth, of which it is a part. What the mind of a single madman is, the minds of all men might certainly be; and we might no longer feel the same moral relations, as we might no longer feel the same geometrical relations of space. But if the moral distinctions be as regular as the whole system of laws which carry on in unbroken harmony the motions of the universe, this regularity is sufficient for us while we exist on earth; and when we leave this earth, we carry with us a conscience which can have little fear, that the virtues which Heaven has made it so delightful for us to practise below, and which have been the chief instruments of producing a happiness which, when the universe was formed with such innumerable adaptations to the enjoyment of all who live, was surely not foreign to the intention of its Author, will, in that immortality, which is only a prolongation of this mortal life, be regarded with abhorrence by that great Being, whose perfections, however faintly, we have endeavoured to image, and who has here been so lavish to us of a love as constant in its approbation of moral good as the moral excellence which it has made happy.

We have now, then, examined very fully the great question, as to the distinctions which we find man everywhere to have made of actions, as morally right or wrong; and I trust, for the sake of your happiness in life at least, as much as for the accuracy of your philosophy, that you are not inclined to withhold your logical assent from the doctrine of the moral distinction of vice and virtue; a doctrine which seems to me to have every character of truth as a faithful picture of the phenomena of the mind, and which it would therefore be as erroneous as it would be miserable to deny.

Certain actions then excite, when considered by us, certain emotions of moral regard. But what are those actions, and how are they to be arranged?

In this inquiry, which involves the whole doctrine of practical ethics, philosophers have been very generally misled by that spirit of excessive simplification, of which, in the course of the various discussions that have occupied us together, we have had occasion to remark many striking instances, and in part, too, by the influence of another error, which also we have had frequent occasion of remarking, the error of considering mere abstractions as realities.

In considering the emotion, or rather the various emotions excited by the various objects which are termed beautiful, we observed the constant tendency of inquirers into these interesting phenomena, to suppose that there is one universal Beauty, which is diffused in all the objects that are termed beautiful, and forms, as it were, a constituent part of themselves.

> One Beauty of the world entire,
> The universal Venus,—far beyond
> The keenest effort of created eyes,
> And their most wide horizon,—dwells enthroned
> In ancient silence. At her footstool stands
> An altar burning with eternal fire,
> Unsullied, unconsumed. Here, every hour,
> Here, every moment, in their turns arrive
> Her offspring;—an innumerable band
> Of sisters, comely all, but differing far
> In age, in stature, and expressive mien,
> More than bright Helen from her new-born babe.
> To this maternal shrine, in turns they come
> Each with her sacred lamp; that, from the source
> Of living flame, which here immortal flows,
> Their portions of its lustre they may draw
> For days, for months, for years, for *ages* some,
> As their great Parent's discipline requires.
> Then to their several mansions they depart,
> In stars, in planets, through the unknown shores
> Of yon ethereal ocean. Who can tell,
> Even on the surface of this rolling earth,
> How many make abode? The fields, the groves,
> The winding rivers, and the azure main,
> Are rendered solemn by their frequent feet,
> Their rites sublime. There each her destin'd home
> Informs with that pure radiance from the skies
> Brought down, and shines throughout her little sphere
> Exulting.*

This universal Venus, from the undecaying flame of whose altar has been derived whatever warms us with delight, in the myriads of myriads of objects that are lovely in nature, is indeed one of the most magnificent personifications of poetry. But philosophy has in truth been as fond of this personification as poetry itself, and is for ever seeking in objects that are beautiful the charm of this universal Beauty. It has been not less fond of personification in its ethical inquiries, and has for ever been employed in the search of one universal Virtue,—of something that is capable of existing, as it were,

* Pleasures of Imagination, book i.

in various forms, and that may be supposed to form a part of all the actions which are denominated virtuous. There is no virtue, however, as I have already repeatedly said; there are only virtuous actions; or, to speak still more correctly, only virtuous agents: and it is not one virtuous agent only, or any number of virtuous agents, acting in one uniform manner, that excite our moral emotion of regard; but agents acting in many different ways—in ways that are not less different in themselves, on account of the real or supposed simplicity of the generalizations and classifications which we may have made.

By some, all virtue has been said to consist in benevolence; as if temperance, patience, fortitude, all the heroic exercises of self-command, in adversity and every species of suffering, were not regarded by us with moral love, till we had previously discovered in the heroic sufferer some benevolent desire, which led him thus to endure without a single murmur, or rather, in all the circumstances of the case, with choice, an amount of physical evil, from which others would have shrunk with cowardly feebleness. By another sect of philosophers, the virtues of self-command have been exalted even above the gentler virtues of benevolence. By others, the calm exercise of justice has been said to involve all moral excellence; and almost every ethical writer has had some favourite virtue, to which he has built his altar, and ascribed to it a sort of omnipresence in all the other virtues that are adored; and that, but for the presence of this, as the inherent divinity, would have been objects of a worship that was idolatrous.

From this very circumstance, indeed, of the different favourite virtues of different philosophers, some sophistical writers have endeavoured to draw conclusions subversive of the very distinctions of virtue and vice. They forget that even those who form their little exclusive systems, are still thus exclusive in their systems only; that in their hearts they feel the same regard for every virtue as if they had never entered into ethical controversy, and that the assertors of benevolence, as all which constitutes moral worth, did not, on that account, deny a moral difference of patience and impatience; they only laboured to prove, though they might not be very successful in their demonstration, that to be patient was but a form of being benevolent, and was valued by us for nothing more than the benevolence which it implied.

Of these too narrow systems it would be useless however to enter into any examination at present. Their error will be best seen by considering the virtues which they would exclude. The classification of these virtues, that may be regarded as the most convenient, is that which considers them as duties, in their relation to different individuals; and, in the first place, as the most comprehensive of all classification,—the arrangement of them as duties which relate primarily to others, and duties which relate directly to ourselves.

LECTURE LXXXIII.

DIVISION OF THE PRACTICAL VIRTUES INTO THREE CLASSES — DUTIES THAT RELATE PRIMARILY TO OTHERS—DUTIES THAT RELATE DIRECTLY TO OURSELVES—AND DUTIES TO GOD.

GENTLEMEN,—after the discussions in which we have been of late engaged, of the theory of morals, we are now to enter on the consideration of those practical duties of which we have been investigating the source. Man is not formed to know only; he is formed still more to avail himself of his knowledge, by acting in conformity with it. In the society in which he is placed, he is surrounded with a multitude, to almost every one of whom some effort of his may be beneficial; who, if they do not require the aid of his strenuous and long-continued exertions, which are necessary only on rare occasions, require, at least in the social intercourse of life, those little services of easy, courtesy, which are not to be estimated as slight, from the seeming insignificance of each separate act; since they contribute largely to the amount of general happiness by the universality of their diffusion, and the frequency of the repetition. While his actions may thus have almost unremitting usefulness, Nature has, with a corresponding provision, made it delightful to man to be active; and, not content with making it delightful to him to be merely active,—since this propensity to action, which of itself might lead him sometimes to benefit others, might of itself also lead him to injure as well as to benefit,—she has, as we have seen, directed him how to act, by that voice of conscience which she has placed within his breast; and given still greater efficacy to that voice by the pain which she has attached to disobedience, and the pleasure that is felt in obeying it, and remembering it as obeyed. Of this moral pleasure it is, indeed, the high character, that it is the only pleasure which no situation can preclude; since it is beyond the reach of all those external aggressions and chances which can lessen only the power of diffusing happiness, not the wish of diffusing it; and which, even in robbing the virtuous of every thing beside, must still leave with them the good which they have done, and the good which they would wish to do.

Human life, then, when it is such, as not impartial spectators only, but the individual himself can survey with pleasure, is the exercise, and almost the unremitting exercise, of duties. To have discharged these best, is to have lived best. It is truly to have lived the most nobly, though there may have been no vanities of wealth in the simple home, which was great only because it contained a great inhabitant; and no vanities of heraldry on the simple tomb, under the rude stone of which, or under the turf which is unmarked by any memorial, or by any ornament but the herbage and the flowers which nature everywhere sheds, the ashes of a great man repose. What mere symbols of honour, indeed, which man can confer, could add to the praise of him who possesses internally all which those symbols, even when they are not falsely representative of a merit that does not exist, can only picture to the gazer's eye, to the praise of him who has done every thing which it was right for him to do; who has abstained, in his very desires, from every thing which it would have required a sacrifice of virtue to possess; and who, in suffering the common ills of our nature, has suffered them as common ills, not repining at affliction, nor proud of enduring it without a murmur, but feeling only that it is a part of a great system which is good, and that it is that which it is easy to bear?

Human life, then, when it is worthy of the name of life, is, as I have said, the exercise of duties.

In treating of our practical virtues, I shall consider, first, those which directly relate to our fellow-creatures, and afterwards those which immediately relate to ourselves. Besides these two classes of duties, indeed, there are others of a still higher kind—the duties which we owe to the great Being who formed us; duties which, though they do not absolutely produce all the others, at least add to them a force of obligation, which more than doubles their own moral urgency; and with the wilful violation or neglect of which, there can be as little moral excellence of character in the observance of other duties, as there would be in the virtue of any one who, after boasting of a thousand good deeds, should conclude by confessing, that he had never felt the slightest affection for the parent to whom he owed existence, and wisdom, and worldly honour, or for some generous benefactor who had been to him like a parent. These duties of gratitude and reverence which we owe to God, will admit, however, of more appropriate illustration, after the inquiries on which we are to enter in another part of the course, with respect to the traces of the divine perfections, that are revealed to us in the frame and order of the universe.

At present, then, the practical virtues which we have to consider, are those that relate immediately only to our fellow-creatures and ourselves.

Of these two great classes of duties, let us consider, in the first place, the duties that primarily relate to others.

Of the living multitude in the midst of which we are placed on this earth, which is our common home, by far the greater number have no other relation to us than simply as they are human beings; who may, indeed, sometimes come within the sphere of our usefulness, and who, even when they are far beyond this sphere of active aid, are still within the range of our benevolent affection, to which there are no limits even in distance the most remote, but to whom this benevolence of mere wishes is the only duty which, in such circumstances, is consigned to us. There are others, with whom we feel ourselves connected by peculiar ties, and to whom, therefore, we owe peculiar duties, varying in kind and importance with the nature of the circumstances that connect us with them. The general duties which we owe to all mankind may be treated first, before we enter on the consideration of the peculiar duties which we owe to certain individuals only of this wide community.

The general offices which we owe to every individual of mankind, may be reduced to two great generic duties—one negative, the other positive; one leading us to abstain from all intentional injury of others, the other leading us to be actively beneficial to them. With the former of these, at least with the greater number of the specific duties which it generically comprehends, justice is very nearly synonymous; with the other set of specific duties, benevolence; which, though it may, in truth, be made to comprehend the negative duties also, since, to wish to benefit, is at the same time to wish not to injure, is usually confined to the desire of positive increase of good, without including mere abstinence from injury.

I proceed, then, to the consideration of the former set of duties, which are negative only,—as limited to abstinence from every thing which might be injurious to others.

These duties, of course, are specifically as various as the different sorts of injury which it is in our power to occasion, directly or indirectly. Such injuries, if man were wicked enough, and fearless enough both of individual resentment and of the law, to do whatever it is in his power to do, would, in their possible complication and variety, be almost beyond our power of numbering them, and giving them names. The most important, however, if arranged according to the objects which it is the direct immediate inten-

tion of the injurer, at the moment of his injury, to assail, may be considered as reducible to the following general heads: They are injuries which affect the sufferer directly in his person—in his property—in the affections of others—in his character—in his knowledge or belief—in his virtue—in his tranquillity. They are injuries, I repeat, which are intended to affect the sufferer directly in his person—in his property—in the affections of others—in his character, &c.

Let us now then proceed to the consideration of these subdivisions of our merely negative duty, in the order in which I have now stated them. Of injuries to the person of another, the most atrocious, I need not say, is that which deprives him of life; and as it is the only evil which is absolutely irreparable by us, and is yet one to which many of our most impetuous passions might lead us, jealousy, envy, revenge, or even sudden wrath itself, without taking into account those instances of violence in which murder is only the dreadful mean of accomplishing a sordid end; the Creator and Preserver of man has provided against the frequency of a crime to which there might seem so many fearful inducements and facilities, by rendering the contemplation of it something, from which even the most abandoned shrink with a loathing, which is, perhaps, the only human feeling which still remains in their heart; and the commission of it a source of a wilder agony of horror than can be borne, even by the gloomy heart which was capable of conceiving the crime. "Homo homini res sacra." When we read or hear of the assassin, who is driven by the anguish of his own conscience to reveal to those whom most he dreaded, the secret which he was most anxious to hide, addressing himself to the guardians, not of the mere laws, which he has offended, (for of the laws of man he does not think, except that he may submit himself to that death which they only can award,) but to the guardians of the life and happiness of those whose interests have been assigned to them, the guardians of the individual whom their protection at that moment, which is ever before his memory, was too powerless to save; when we think of the number of years that in many instances of this kind have elapsed since the mortal blow was given, and of the inefficacy of time, which effaces all other sorrows, to lessen that remorse which no one suspected to be the cause of the wasting of the cheek, and the gloomy melancholy of the eye, can we fail to regard a spectacle like this, as an awful testimony to the goodness of that Almighty Protector of the world, who proportions the internal restraints of conscience to the iniquity that needs to be restrained, and to the amount of evil which would flow from it, if unrestrained, and who, seeming to leave the life of every individual at the mercy of every arm, has secured for it a defence in the very bosom of him whose watchful glance had already marked its victim, and whose hand was already almost raised to give the blow? The reign of superstition, its wide and general reign, is now over, at least in our land. We do not need to have recourse to volumes of philosophy to convince us that the ghost which haunts the murderer, is but an image of his own fancy. This, now, the very children will tell us, while they laugh not so gaily, perhaps, as at other tales, but still with a laughter which, though mixed with some little horror, is sincere, at the spectres which their predecessors in the same nursery, a single generation back, would, on hearing the same story, have seen before their eyes for more than half the night. There is no fear then now that we should be tempted to suppose any peculiar supernatural visitation, in the shape that seems for ever rising to the eye of the murderer. It is to the influence of his strong conception alone that all will agree in ascribing it; and if it be, as it most certainly is, the result only of conception that is awfully vivid, how strongly does it mark the horror, so far surpassing the horror of every other offence which must have given to the imagination this agonizing sensibility. The robber may plunder, the traitor may betray, without any moral superstition of this sort; but let one human being give his last gasp beneath the dagger of another human being, and though superstition had before been banished from the earth, there is at least one individual to whom this single crime would be sufficient to call it back.

The species of injury which I have placed next in order, is that which relates to the property of others.

Were we to consider for the first time the unequal distribution of property in society, without reflecting on the amount of general happiness to which that unequal distribution is subservient, we should scarcely know, in our astonishment at the seeming rapacity of the few and the acquiescence of the many, whether the boldness of such an usurpation, at least of that which on such a first unreflecting view would seem usurpation, or the strange submission by all the plundered, to an usurpation which they might have prevented, were the more wonderful. It would not be easy to represent this first aspect of society in a more lively manner than has been done by Paley.

"If you should see a flock of pigeons in a field of corn; and if (instead of each picking where and what it liked, taking just as much as it wanted, and no more,) you should see ninety-nine of them gathering all they got into a heap; reserving nothing for themselves

but the chaff and the refuse; keeping this heap for one, and that the weakest, perhaps worst pigeon of the flock; sitting round, and looking on all the winter, whilst this one was devouring, throwing about, and wasting it; and if a pigeon, more hardy or hungry than the rest, touched a grain of the hoard, all the others instantly flying upon it, and tearing it to pieces: if you should see this, you would see nothing more than what is every day practised and established among men. Among men, you see the ninety-and-nine toiling and scraping together a heap of superfluities for one, (and this one, too, oftentimes the feeblest and worst of the whole set, a child, a woman, a madman, or a fool;) getting nothing for themselves all the while, but a little of the coarsest of the provision, which their own industry produces; looking quietly on, while they see the fruits of all their labour spent or spoiled; and if one of the number take or touch a particle of the hoard, the others joining against him, and hanging him for the theft."*

There must, indeed, as this author adds, be "some very important advantages to account for an institution which, in this view of it, is so paradoxical and unnatural," and such advantages it is very easy to discover. The gross inequality of property, strange as it may seem to be at any one moment, is, it is evident, only the effect of that security and absolute command of property, which allow the continual accumulation of it by continued industry; and without such security, and absolute command of the profits of exertion, the arm of the strong would soon have been weary of the little toil which was necessary for mere subsistence; and the ingenuity of the wise would have contented itself with enjoying, rather than augmenting, its scanty but precarious acquisitions. If all things had been common to all, that common all would truly have been of little worth to the individuals, who would have seen nothing appropriated, indeed, but nothing enjoyed. Instead of that beautiful and populous earth which we behold,—where cities pour wealth on the fields, and the fields, in their turn, send plenty to the cities,—where all are conferring aid and receiving aid, and the most sensual and selfish cannot consume a single luxury, without giving however unintentionally, some comfort, or the means of comfort, to others,—instead of this noble dwelling-place of so many noble inhabitants, we should have had a waste or a wilderness, and a few miserable stragglers, half famished on that wide soil which now gives abundance to millions. Nor would the loss of mere external convenience and splendour have been the chief evil. The intellectual sciences, and arts, and systems of moral polity, which distinguish the civilized from the savage, by differences far more important than any which the eye can perceive, never would have arisen on such a scene. It was property, that very exclusive property, which is now better secured by the civilization to which it gave rise, that was itself, at a still earlier period, the great civilizer of man.

If, indeed, in considering these comforts of society, which flow from the distribution of property, that could not be secure without becoming soon unequal, we considered only the comfort of the few who possess the greater share, the happiness of the few might seem, and, it will be allowed, would truly be comparatively, an object of too little value, to be set against any great loss of comfort on the part of the multitude. But it requires only a very slight reflection on the circumstances of society, as it is at present before us, to discover, that, even if the few have gained more, the many have gained much; and perhaps to a very nice observer and estimator of the situation of both,—of the enjoyment that is involved in mere occupation, and of the misery that is involved in the total want of it,—it might seem necessary to reverse the scale, and to ascribe the greater gain to the many rather than to the few. They profit by the results of every science and art, which they enable the studious, whom they support, to prosecute at their leisure; the speculations of the sage, whom they perhaps count idle,—speculations that teach new processes, mechanical or chemical, to the innumerable busy hands that are every moment producing, almost blindly, the beautiful results, of which they know little more than that they are of their own producing,—may be found at last embodied, as it were, in some humble implement or humble luxury, in the obscurest cottage; and even the wretch who, in the common prison, earns a part of his subsistence by the meanest operations to which, in the division of manufacturing labour, the human hand can be put, has accommodations which, miserable as they are, compared with the luxuries of the rich and the free, are yet themselves luxuries, compared with the far more miserable accommodations which, if there never had been any inequality of property among mankind, would, in that system of sloth, and consequent imbecility, have been the common lot of all. This influence of wealth and of the division of labour in the enjoyments of the lowest of the people, is very strongly pictured by Dr. Mandeville in one of the most striking passages of his work.

"A man would be laughed at, that should discover luxury in the plain dress of a poor creature that walks along in a thick parish gown and a coarse shirt underneath it; and yet what a number of people, how many dif-

* Paley's Moral Philosophy, 21st edit. 8vo, vol. i. p. 106.

ferent trades, and what a variety of skill and tools, must be employed to have the most ordinary Yorkshire cloth. What depth of thought and ingenuity, what toil and labour, and what length of time must it have cost, before a man could learn from a seed to raise and prepare so useful a product as linen. Must that society not be vainly curious, among whom this admirable commodity, after it is made, shall not be thought fit to be used, even by the poorest of all, before it is brought to a perfect whiteness; which is not to be procured but by the assistance of all the elements, joined to a world of industry and patience? I have not done yet: Can we reflect, not only on the cost laid out upon this luxurious invention, but likewise on the little time the whiteness of it continues, in which part of its beauty consists; that every six or seven days at farthest it wants cleaning, and while it lasts, is a continual charge to the wearer; can we, I say, reflect on all this, and not think it an extravagant piece of nicety, that even those who receive alms of the parish, should not only have whole garments made of this operose manufacture, but likewise that, as soon as they are soiled, to restore them to their pristine purity, they should make use of one of the most judicious as well as difficult compositions that chemistry can boast of; with which, dissolved in water by the help of fire, the most detersive and yet innocent lixivium is prepared, that human industry has hitherto been able to invent?"*

The feeling of a breach of duty in the violation of the property of another, though uniformly attendant on the notion of property, requires, of course, this notion as antecedent to the moral feeling; and property is, in a great measure, the creature of the public law, not because our moral feelings are arbitrary results of the arbitrary institutions of man, but because, as soon as we are acquainted with the nature of social ordinances, and the advantages to which they give rise, these ordinances become themselves an object of that moral regard, the susceptibility of which, as an essential principle of the mind, preceded all law, and transfer this regard which themselves excite to forms of succession and transfer, which might otherwise have been arbitrary and indifferent. It is not in such cases, however, the social ordinance which is loved merely as an ordinance, but the good to which it is perceived that such ordinances, upon the whole, tend to give rise; and this obedience to that which is an evident source of good upon the whole, and which, in the particular case of property, is obviously productive of the greatest good, as a standard to which, in cases of doubtful right, all might be obliged to bend, and peace be thus preserved, when otherwise there could not fail to be hostility, is the circumstance that has extended to artificial arrangements of property, those moral emotions which originally had a narrower field, but which still have the same great object as before, when they embrace the widest plans of legislative wisdom.

The writers who attempt to prove justice to be a virtue wholly adventitious, and not the result of any original moral tendency of our nature, because in different stages or circumstances of society there are different views of property, forget that justice, as a moral virtue, is not the creation of property, but the conformity of our actions to those views; that though all men in every part of the earth, and in every age since the earth was peopled, had, without even the exception of a single monstrous individual, united in their notions of what is termed property, there might still have been the most complete injustice,—a desire of invading this property, not merely as frequent as in the present circumstances of mankind, but equally universal with the notion of property itself. There might then, the mere notion of property remaining in every respect precisely the same, have been either perfect justice or perfect injustice, or such a mixture of both as the present order of society presents. It is justice not to invade that which is recognised as belonging to another; and though law cannot produce justice, it may present to it new objects, by the standard which it fixes of transfers and successions, that otherwise might have been arbitrary; and may present these new objects to our justice, without any breach of moral principle; since, though law, as mere law, or the expression of the will of many individuals, can never be felt by us to be morally obligatory on this account alone, obedience to a system of laws, of which the evident tendency is to the public good, is itself an object of our moral regard, as soon as we are capable of knowing what law is, and what are its general beneficial tendencies. In the different rights of property, then, in different nations and ages, as variously sanctioned in various systems of jurisprudence, I perceive no inconsistency of the moral principle. I perceive everywhere, on the contrary, a moral principle which, among the rude and the civilized, and in all the innumerable gradations of civilized life, and of systems of law more or less sage and refined, feels that there are certain things which it would be wrong to invade; in savage life, perhaps only the objects which are in the immediate occupation of another, or on which he has exercised his labour for purposes of utility to himself; in more civilized society, innumerable objects which the circumstances of that society have rendered essential to the

* Fable of the Bees, vol. i. p. 182. Lond. 1728.

comfort of their possessor, and which law, with a view to the preservation and furtherance of general happiness, has allotted in various ways. Till it can be shown, therefore, that this regard for social ordinances that are manifestly, upon the whole, productive of good, and consequently the regard for that good of which they are productive, are inconsistent with the moral principle, of which the great object is that very good; the sophist, who would represent the varying rights of property as proofs of a varying morality, has no argument in showing the mere influence of such ordinances, that teach us to respect what otherwise might have been indifferent. It is the same moral principle of justice still, though directed to new objects; as it is still the same power of vision that traces the stars of the firmament, though, but for the nice contrivances of the optician, and the labours of all the ruder artificers who have furnished him with the materials of his beautiful art, eye after eye might for ages have gazed upon the great vault above, without knowing the very existence of brilliant multitudes of worlds, which, with the aid of this skilful but simple contrivance, it is now impossible for the rudest observer not to perceive. Who is there that, on this account, will deny to the mind its original visual sensibility? That mental sensibility is the same, the bodily organ of sight is the same; yet how different in power and extent is our vision itself! at least as different as the wider and narrower influence of justice that respects in one state of society a thousand objects which are unknown to it in a state of ruder polity.

In contending for essential principles of morals, no one asserts that, in circumstances which are absolutely different, the moral sentiment should be the same; more than that an eye, with and without a telescope, should form the same views of the nature that is before it. In savage life, the notions of property are few, because there are, in truth, in such a state, few objects that can be useful to the individual. It is luxury, which, creating new objects and new wants, creates also new objects to be appropriated. It is probable, if we are to suppose man ever to have been absolutely savage, without the exercise of a single art, that mere occupancy was then the only title. Indeed, what other title to the common gifts of nature could there in such circumstances be? When his labour, however, had been employed in rendering useful what in itself had no use, he would not merely feel the work of his art to be his own; but the work would be respected as his by those who knew the labour which he had employed, and the purposes of personal advantage to which it was meant to be instrumental; or at least, if in such circumstances of temptation it were an object of rapine to others, there would still, unless in circumstances of mutual enmity, be a feeling of conscious wrong in the aggressor. This species of property we accordingly find recognised wherever man is to be found; and is it wonderful that other species of property, which could not even be conceived in savage life, however useful in the circumstances of refined society, should not be regarded as sacred by those to whom the possession of it would seem to confer no utility on the possessor; who would rather have the trouble of excluding others, than the pleasure of enjoying that from which he excluded them?

The mere history of property, then, interesting as it is in the illustrations which it affords of many beautiful phenomena of our moral nature, and of the advantages which man receives from the social government, to the force of which his own individual power has contributed as an element, like the other elements that mingle with it, is yet valuable only as illustrative. The moral principle which, in the various stages of society, in all the varieties of property which social ordinances have made or secured, impresses on us the duty of respecting the various objects which are property, that is to say, which are objects that, in these particular circumstances of society, could not be violated without a feeling of self-reproach in the invader, is all which, ethically, we have to consider. That such a feeling does arise in the breast of him who invades what, in the general circumstances of the society, is regarded as property, even the sophist who would found so much on the varying circumstances in which it arises does not dispute; and it is this feeling, in whatever circumstances, and in whatever manner it may have arisen, from which the duty flows. Whether the object be of a kind which, even in the fabled state of nature, we should have felt it right to respect, as the property of him who had won and occupied it with his own unwearied labour, or of a kind which we respect as property, because we respect that social good which arises from the laws that have declared it to be property, it is not wonderful that our feeling of respect for it should seem, in these two cases, to be the same; since the respect is only that feeling of moral duty, the object of which, that is always some form of good to others, is in both cases truly the same.

Justice, then, I repeat, and the distinction is one which is of great importance, is not what constitutes property; it is that virtue which presupposes property, and respects it, however constituted. It may vary, therefore, with all the ordinances of different social states, but it is still the same virtue, if it respect what, in those different states, is legally assigned to individuals; and, as the same virtue, in all these cases, directed to the same

object of abstaining from what is previously affirmed or recognised as property, it does not vary in the variations of human policy, that may assign to individuals in one state, what, from different views of general good, would not be assigned to them in a different state; but which still, in every case, points out to justice what is to be understood as the property which that unvarying virtue does not fail to respect.

To point out to you the advantages which flow from the general observance of this duty, that leads us to abstain from the property of others, however much it might seem capable of contributing to our own gratification, would surely be a superfluous labour. Indeed, in picturing to you the advantages which flow from the very inequality of property itself, I have sufficiently exhibited to you the benefit of the principle which respects property, and of the duty which consists in our conformity to this principle; a duty, without which, indeed, the mere acknowledgment of the various things possessed, as things of which the possession ought not to be violated, would be of no avail. The general feelings of mankind, with respect to the importance of this duty, are indeed sufficiently shown in the laws which they have established for punishing the breach of it. Even under our own excellent legal system, in which death is appointed to him who premeditates and executes the death of another, it is appointed also to him who has assailed the property only, not the person; and politically and morally erroneous as this equal allotment of punishment to offences so unequal most truly is, it still marks sufficiently the general feeling of the evil which would arise to society from the frequent violation of this simple duty, that such an allotment of punishment should still continue in such a nation, and in such an age.

When we consider the multitude who are in possession of means of enjoyment, that are to them the means only of selfish avarice or of profligate waste; in both cases, perhaps, productive rather of evil than of good to the individual possessor; and when, at the same time, we consider the multitudes, far more numerous, to whom a small share of that cumbrous and seemingly unprofitable wealth would, in an instant, diffuse a comfort that would make the heart of the indigent gay in his miserable hovel, and be like a beam of health itself to that pale cheek which is slowly wasting on its wretched bed of straw, in cold and darkness, and a famine that is scarcely felt, only because appetite itself is quenched by disease; it might almost seem to the inconsiderate, at least for a moment, in contemplating such a scene, that no expression of the social voice could be so beneficial as that which should merely say, Let there be no restraint of property, but let all the means of provision for the wants of mankind be distributed according to the more or less imperious necessity of those wants which all partake. It requires only the consideration of a moment, however, to perceive that this very distribution would itself be the most injurious boon that could be offered to indigence; that soon, under such a system of supposed freedom from the usurpations of the wealthy, instead of the wealth which supports, and the industry which is supported, the bounty which relieves, and the penury that is relieved, there would only be one general penury, without the possibility of relief; and an industry that would be exercised, not in plundering the wealthy, for there could not then be wealth to admit of plunder, but in snatching from the weaker some scanty morsel of a wretched aliment that would scarcely be sufficient to repay the labour of the struggle to him who was too powerful not to prevail. The vices that would tyrannize uncontrolled in such an iron age I do not attempt to picture. I speak only of the mere physical wants of man, and of the means which different states of society afford for the gratification of those wants according as possession is more or less secured, though no other original difference were supposed, than of the simple right of property. There would be no palaces, indeed, in such a system of equal rapine, and this might be considered as but a slight evil, from the small number of those who were stripped of them; but when the chambers of state had disappeared, where would be the cottage, or rather the whole hamlet of cottages that might be expected to occupy its place? The simple dwellings of a happy peasantry might be the last, indeed, to be invaded; but when the magnificent mansion had been stripped by the first band of plunderers, these, too, would soon find plunderers as rapacious. No elegant art could be exercised, no science cultivated, where the search of a precarious subsistence for the day would afford us no leisure for studies or exercises beyond the supply of mere animal wants; and man, who, with property, is what we now behold him, and is to be, in his glorious progress even on earth, a being far nobler than we are capable, in our present circumstances, of divining, would, without property, soon become, in the lowest depth of brutal ignorance and wretchedness, what it is almost as difficult for our imagination to picture to us, as it would be for it to picture what he may become on earth, after the many long ages of progressive improvement. Such is the state to which we should be reduced, if all men were to do what the robber individually does. He contributes whatever a single heart and a single arm can contribute, to make of the social and happy world around us, that un-

social and miserable world which we vainly labour to conceive. His crime is not perpetrated against an individual only, but against the very union that binds society together; and the abhorrence with which his crime is considered, is not the mere wrath that is felt by the aggrieved individual, it is the sympathizing resentment of all mankind.

LECTURE LXXXIV.

OF OUR NEGATIVE DUTIES TO OTHERS—ABSTAINING FROM ROBBING THEM OF THE AFFECTIONS OF OTHERS — OF ABSTAINING FROM INJURING THE CHARACTER OF OTHERS—OF VERACITY.

GENTLEMEN,—in treating of the general duties which we owe to all mankind, I considered these, in my last Lecture, as of two classes, negative and positive; the one set leading us to abstain from injuring others, the other set leading us to be actively useful to them.

An individual, it is evident, may be injured by us in various ways, with which, of course, in the obligation to abstain from the different forms of injury, there is a co-extensive variety of duty. He may be injured directly in his person, in his property, in those affections of others which are almost a species of property, in his character, in his knowledge or belief, in his virtue, in his tranquillity.

Of these various modes of injury we have considered two. I proceed then, now, to the third in order, the injury which we may do to any one, by robbing him of the affections of those whose love may, perhaps, be to him the most precious of his possessions.

Affection, I have said, may be considered almost as a form of wealth possessed; and the most delightful affection which can be given to us, is truly, if I may apply the cold terms of merchandise to the pure commerce of the heart, a species of property for which the price of similar affection has been paid, and to which the laws of wedlock have given a legal and holy title. It is to the robbery of conjugal affection, therefore, as the most important, that I shall confine the few remarks which I have to offer on this species of injury.

If the guilt of the robber were to be estimated in proportion to the quantity of evil which he knowingly produces, where is it that our most indignant hatred of the crime should be fixed? Not surely on him whom alone we are accustomed to denominate a robber. The wretch who perishes on the scaffold for his sordid thefts, unpitied, perhaps, by a single individual in the whole crowd of gazers, that mark the last faint convulsion of his limbs, only to wonder when the quiverings are to cease, may deserve the horrors of that ignominious punishment under which he sinks. But does he truly rank in villany with the robber of another class,—with him who would be astonished, perhaps, to have a place assigned to him among common pilferers, but who is in guilt the basest of them all, however noble he may be in titles, and splendid with all that pomp which can be alike the covering of vice and of virtue? There may pass in some stately carriage, while the crowd are still gazing on the body that hangs lifeless before them, some criminal of far deeper iniquity, whose eye too may turn where all other eyes are fixed, and who may wonder at the increase of crimes, and moralize on their causes, and rejoice at their punishment, while the carriage, in which he reclines and moralizes at his ease, is bearing him to the house of his friend, by a secret appointment with her who is the mistress of it; whom months of incessant falsehoods and treacheries were unable to subdue, but whom, by the influence of some finer simulation, he is at last to carry off, as a noble booty, from the virtue and happiness to which she never is to return.

The common thief, who steals or forces his way into the house at midnight, has never been treated with kindness and confidence by him whose property he invades; and all which he carries off may usually be repaired without very much difficulty, or may perhaps be of a kind which is scarcely of sufficient importance to our convenience to be replaced by the easy efforts that might replace it. But what is to repair the plunder of him whose robbery is of that which exists only within the heart; who steals not the object of regard only, but the very capacity of feeling affection and confidence again, and who, by a single crime, converts, in the eyes of the sufferer, that world of social harmony, which God has made so beautiful, into a world of deceivers and the deceived! of pleasures that are but illusion, and of misery that is reality!

Let us imagine one of those domestic groups, which form, to the lover of happiness, one of the loveliest spectacles with which the earth is embellished—a family, in the small circle of which there is no need of distracting and noisy gaieties without, because there are constant tranquillity and enjoyment within; in which the pleasure of loving is, in the bosom of the wedded pair, a delight that, as blending in one uniform emotion with the pleasure of being loved, is scarcely to be distinguished from that affection which is ever flowing around it,—a delight that grows not weaker but more intense by diffusion to the little frolickers around, who as yet know little more than the affection which they feel, and the affection of which they are the objects, but

who are rising into virtue amid the happiness which virtue sheds. In considering such a scene, would it require any very long and subtile effort of reflection to determine what would be the greatest injury which human malice could devise against it, if it were in the power of malice to execute every atrocity which it might conceive? It would be that very injury which the adulterer perpetrates,—the crime of him who can see all this happiness, and can say in his heart, this happiness shall exist no longer. A time may indeed come, when, if his artifices be successful, this happiness will exist no more; when she, who was once as innocent as she was happy, shall have been consigned to that remorse which is to hurry her, too slowly for her own wishes, to the grave; and when the home which she has deserted shall be a place of wretchedness and desolation; where there is one miserable being who knows his misery, and others who still smile, while they inquire anxiously, with a sort of fearful wonder, for the presence of her whose caresses they no longer enjoy, and are as yet ignorant that a time is to arrive when they are to blush at the very name of her, to whose knee and embrace of fondness they are longing to return.

When Milton describes the leader of the fallen spirits as witnessing, on his entrance into paradise, the happiness of the first pair, he knew well how necessary it was to the poetic interest which he wished us to feel in the character and enterprise even of this audacious rebel, that, in the very prospect of executing his infernal purpose, he should have some reluctance to disturb that beautiful happiness which was before his eyes.

O hell! what do mine eyes with grief behold?
Into our room of bliss thus high advanc'd
Creatures of other mould, earth-born perhaps,
Not spirits, yet to heavenly spirits bright
Little inferior; whom my thoughts pursue
With wonder, and could love, so lively shines
In them divine resemblance, and such grace
The hand that form'd them on their shape hath pour'd.
Ah, gentle pair! ye little think how nigh
Your change approaches, when all these delights
Will vanish and deliver ye to woe,
More woe, the more your taste is now of joy.—
Ill-fenc'd your heaven to keep out such a foe
As now is enter'd; yet no purpos'd foe
To you, whom I could pity thus forlorn,
Though I unpitied: league with you I seek,
And mutual amity.—Hell shall unfold,
To entertain you two, her widest gates,
And send forth all her kings; there will be room,
Not like these narrow limits, to receive
Your numerous offspring; if no better place,
Thank him who puts me, loath, to this revenge
On you who wrong me not, for him who wrong'd.
And should I at your harmless innocence
Melt, as I do, yet public reason just,
Honour and empire with revenge enlarg'd,
By conqu'ring this new world, compels me now
To do what else, though damn'd, I should abhor.*

It is similar happiness which the adulterer invades. But he has not the compunction of the fiend in invading it. He enters into paradise, eager to destroy. He invades it, because it is happiness. In many cases it is his vanity which he seeks to gratify, far more than his sensual appetite. The beauty with which the eye is most attractive to him, is the love with which it is already beaming on another; and if there were less previous conjugal affection to be overcome, and therefore less wretchedness to be produced, by the conquest which he is ambitious of achieving, he would often forbear his seductions, and reserve them for those who may afford to his insatiable wishes of moral desolation a greater harvest of misery.

Such is the adulterer; and of all this mass of wretchedness which he produces, and of all the iniquity which can calmly meditate and plan such wretchedness, what is the palliation which he assigns? It is the violence of his love alone which he pleads. He is not aware what aggravation there is of his guilt, in that which he regards, or professes to regard, as the apology of it. If by love he mean mere sexual appetite, his excuse is of the same kind as that of the common robber, who should think that he had given a moral justification of his rapacity by describing the debaucheries which it enabled him to pursue, and the difficulty which, without his thefts, he should feel in visiting as frequently the tavern and the brothel. And if by the love which is asserted, he meant an affection more worthy of the name, what are we to think of the sincerity of his love, who, to gratify his own lust, is eager to plunge into guilt and wretchedness the very being whom he professes to regard with an interest which should have led him, if sincere, to expose himself to every thing but guilt, to save her from misery like that which he is intentionally preparing for her? To speak of affection, therefore, or of feelings to which he dares to give the name of affection, is on his part to double his crime. It is to confess, that while he is not merely regardless of the happiness of the husband whom he robs, but equally regardless of the happiness of her of whom he robs him, he is as completely and brutally selfish in his love, as he could be in his indifference or his hatred; and that the peace, and honour, and virtue of the being whom he professes to regard as the dearest to him in existence, are therefore as nothing, when he must either sacrifice them, or make a sacrifice, which is far more painful to him, of one of his own desires.

In the present state of manners, in which at least among the higher orders of society, there is so very little of what was once considered as domestic life, and, in the place of its simple unpretending enjoyments, such

* Paradise Lost, book iv. line 358—392.

constant and close succession of almost theatrical exhibitions, on stages on which each is to each mutually spectacle and spectator, to perform gracefully their part is as much an object of ambition to the unpaid actors and actresses, in this voluntary and unremitting drama, as it is to the actors and actresses on another stage, whose livelihood, as well as glory, depends on the number of hands which they can render by their best efforts most noisy in applause. That there is a very powerful charm in elegant manners, and in the lighter eloquence of conversation, which can adapt itself readily to every subject, from the statesmanship of the day to the flower or the feather, I am far from denying, and that, even in a moral view, from the influence which it gives to the opinions of the individual, and the easy happiness which it spreads to all around him, this excellence, frivolous as it may seem, is not to be despised; however humble and comparatively insignificant it must always be rated, when placed in the scale of merit with nobler wisdom, or still nobler excellence of the heart. One great evil of this system of universal display, however, and of the familiar and sprightly levities which it involves, is, that where this gay excellence is of high value, the praise of it must be sought from all. To all alike must be paid those gallantries of manners which all alike are to admire. The wedded and the unwedded may thus be said to live in a constant interchange of symbols of affection, which, though understood to be mere symbols, may yet, as symbols, excite that very affection which they were never seriously intended to awake. Nor is this all. In the eagerness for general admiration, there may be a wish to excite feelings that, without amounting to love, may approach love, in the heart that is already the property of another; an assiduity of attention which, though there may be no thought of leading the way to absolute infidelity, has a great portion of the guilt of adultery itself, and may almost be considered as a minor species of it; since its object is to excite a peculiar admiration, which cannot be felt without some estrangement, or tendency to estrangement, of conjugal regard. In this way, indeed, I have no doubt that more disquietude of domestic happiness has been produced upon the whole, than by adultery itself, and produced in bosoms that would have shrunk indignantly from the solicitations of the adulterer.

The next species of general duty, to which we have to proceed, is that which relates to the character of others.

The extent of the injury which we may occasion to any one, by wounding his reputation, is not to be estimated merely by the advantages which a pure and honourable character directly affords. It is necessary to take into account also the value, above even its high intrinsic excellence, which every individual, from the very constitution of our common nature, as explained to you in a former part of the course, when I treated of the desire of fame, is led to attach to it. The conscience of the virtuous is, indeed, in one sense of the word, sufficient to itself. It cannot be unhappy, while afflictions are all from without, and there is no self-reproach within to lay open the bosom to their cruel power; yet, even to the virtuous, the approving voice of those who are moving along with them in their earthly path, is one of the most pleasing accessions which their happiness can receive; and to rob them of this voice, or to convert it into murmurs or whispers of reprehension, is to do all the evil which malice, that cannot rob them of the consciousness of merit itself, is able to effect. The consciousness itself, indeed, is happily not within the power of the calumniator. But, if it were within his power, who can doubt that that power would be gladly exercised; that he who defames, at the risk of detection, would, if the virtues of others were submitted to his will, prevent all peril of this kind, by tearing from the heart every virtue, of which he must now be content with denying the existence, and thus at once consign his victim to ignominy, and rob him of its only consolation? So hateful, indeed, to the wicked, is the very thought of moral excellence, that, if even one of the many slanderers with whom society is filled, had this tremendous power, there might not be a single virtue remaining on the earth.

The evil, however, which calumny can do to those whose virtue is scarcely in need of any support from public approbation, is slight, when compared with the evil which it may produce to those whose weaker virtue is mixed with much imperfection, that affords an easy pretext for censure, even when censure is unmerited; while the loss of the encouraging regard of others is more injurious, when withheld from frailty, that, even when it wishes to do what is worthy of praise, is too ready to fall, without the support to which it clings. The real imperfections of mankind are, therefore, delightful to the heart of the slanderer, who sees in them only a warrant for all those additional charges of guilt or error which it may be his interest to add to the real amount. They are the elements of the poison which he prepares, without which, he would have as little power to cloud the moral scene, as the enchantresses of ancient fable would have had to obscure the sun, or bring down the moon from the sky, without the baleful herbs that were essential to the incantation.

It is our duty, I will not say only to love the good, but even with our indignation

against the wicked, to mix some portion of pity, that pity which would lead us always to wish, that even their names could still be added to the list of the virtuous. If such be our duty then, what are we to think of those, who, far from pitying the wicked, would gladly double all their atrocities, and who, still farther from loving the good, would point them out, as the wicked, to public execration? There is one species of atrocity, indeed, which such malignant industry does not fail to render clear, but it would be well for him who exhibits it, if that guilt were the guilt of others.

"He of whom you delight to speak evil," says a sententious French moralist, "may become acquainted with what you have said, and he will be your enemy; he may remain in ignorance of it, and, even though what you have said were true, you would still have to reproach yourself with the meanness of attacking one who had no opportunity of defending himself. If scandal is to be secret, it is the crime of a coward; if it is to become known, it is the crime of a madman."* The moral dilemma in this argument is, indeed, addressed to one who may be supposed to have still a love of virtue in general, and a detestation of that which it would be cowardly to do; but even those who are insensible to the better motive, may feel at least the force of the selfish one; and if the secret history of the hearts of all the malignant were known, and the feelings also known, with which they are universally regarded,—it would appear, in the estimate of all which is gained and all which is lost, that detraction is truly madness or folly, as much as it is guilt.

But, if the tale which we love to whisper be just, can it be a crime to lament over guilt that is real? It is not a crime to lament over guilt, if we do lament over it. But if we do truly lament over the probable appearances of it, we shall not be very eager to circulate a doubt that may be injurious, till we have reason ourselves, not to doubt merely, but to believe. I do not wish to recommend that weakness of humanity, which, in the world, often passes current for virtue, though it implies rather a defect of moral feeling, than any refinement of it,—or which at least, if it be virtue, is a virtue that can hear of oppression, and even witness it, without feeling indignation against the oppressor; and which rather would see a thousand repetitions of the injury, than give to the wicked the name and the odium which he deserves. When crimes are walking secretly in darkness, as much as when they present themselves proudly in the very sunshine of day, it is our duty, to the innocent who have suffered, to give them the consolation of our sympathy, in the indignant feeling of their wrongs, as it is our duty to the innocent who may suffer, to call them to beware. Even in denouncing guilt, however, the office which we exercise is an office of duty, not of pleasure. It is to be exercised, not with the eagerness of one who rejoices in discovering something which he may condemn, but with the sorrow of a lover of humankind, who is forced to add another moral ill to the catalogue of human delinquencies. Such are the feelings of a generous spirit, even when the vice which it discovers is of a species that implies more than ordinary moral turpitude; and when it discovers only such foibles as are not inconsistent with the ordinary proportion of human virtue, it will love rather to speak of the virtue than of the failing; it will think not of what the individual is only, but of what human nature is; and will not withhold from one the indulgence which it must extend to all, and of which it must, even on some occasions, have too good reason for wishing the extension to itself.

When the propagators of tales of scandal think that they have completely justified themselves, by declaring that all which they have said is true, they forget that there are virtues of which they are silent that are true, as well as the defects of which they speak with such minute and exact remembrance; and that, if they were to omit all notice of what is excellent in a character, and to cull only what is defective, the most illustrious of mankind, without any positive violation of biographic truth, might soon cease to be illustrious.

When detraction arises from envy, malice, or motives of sordid interest, it is evident that it can be cured only by the cure of the passions from which it springs. But though these, at first sight, might seem to be the common sources of defamation, it is to another source that it is chiefly to be traced; to the mere flippancy of the gay and the idle, and the necessity of filling up with amusement of some sort a conversation that would flag but for this ever ready resource. In these circumstances, nothing is so quick to present itself as the fault of another, even though we may have fairly begun with speaking of his virtues. "What pleasure, it has been truly said, can two or three persons have together, who have no mutual esteem, whose hearts are as void of feeling as their heads are void of ideas! What charm could their conversation possess without the aid of a little scandal! The sacrifice of a third person is almost always the chief pleasure of a tête-à-tête. A vain idler, who would otherwise be as wearisome to every body as he is weary of himself, speaks to men and women of the same character. He flatters, at the expense of the absent, their vanity and their

* De St. Lambert, Œuv. Philosophiques, tome ii. p. 251.

envy; he thus animates their languor, and they pay him in the same coin. If he is gifted with some imagination, and can express agreeably the flattering things which he wishes to appear to think of you, and the evil which he thinks of others, he is treated and caressed, becomes the favourite of every circle, and will continue for his whole life to cultivate the talent of slandering gracefully."*

There is considerable truth in a remark of another French writer, to the same purport, "That there is now-a-days less scandal than there was formerly, because there is more play. Cards, he says, have saved more reputations than a whole host of itinerant preachers could have done, though their only business had been to preach against evil-speaking. But we cannot play always; and, therefore, we must sometimes amuse ourselves with a little defamation."

The moral conclusion to be drawn from this remark is, that what cards may thus have tended in part to do, may be effected by other better means. If scandal arise in a great measure from poverty of conversation, it will diminish in proportion as minds become more cultivated, so as not to have every subject of discussion exhausted, when the health of the visitor and of the visited, having once been ascertained, cannot again with any decency be made a subject of inquiry, and when the meteorology of the day and of the season has, after a little debate, been settled in all its physical exactness. It is to this general increase of mental cultivation that the lessening of scandal is to be attributed, far more than to mere card-playing; which, even when the use of cards was more prevalent than now, could afford only a suspension of hostilities, that were ever ready to begin again with new violence when the game was finished, with perhaps a little additional bitterness on the part of the losers, against the vices of the wicked, and the frailties of the weak. The only true and permanent source of peace and amity with the faults of the absent, is that interest in better subjects which enables the present to animate their conversation, and to sustain it in rich variety, without the necessity of wandering to that resource which marks the folly of the head still more than the uncharitableness of the heart. It is pleasing to trace in this, as in all its other influences, the connexion of intellectual culture with the virtues which it not merely embellishes but invigorates; to perceive that philosophy which, in senates and councils, teaches purer humanity to statesmen and kings, extend its gentle influence to the private circle, and diffuse a more amiable cheerfulness on the very pleasures of the gay.

The next duty of which we have to treat is that of veracity, which relates to the knowledge or belief of others, as capable of being affected by the meanings, true or false, which our words or our conduct may convey; and consists in the faithful conformity of our language, or of our conduct when it is intended tacitly to supply the place of language, to the truth which we profess to deliver, or, at least, to that which is at the time believed by us to be true.

So much of the happiness of social life is derived from the use of language, and so profitless would the mere power of language be, but for the truth which dictates it, that the abuse of the confidence which is placed in our declarations, may not merely be in the highest degree injurious to the individual deceived, but would tend, if general, to throw back the whole race of mankind into that barbarism from which they have emerged, and progressively ascended through still purer air and still brighter sunshine to that noble height which they have reached. It is not wonderful, therefore, that veracity, so important to the happiness of all, and yet subject to so many temptations of personal interest in the violation of it, should, in all nations, have had a high place assigned to it among the virtues.

That, in the case of a virtue, so essential to the commerce of life, man should have been led instinctively to the practice of it, would not of itself appear absurd, or even very wonderful, to those who consider the other instructive tendencies in our constitution; and since all, in uttering falsehood, are conscious of an effort which represses the truth that seems to start of itself to the lips, and all seem to believe what is told them, till the experience of frequent deceit have induced some degree of doubt in the young listener, who begins to be a sceptic; it has been supposed, by many philosophers, that there are, in our nature, two instinctive tendencies adapted to each other,—a tendency to speak truth, and a tendency to believe what is spoken.

On this subject it is perhaps not very easy to decide with absolute confidence; since it must be admitted by all, that, whether there were, or were not, such original tendencies in the mind, they now do truly form a part of it,—that we have a disposition to speak truth, as often as we speak, without any positive motive to be deceitful; and a disposition to believe what is related to us, if in the circumstances of the relater there be no obvious interest in falsehood, and in the circumstances of the narrative itself no apparent improbability. But since principles are not to be multiplied without urgent necessity, I confess that I do not see,

* De St. Lambert, Œuv. Phil. tome ii. p. 250.

in the phenomena of veracity and belief, sufficient reason to assert peculiar instincts, as concerned in the production of them, since they admit of a sufficient explanation by other more general principles.

That there is a love of society in man, and a desire of sympathetic feeling in the society that is loved, I am far from denying; and if this general love of sympathy with our feelings, to which truth contributes, were all which is meant by the assertion of instinctive veracity, it would be absurd to object to the principle. But this is not what is meant by the assertors of the doctrine. The tendency of which they speak is an instinct additional; and it is to this additional instinct only that the remarks which I have to offer are meant to be applied.

If in our inquiry we are to go back to the very origin of language, it may be presumed that some want, or wish, would be felt when words were uttered. The very motive, therefore, which led to the use of speech, would lead to the truth of it; since no wish could be attained by the use of language, unless the wish were truly expressed. It surely cannot seem wonderful that the expression of wants should be sincere; though it might, indeed, have seemed very wonderful if, with the wish of obtaining food from a brother savage, the savage had employed his power of utterance only to declare that he was not hungry. He might speak falsehoods on some occasion, indeed, on the same principle as that which led him on ordinary occasions to be sincere; that is to say, from the influence of a powerful desire. He would have some secret wish to gratify by the deceit, and, having this wish, he might say what was not, as he was before in the habit of saying what was.

What is true of the savage is true of the child. He too has wishes to gratify; and he speaks truth, because the expression of his wishes must be truth. Nor is this all: The simple laws of suggestion, on which the use of arbitrary signs depend, have themselves an obvious relation to veracity, that connects the utterance of the tongue with the emotions of the heart. Language, as a mere series of symbols, is associated with certain feelings. The feeling of warmth, for example, is more closely associated with the verbal sign that expresses it, than with any other of the various signs of which language is composed; and when we think of this feeling, the word 'warmth' will occur more readily than any other. It is the same with all our other feelings. They suggest, of themselves, by mere association, the corresponding phrases expressive of them; and truth is the result of this very suggestion. We are conscious of an effort in speaking falsehood, because, but for this effort, our feelings would of themselves suggest their corresponding signs; and we have thus to repress the truth that rises spontaneously, and to invent laboriously the combinations of words that are in discord with our belief. What wonder is there that, when we walk through a meadow in a sunny evening of autumn, there should arise to the mind, and thus to ready utterance, phrases expressive of the real feelings—how beautiful is this scene, and how happy these cattle appear—rather than phrases which have no connexion with the real feelings, and which cannot be supposed, therefore, to be readily uttered, because they are not readily suggested; phrases which would say, what a scene of ruggedness and sterility is this before us, and how terrible are those wolves and tigers! When the common laws of association are reversed, by which things signified suggest their signs, as conversely signs suggest the objects or feelings which they signify,—then, indeed, it may be necessary, in accounting for the accordance of words and sentiments, to have recourse to a peculiar instinct of veracity.

There seems, then, no necessity for a peculiar instinct to account for the general tendency to speak truth rather than falsehood, independently of all moral consideration of the difference of truth and falsehood; though this moral feeling in aid of the common principle of association, and of the general love of sympathy, is certainly an important element in the habitual production of truth. As little reason does there appear to be for the supposition of a peculiar corresponding instinct of credulity. All which seems necessary to account for this, is the influence of common experience.

If there be, as we have seen, some very obvious reasons to account for the tendency to speak truth, those who hear must, for the same reasons, be hearers of truth; and they who are in the constant, or almost constant, habit of hearing truth, will of course, from the same principle which directs their reasoning in other cases, soon learn to draw the conclusion, that what is said may be regarded almost with certainty to be true. It would be as wonderful that they should not draw this conclusion as to general truth, from the general concurrence of the phenomena, as that they should not draw a similar general conclusion with respect to any of the laws of nature in which a similar concurrence was discovered. If all men had universally spoken truth, all men would universally, in consequence of this uniform connexion, have believed truth; or if we deny this consequence, it would really be difficult for us to explain why we do not put our hand as readily in the fire as in water, or jump down a precipice with as little fear as we walk along a plain. But all men do not speak truth as certainly as fire burns; and there-

fore we believe in the one case with some little doubt, in the other with certainty. It seems to us more probable that what is said to us is true, than that it is untrue; the probability increasing, in our estimation, according to the circumstances in which we have previously found truth to be most exactly conformable to the declarations made, and in many cases making a near approximation to absolute certainty; because in cases of the same sort, we have rarely, if ever, discovered any disagreement of the fact and the assertion. That, even if we possess the instinctive credulity supposed, we yet do not believe every thing which is told us, must be admitted by those who contend for the principle. And why do we not believe whatever is told us? The only answer which can be given by them is, that we do not believe every thing because we have occasionally been deceived: and if the doubt can be explained by the experience of the small number of instances in which we have been deceived, why may not the tendency to the moderate assent, that is tempered by this little mixture of doubt, be admitted to arise, in like manner, from our experience of the greater number of instances in which we have not been deceived?

That we should be more credulous in childhood than in mature life, is not wonderful, when we consider that the probabilities of truth are always far greater than the probabilities of falsehood; that the discovery of many of the possible motives to falsehood, on which our doubt in after-life is founded, requires an analysis much nicer than children can be supposed to perform; and that it is the very nature of the mind, when untrained to habits of reflection, to think only of the majority of cases when the number is very greatly superior, and to forget the few exceptions. The general analogies of a language are, in this way, made absolutely universal by a child, as they are in many instances, too, so regarded by the vulgar, who understand, indeed, the irregular inflections when pronounced, but continue, in their own discourse, to employ the more general forms of termination in the particular substantives and verbs, in which grammatical usage requires a departure from the ordinary rules of inflection. The child will learn to doubt better as he will learn to speak more idiomatically; but still the too regular language which he uses does not flow from any peculiar instinct, nor does the too regular belief.

The only original principle that seems to me to be truly concerned in the phenomena of veracity, at least the only principle in addition to the general social propensity by which we delight in the sympathy of others, is the susceptibility of moral emotion, to the influence of which, in aiding habits of truth, I have already alluded. We feel that in injuring another in his belief we are guilty of what is morally wrong; as we feel that we are guilty of moral wrong in injuring any one, however slightly in his person or his property. We abstain from the one species of injury, therefore, as we abstain from the other; and though I cannot think that we speak truth, from an instinctive propensity that is independent of all experience or reflection, I have no doubt that we speak it, in many cases, from a moral disapprobation of deceit, which is itself the result of a tendency as truly original as any of our instincts.

LECTURE LXXXV.

OF OUR NEGATIVE DUTIES CONTINUED;—OF ABSTAINING FROM INJURING THE VIRTUE OF OTHERS—EITHER DIRECTLY BY OUR SEDUCTIONS—OR INDIRECTLY BY OUR EXAMPLE; OF ABSTAINING FROM INJURING THE MENTAL TRANQUILLITY OF OTHERS.

In my last Lecture, Gentlemen, in prosecution of the inquiry on which we had entered into the great class of negative duties, I considered those which relate to our power of injuring others in three very important respects: in the affection of those whom they love—in their general reputation—and in their knowledge or belief, as affected by the confidence which they attach to our false declarations. There still remain two other modes of injury to be considered by us, in the two corresponding negative duties to which they give rise.

Of these, the next in order is the dangerous power which we may exercise over the virtue of another.

This power over the virtues of others may be exercised in two ways; directly by our seductions, indirectly by our example.

The very name seduction excites immediately the thought of one particular form of allurement to guilt, to which that name is peculiarly affixed; and which deserves this peculiar distinction, by the amount of irreparable injury that may thus be produced by the persuasion of a few fatal moments. The remarks, however, which I made in my last Lecture on the crime of adultery, are in many respects so applicable to this, as to render superfluous any long discussion of the evil which the seducer perpetrates, and of the selfishness which must be in the heart before it could meditate so much evil. There is not, indeed, in simple seduction, the theft of affection belonging to another, of which the adulterer is guilty; but there is the theft of the affection of the individual herself, the fraudulent acquisition of it by falsehoods and

artifices, which in every other species of intercourse would be universally considered as lasting disgrace; and which are surely not less disgraceful, when the wretchedness produced by the fraud is far greater than any other fraud could produce, and is the wretchedness of one of whom man, who betrays her fondness, was appointed the protector. Whatever other consequences may attend the treachery of the seducer, there is, as in adultery, at least in almost every case, the production of misery to more than the individual directly betrayed; to a whole family perhaps, that lose in a single moment, as if by some sudden desolation or total change of scene, whatever was delightful in the thought of the past, or a promise of delight in the thought of the future; and that must either cease to love one whom it would be agony to abandon, or retain a love that involves more intense and lasting anguish, because it is the love of one who never can be happy. But, though there were no parent or friend to share her sufferings, and to aggravate them to her by this very participation, there is still the great sufferer herself, the production of present guilt, and future shame and misery, that admit almost as little of consolation as of remedy, to one, for whom the producer of all this moral depravation and anguish of heart professes feelings which he honours with the name of love, and who, in the dreadful sacrifices which she has made, has shown too strongly the force of that attachment of which he has availed himself to render her his victim. If it be justly considered as adding tenfold horror to the crime of murder, that he on whom death was inflicted was a friend and benefactor of the assassin, and forgave the deadly blow even while he recognised the arm from which it came, what weight of guilt does the very love which, even after ruin, still lingers in her gentle heart that was betrayed, add to the atrocious selfishness of him who rejoiced to perceive the tenderness of love, only as a proof that his artifices had not been wasted; who, in abandoning her afterwards to all her misery, regretted only the difficulty which he might have in shaking off a love so obstinate; and on receiving, perhaps, one of those letters of upbraiding, in which, in the very vehemence of indignation, it is still evident that it is love which upbraids,—could see those gleams of tenderness, with no other thought than that of gratified vanity, —a conscious pride of attractions, which might succeed with other hearts, as they had succeeded with that heart, over which they still retained so lasting a hold.

The period which intervenes between the first artifices of the seducer, and the misery to which he is ultimately to give occasion, surely does not lessen his guilt, as a moral agent, deliberately planning those very means of wretchedness. Let us imagine, then, gathered into one terrible moment, all this amount of wretchedness,—the distraction of parents, the tears of sisters, the shame and remorse of the frail outcast; or perhaps, in the dreadful progress of depravation of what once was shame and remorse, a wild excess of guilt, that seeks only to forget the past, and that scarcely knows, in the distraction of many acquired vices, what it is which constitutes at the moment the anguish which it feels: if all this combination of miseries could be made visible as it were to the very eyes of the seducer in a single moment, and the instant production of it were to depend on a single word of renewed solicitation on his part; what love, I will not say, but even what passion that calls itself love, in any human breast, can we conceive to be so unmoved by such a sight, as to utter calmly a word so destructive? And if a single moment of the miserable result be so dreadful to be contemplated, how much more terrible is it when regarded as the misery of years—of years that, after their course of earthly wretchedness is finished, consign to immortality a spirit, that, but for the guilt of him who rendered it what it is, might have looked back upon the earth, with the calm pleasure of those who turn their eyes on a scene which their acts of virtue have rendered delightful, and quit it only for scenes which they are to render delightful, by the continuance of similar acts, or wishes of virtue.

It is this species of seduction of the purity of female love, as I have said, to which the name is usually attached. But there are vicious seductions of as many kinds as there are vicious objects to be obtained by vicious means. He who knowingly and wilfully lessens a single virtue in the heart of another, or introduces into it a single vice, or increases the power of any guilty passion, is a seducer; guilty himself to the extent at least, or more than the extent, of the guilt which he occasions. The flatterer is a seducer; and, in thinking of flattery, we are not to think only of the courts of kings, and of the palaces of those who have almost the splendour of kings. There is a scale, which comprehends in it all mankind; a scale of the great, who are great to those beneath them, as they are little to those above them; and everywhere there are flatterers, because at every point of the scale there is some little power or patronage, which can gratify some little desire, that corresponds with the gifts which the flatterers of flatterers can offer to those who pay to them a similar homage. As it would be difficult to find any one too great to be the subject of adulation, it would be difficult also to find one too little to be the subject of it, if only we could find one still meaner, who might look to him with hope. Of the various corruptions, therefore, with

which virtue may be assailed, flattery is not merely one of the most powerful, but the most general of all; because it is at once the most easy to be offered, and the surest to be received. "We believe that we hate flattery," says La Rochefoucault, "when all which we hate is the awkwardness of the flatterer." It is the very nature of this species of blandishment, as has been truly remarked, to please even when rejected; and however frequently refused admission, to be admitted at last. "Habent hoc in se naturale blanditiae: etiam cum rejiciuntur placent; saepe exclusae, novissime recipiuntur."

Flattery, then, the fosterer of vanity, and often of affections more degrading, implies, in whatever station the flatterer and the flattered may be, a disregard of the virtue of others, which in itself is no slight vice. But the sly bribery of praise is not the only bribery with which human selfishness would strive to seduce human selfishness. There are grosser bribes, which those who count themselves honourable men, and are aspiring to stations of still higher honour, have no hesitation in employing for the furtherance of useful vice. A little perjury, real or implied, is all which they require; and they are content to pay for it its fair market price, or even to raise a little the market price, if perjury should have grown more reluctant than before, or more skilful in the calculation of its own exact value. It is painful to think, that an offence against public morals, of such serious import, should be so lightly estimated by those who strive to forget their own delinquency, in the equal and familiar delinquency of others; as if the very wideness of guilt were not an additional reason for ceasing to contribute to that which has been already so extensively baneful;—and that the first step to the legislation of the freest and most virtuous nation on the earth, to the noblest of all the trusts which a nation can bestow,—that of enacting the means by which its own tendencies to guilt may be lessened,—should, in so many instances, be the purchase of a crime, or of many crimes.

If, however, the purchase even of a few crimes be an offence so worthy of reprehension, not merely for the encouragement which it gives to the venal barterers of their conscience, but still more for the corruption of moral principle which it tends to diffuse through the whole community, what deeper reprobation belongs to those to whom this general debasement of a people is itself an object of desire; who can see millions sunk in ignorance, and in all the vices of ignorance, and know the means which might have accelerated their moral progress, and rejoice with a secret triumph that they have been instrumental in withholding them. How many nations are there on the earth, in which nothing is so much feared by those who have the miserable charge of the general servitude, as that man should become a little nobler than it is possible for him to be, when he has to bow his head at the feet of the oppressor; and in which the diffusion of knowledge is dreaded, as the diffusion of that which the slave cannot feel long, and continue to be a slave. To withhold, for purposes of selfish gain, the means by which the moral condition of a state might be ameliorated, is to be guilty of an injury to virtue, compared with the atrocity of which, the guilt of seducing to vice a single individual, is as insignificant as would be the crime of a single assassination, compared with the butchery of millions in the massacre of a whole nation, of which none were to survive but the murderers themselves, and those by whom the murder was sanctioned and applauded.

The various species of seduction which we have been considering, have had some object of direct personal gain in view. The betrayer of female innocence has previously yielded himself to the control of appetites and passions, that are to him what reason and morality are to the good, and that must be gratified, though he seek the gratification of them in misery itself. The flatterer seeks the favour of him whom he flatters, and seeks it usually for interests, without which the mere favour would be of little value to him. The briberies of money, or place, or pension, present or future, near or remote, or whatever else can be offered to the rapacity of avarice or ambition, or of all the passions which avarice and ambition can gratify, are not gifts or promises that are gratuitous, but expect a return of profit of some sort to the passions of the briber. Even those who delight in keeping nations in ignorance and servility, and who care not how many vices may accompany or flow from these, still see the connexion of servility as an effect, with ignorance as a cause; and, perhaps, would have no great objection to allow a little more wisdom to a people, if they were to become more obsequious by their wisdom, or to remain even as truly slaves in heart as before. There is one species of corruption, however, which is exercised from a love of the corruption itself, or at least from the mere pleasure of companionship in guilt,—a spirit of malicious proselytism, which forms the last dreadful stage of vice; when the grey-headed veteran of debaucheries, that began in youth, and have been matured by a long life of unceasing excess in all that is gross and depraved, till he have acquired a sort of oracular gravity of profligacy among gayer profligates, collects around him his band of youthful disciples, whom he has gathered wherever his watchful eye could mark out another victim; relates to them the tales of merriment of

other years, as an excitement to present passions; observes in each the few virtues which will need even yet to be repressed, the irresolute vices that will require to be strengthened; and, if on some ingenuous cheek a blush should still arise, marks it with a sort of joy, that almost calculates the moment of triumph when that blush shall have been washed away, to appear again no more. If there be a being on this earth whom it is permitted to us to hate with full and absolute detestation, it is surely a human demon like this; and, if we could trace through all its haunts the licentiousness of a single great city,—from the splendid gaming-house of the rich to the obscure chambers of vulgar riot, in which the dissolute of another order assemble to plan the frauds or robberies of the night, or to turn to the only uses to which they know how to turn them, the frauds or robberies of the preceding day,—of how many demons of this class should we trace the horrible power, in the lessons which they are giving, and the results of lessons which have been given!

With these circumstances, which lead to the intentional and wilful corruption of others, is unfortuuately often joined the vanity of a display of profligacy, surpassing the conception of ordinary profligates, or the equally hurtful vanity of an audacious wit, that can dare to jest, where others, if they do not revere as the pure revere, are at least accustomed to tremble as the superstitious tremble. How many are there who assume the appearance of this audacity which they do not feel, shuddering perhaps with a secret horror of conscience at the very epigram in which they seem to have been gaily impious, when they poured out their merry obscenities, or still merrier blasphemy. There are other minds, which have a due abhorrence of all such blasphemy, when the blasphemy is in verse; who require most rigidly that it be in prose, and have too great regard for the virtue and holiness of man, to allow them to be corrupted by the licentious iniquity of rhyming. If, however, they can invent an argument which may logically make man miserable by mood and figure,—an argument that, to those who are not very nice distinguishers of truth, and the semblance of truth, may seem to prove God to be only a sort of poetic personification, and virtue and immortality to be words as meaningless,—they have no hesitation in supposing that the happiness of mankind, which the credit of an epigram should not be allowed to outweigh, is yet too light in the scale to be poised against the credit of any acute sophistry that can be wrought into the form of a philosophic dissertation. They are too wise not to discern that the evident tendency of that which they value only as acute, is to corrupt human virtue, and extinguish the best hopes and consolations of human suffering. But it is sufficient comfort to them, that if they render miserable those whose virtue they corrupt, they have at least not corrupted them, without the observance of some of the most exact technicalities of logic.

Such are various forms of direct corruption, in which we are seducers to vice. It is not by direct and intentional corruption only, however, that we produce injury to the virtue of others. There is an indirect influence, which, in some situations, is not less injurious,—the influence of example.

We are formed to live together in society; and in those who are to live together, it is necessary for happiness and almost for social union, that there should be some resemblance of manners, and agreement of sentiment, at least in the general subjects in which the interests of all are equally involved. To this agreement the various humours of mankind, and the very different circumstances in which different individuals of the same society are placed, would seem indeed to oppose causes of division that are almost insuperable. By one principle of the mind, however,—the principle of suggestion, or, as it is commonly termed, the principle of association,—nature has in a great measure softened down the most prominent and offensive peculiarities. What we have seen done in one situation, is recalled to us by the very feeling of this situation, when we are placed in it; and, as it arises to us thus more readily, and is sometimes, perhaps, the only mode of conduct which arises clearly to our mind, we proceed on it without farther reflection, and act in a certain manner, because others have acted in a certain manner, and because we have seen them act, or heard of their action. It is evident, that in resolving to act in a certain manner, on any occasion, we must have had a previous conception of the manner in which the action may be performed; and that we may, therefore, often prefer one mode of action, from the advantages which it seems to present, when it would not have been preferred in competition with other modes of action, still more advantageous, but not conceived at the time. The wise, indeed, on this very account, even when they see good that may flow from one mode of conduct, pause to consider various possibilities, and appreciate the differences of the good and the better; but how few are the wise! and how much more numerous they who, when any immediate good presents itself, do not wait to consider whether a better may not be found. The first conceptions that arise, are the conceptions which regulate half their conduct; and these first conceptions, when the circumstances of the case are similar, are, by the natural influence of association, the conceptions either of what they have themselves

done before, or of what others were observed to do in those similar circumstances. It is impossible to will any particular action, without having previously conceived that particular action; and the various consequences of various modes of conduct have seldom entered into the contemplation of the multitude. They see what others do; and their thought has scarcely wandered beyond what is commonly before their eyes, or what is the subject of common discourse. As soon, therefore, as similar circumstances recur, the image recurs of what has been thus familiar to them; and it recurs more strongly and vividly, because its influence is not lessened by that of any other accompanying image. They act, therefore, as others have acted, not so much from a feeling of respect for general sentiment, as from mere ignorance, and the absence of any other conception that might give a different momentary impulse. They see only one path, and they move on, accordingly, in that only path which their dim and narrow glance is capable of perceiving.

How powerfully the conduct is influenced by any vivid conception, is shown very strikingly in those phenomena of panic terror to which I have more than once alluded for illustration, because they throw light on many of the most perplexing phenomena of the mind. When astonishment is once produced in any very lively degree, however rich in knowledge a mind may have been, it is, for the moment, like the ignorant minds around. It cannot deliberate and choose, because no objects of choice occur to it. What is called presence of mind, is only such a state of mastery of the feeling of astonishment, and other lively emotions, as allows the conceptions to arise which would have arisen if there had been no circumstances productive of lively emotion; and the want of presence of mind is the temporary want of such conceptions, from the overwhelming influence of one lively emotion. The image of what others are doing, is therefore the only image before the mind; and each individual thus augments and multiplies the panic, by presenting to others the ready image of that flight, which, as presented to him by those who were first to fly, had made him for the moment that cowardly thing which, in hours of freer choice, he would have conceived it impossible for him to become.

In every case of this species of moral sway, then, it is to the similar influence of mere suggestion, in presenting to us a clear image of one mode of conduct out of many possible modes, that are not conceived so distinctly, because they have never been seen, that I am inclined to ascribe the chief part of that power which is attributed, and justly attributed, to example; though to this direct influence of the principle must be added various indirect and auxiliary influences of it, in the notions of moral worth, or dignity of character, of those who performed the action before; or the remembrance even of accidental circumstances of pride or pleasure, that may have been connected with it. When all the direct and indirect influences of the suggesting principle, then, are added together, it cannot seem wonderful that there should be such a propensity in the great imitator, man, to moral imitation; and that the conduct of him who is born to-day, should depend almost as much on the nature of the minds of those who are to surround him hereafter, as on the nature of the mind that is animating his own little frame.

In considering the influence of example on national virtue, we are too apt to think only of the authority of those who are placed in eminent stations; and to forget the more direct influence of domestic examples on those individuals, who must always indeed be ranked as individuals, but whose virtues or vices united are the virtues or vices of the nation. The example of the great may give the primary impulse, but the force descends progressively from rank to rank; and each is affected chiefly by those who are around him, or a very little above him. The parents who hang over our cradle, thinking for us, before we have formed what can be called a thought, and who continue, during life, to be viewed by us with a peculiar sort of tender veneration, which no other created being seems to us entitled to possess,—the comrades of our pastimes in boyhood, and the friends who partake with us the graver occupations, and graver pastimes of our maturer years,—these are they who transfuse into us their feelings, and from whom, without thinking of them as examples, we derive all that good or evil which example can afford; and yield ourselves more completely to the influence, because we are not aware that we are yielding to any influence whatever. To be frequently with the good is to know, on almost every occasion, how the good would act in the situation in which we are placed, and to feel, at the same time, that reverence for the action itself as it seems to us recommended by their choice, which we must have felt for those whom we imagine as performers of it. Whatever impresses on us strongly the image of the virtuous, therefore, cannot be indifferent to our virtue. The very meeting of a great man, as Seneca strongly says, may be of lasting advantage to us; and we derive instruction from his very silence. "Nulla res magis animis honesta induit, dubiosque et in pravum inclinabiles revocat ad rectum, quam bonorum virorum conversatio. Paullatim enim descendit in pectora; et vim præceptorum obtinet frequenter audiri, adspici frequenter. Occursus mehercule ipse sapientium juvat;

et est aliquid, quod ex magno viro, vel tacente, proficias."*

It is this universal radiation of example, reflecting light upon example, which forms the moral splendour of an age, without some portion of the light of which good laws are powerless, and with which it is almost a matter of little moment, at least to the existing generation, how few the laws may be under which good men are living in peace. "When a citizen is inspired by the genius of virtue," says an eloquent declaimer on morals, "he feels no embarrassment in those cases for which the law has made no provision. His own heart is his legislator. He has there a species of instinct, less likely to err than even reason itself. A good man divines, as it were, good laws, that, as laws, are yet unexisting. It is not so much in the head, indeed, that the true genius of legislation has its seat, as in the heart; and wise as Solon and Lycurgus were, who can doubt that they had still more virtue than wisdom? When Rome was in peril, what was her resource? She did not form new laws. She ordered the laws to be silent, and gave herself up to the guidance and example of a single good man. The conscience of Camillus was, for a long time, all the legislation of Rome. That Rome, which had scarcely begun to exist, was already almost expiring under the assault of the Gauls. But what is there which a great man cannot do, when he is sure of the courage and of the virtue of his fellow-citizens! Rome, delivered by his arm, had no longer a foe to dread; and with her proud morals, and but a handful of laws, rose from the very brink of the grave, to march like a Queen to the conquest of the universe. The firmness of Brutus, the good faith of Regulus, the moderation of Cincinnatus, the calm probity of Fabricius, the chastity of the Lucretias and Virginias, the disinterestedness of Paulus Æmilius, the patience of Fabius, —these were the best laws of Rome. A virtuous man is a living law,—he is more: precepts can only point to us what tract we should pursue, but examples hurry us along. What a difference there is between a law that speaks but once, and Cato ever acting! This Cato was to Rome its thirteenth table of laws; and without the thirteenth, how defective would the twelve other have been!"

The influence of moral feeling is, indeed, what this author considers it to be, the supplement of the deficiencies of law; the thirteenth table of the early laws of Rome, and many volumes of statutes, where laws are more voluminous. The direct power of example, then, in those who surround us, and whose conduct is the first to rise to our conception, in all the similar circumstances in which ourselves are placed, is a power which the unreflecting can scarcely fail to obey. But though chiefly to be traced to those who mingle with us in the familiar scenes and occurrences of domestic life, the influence is yet referable in part also directly, and indirectly in a very high degree, to the smaller number, who do not so much surround us, as shine upon us from a distance, the eminent of every class, whose real dignity of merit, or even whose accidental dignity of station, has raised them to a height which brings their image frequently before us; and presents it associated with all the respect which the heart readily pays to the one species of dignity, and which, for the peace and good order of states, it is necessary to pay in some degree to the other also—at least when the dignity of mere rank is not so dishonoured by the profligacy of its possessor, as to cover, in our detestation of the profligacy, the feebler titles of the rank itself.

It is this moral or immoral influence, in promoting or injuring the virtues of others, an influence of which it is impossible for them to divest themselves, that gives to those who are in any way distinguished above the crowd a fearful responsibility with which they are unfortunately not always sufficiently impressed. It is not their own conscience only for which they are answerable, they are answerable also, in some measure, for the consciences of others.

Componitur orbis
Regis ad exemplum; nec sic inflectere sensus
Humanos edicta valent, ut vita regentis;
Mobile mutatur semper cum principe vulgus.

"Princeps optimus," says Paterculus, with a forcible brevity of expression, "faciendo docet; et licet sit imperio maximus, exemplo major est."

In the life of a sovereign, then, there is nothing private. His friendships, his very amusements, are not friendships and amusements only: they are public virtue or public guilt. If he think more of the trappings of his state than of its duties, if the splendour of some courtly festival be more important to him, than that noblest of spectacles which is to be found in the general happiness of a peaceful and virtuous land, if the favourites of his private confidential hours, whom he thus offers to his people, as models of the conduct that is worthiest of being honoured, be those who are known to the world only by superior profligacy, and whom every virtuous father of a family would exclude from the dwelling of those for whose innocence he would tremble if the corrupters were admitted, there may be virtue still in that state; but it is only because there are in it principles of virtue too powerful to be overcome by the vicious authority even of the most

* Senecæ Epist. xciv.

powerful. The guilt of the sovereign, however, in such circumstances, is to be estimated, not by the vices which have spread among his people, but by the vices which his own conduct has authorized; and would not be increased in the amount of its moral delinquency, though all mankind had become, what he has said, by his example and his favour, that it is noble to be. If, however, a prince be indeed what a prince should be, he has the comfort of knowing, that he is not enjoying only the happiness of virtue, but diffusing it; that, since his actions must be lessons, they are lessons of good; and that if, by his example, he exercise a sway more extensive than that of his laws or his arms, it is a sway which, like that of his laws and his arms, is exercised only for the happiness of the world.

An influence so extensive, indeed, belongs only to a few of mankind; but even the humble must not think, on this account, that they have no influence. It is indirectly, I have already said, as spreading through them, that the influence of the powerful is chiefly exercised. In their homes, among their friends, on all those who come within their little sphere, they exercise power over the vice or virtue of others, and thus indirectly an influence on the amount of moral good and evil in the world, in every future generation,—an influence which it is as little possible for them to shake off, as for the sovereign of many states to abdicate his moral sway, and to be a sovereign only with his sceptre or his sword.

From this inevitable influence of example, by which every moral or immoral action that is performed by us may have consequences that never entered into our design or our wish when we planned or performed it, arises one very important duty,—the duty of attending to the appearances of our actions. It is not enough for us to have willed what is virtuous, and to have executed it by means that in themselves imply no immorality, if they have been such as might lead others to suspect the purity of what was truly pure. The loss which we might ourselves suffer in this way, in our character and authority, is not the only evil, nor, in many cases, the greatest evil, of such seeming improprieties. We may, without due care as to appearances, act virtuously, and yet give all the authority of our station and character to vice,—misleading those to whom our example may have the force of precept, and, perhaps, by some of the most generous sacrifices of which our nature is capable, inducing the inconsiderate, who suppose that they are imitating us, to quit that moral good which we truly sought, for the evil which we only seemed to them to pursue.

The only remaining species of injury to others, the duty of abstaining from which we have still to consider, is that which relates to their mental tranquillity.

This indeed, all the other species of injury already considered by us, tend indirectly to disturb. But the injury of which I speak at present, is the direct violation of the peace of others, by our immediate intentional influence on their feelings.

In treating of the emotions of pride, particularly in the form of that haughtiness which the proud are so apt to assume, I have already treated of one of the most injurious influences of this sort, my remarks on which it would be unnecessary now to repeat. You must be sufficiently aware, that the aim of the haughty is to excite in others the mortifying feeling of their abject inferiority; and that, if they could always produce the feelings which they wish to excite, they would not merely have all the guilt of a cruel tyranny,—for that they have, even in their most powerless wishes, but would truly, in their very effects, be the most severe of human tyrants.

It is not the insolence of the haughty, however, which is the only intentional disquieter of others. There is a power in every individual, over the tranquillity of almost every individual. There are emotions latent in the mind of those whom we meet, which a few words of ours may at any time call forth; and the moral influence which keeps this power over the uneasy feelings of others under due restraint, is not the least important of the moral influences, in its relation to general happiness.

There are minds which can delight in exercising this cruel sway; which rejoice in suggesting thoughts that may poison the confidence of friends, and render the very virtues that were loved, objects of suspicion to him who loved them. In the daily and hourly intercourse of human life, there are human beings who exert their malicious skill in devising what subjects may be most likely to bring into the mind of him with whom they converse, the most mortifying remembrances; who pay visits of condolence that they may be sure of making grief a little more severely felt; who are faithful in conveying to every one the whispers of unmerited scandal, of which, otherwise, he never would have heard, as he never could have suspected them; though, in exercising this friendly office, they are careful to express sufficient indignation against the slanderer, and to bring forward as many grounds of suspicion against different individuals as their fancy can call up; who talk to some disappointed beauty of all the splendid preparations for the marriage of her rival; to the unfortunate dramatic poet, of the success of the last night's piece, and of the great improvement which has taken place in modern taste; and who, if they could have the pecu-

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liar good fortune of meeting with any one whose father was hanged, would probably find no subject so attractive to their eloquence as the number of executions that were speedily to take place.

Such power man may exercise over the feelings of man; and as it is impossible to frame laws which can comprehend injuries of this sort, such power of man may exercise over man with legal impunity. But it is a power of which the virtuous man will as little think of availing himself, for purposes of cruelty, as if a thousand laws had made it as criminal as it is immoral; a power which he will as little think of exercising, because it would require only the utterance of a few easy words, as of inflicting a mortal blow, because it would require only a single motion of his hand.

The true preservative against this power, is that which is the protector of the virtuous from all other injury—their own purity of conscience. It is not easy to excite permanently any unpleasant images in the mind of one who, in the retrospect of life, has only virtuous actions or virtuous desires to remember—who has wished to keep nothing secret from the world, but the benefactions that provided as carefully for the virtuous shame, as for the very wants of poverty; and who, therefore, if his whole mind could become visible, would be not less, but more beloved. The tranquillity of such a mind may indeed be disturbed for a moment by the petty malice that would strive to awake in it disagreeable remembrances; but even when it may be thus disturbed, there is no painful feeling so likely to arise in it, as regret for that malice itself which it disdains, indeed, but which it cannot disdain without some accompanying pity.

LECTURE LXXXVI.

OF OUR POSITIVE DUTIES; OF THE DUTIES OF BENEVOLENCE.

In my last Lecture, Gentlemen, I concluded my remarks on the order of our general duties, which are negative only; that is to say, which consist in abstinence from the different sorts of injury which it is in our power, directly or indirectly, to occasion to others.

These we considered under seven heads: as our actions may be injurious to others, in their person, in their property, in the affection of those whom they love, in their general character, in their knowledge or belief, as affected by the confidence which they place in the truth of our declarations; in their virtue, as subject to the influence of our intentional seductions, or to the unintended influence of our mere example; and lastly, in their peace of mind, which, as liable to be disturbed by mortifying reflections, that are in most cases easy to be excited, is in some measure under our control, from the power which the principle of suggestion gives us over the trains of thought of others, and consequently over the general emotions, pleasing or unpleasing, which result from those trains of thought, or form a part of them.

To abstain, however, from every species of injury which it is in our power to occasion to others, though it is an important part of virtue, is but a part of it. Even in our most scrupulous forbearance from all the evil which we might produce, if this abstinence, however complete, were all, the world would still be only as if we had not been. There might be before our very eyes misery, which, though not produced by ourselves, was not the less an evil, and which a slight effort on our part —a word, a very look expressive of a wish, might have been sufficient to remove. There might, in like manner, be means of easy happiness to individuals or whole families, which required only the same simple wishes on our part to convert them into happiness itself, but which would be wholly unproductive without us; and yet, if we had no feelings which led us to be more than passively and negatively good, the misery would remain unrelieved, and the happiness be unproduced or unpromoted.

Nature then, when she conferred on us, in so many noble powers of mind and body, such abundant facilities of usefulness, did not leave us destitute of the wishes which alone could make these facilities valuable. She has given us a benevolence that desires the good of all, and a principle of moral feeling, which, when we allow an opportunity of being widely beneficial to escape, speaks to us with a voice of reproach which it is not easy for us to still. By the one we merely desire the happiness of mankind; by the other we feel that to promote this happiness of mankind is a duty.

It is in this latter aspect that we are at present to consider our power of being beneficial, as giving occasion to a duty, or set of duties, corresponding with the particular species of good, which any exertion on our part can occasion or further.

So important is this duty of benevolence, that, as I formerly mentioned, some very eminent moralists have been led to maintain, that whatever is felt by us to be virtuous, is felt to deserve that name merely as involving some benevolent desire; an opinion which is evidently founded on a partial view of the phenomena; since the experience of every one, if he attend sufficiently to his own feelings, without regard to any system, must convince him that he has a simi-

lar emotion of moral regard, in cases in which the thought of personal duty, as in many of the noblest efforts of self-command, was all which could have been present to the mind of the agent; or in which, though it might be possible to invent some benevolent motive, as what might influence the fortitude of the heroic sufferer, the moral admiration was at least far more rapid than the tardy invention of the benevolence. The doctrine of virtue, as consisting in benevolence, false as it is when maintained as universal and exclusive, is yet, when considered as having the sanction of so many enlightened men, a proof at least of the very extensive diffusion of benevolence in the modes of conduct which are denominated virtuous. It may not, indeed, comprehend all the aspects under which man is regarded by us as worthy of our moral approbation, but it comprehends by far the greater number of them,—his relations to his fellow-men, and to all the creatures that live around him, though not the moral relations which bind him to the greatest of all beings, nor those which are directly worthy of our approbation, as confined to the perfection of his own internal character.

That benevolence, the moral link which connects man with man, is in itself virtuous, may indeed appear to some very rigid questioners of every feeling to require proof; but it can appear to require it only to those who deny altogether the very moral distinction of virtue and vice, in that general scepticism which has been already fully considered by us. Of those who allow virtue to be more than a name, there is no one who will refuse to benevolent exertions the praise of this excellence—no one who can read the history of any of those heroes of the moral scene whose life has been one continued deed of generosity to mankind, without feeling that if there be virtue on earth, there has been virtue in that bosom which has suffered much, or dared much, that the world might be free from any of the ills which disgraced it. The strong lines with which the author of the Botanic Garden concludes his praise of one of the most illustrious of these heroes of benevolence, scarcely express more than we truly feel on the contemplation of such a character. It does seem as if man, when he acts as man should act, is a being of some higher order than the frail erring creatures among whom we ourselves pass a life that, with all its occasional acts of generosity and self-command, is still, like theirs, a life of frailty and error.

And now, Philanthropy, thy rays divine
Dart round the globe, from Zembla to the line;
O'er each dark prison plays the cheering light,
Like northern lustres o'er the vault of night.
From realm to realm, with cross or crescent crown'd,
Where'er mankind and misery are found;
O'er burning sands, deep waves, or wilds of snow,
Thy Howard, journeying, seeks the house of woe.
Down many a winding step to dungeons dank,
Where anguish wails aloud, and fetters clank,
To caves bestrew'd with many a mouldering bone,
And cells, whose echoes only learn to groan;
Where no kind bars a whispering friend disclose,
No sunbeam enters, and no zephyr blows,
He treads, inemulous of fame or wealth,
Profuse of toil, and prodigal of health;
With soft assuasive eloquence expands
Power's rigid heart, and opes his clenching hands;
Leads stern-eyed Justice to the dark domains,
If not to sever, to relax the chains;
Or guides awakened Mercy through the gloom,
And shows the prison, sister to the tomb;
Gives to her babes the self-devoted wife,
To her fond husband liberty and life.
The spirits of the good who bend from high,
Wide o'er these earthly scenes, their partial eye,
When first, array'd in Virtue's purest robe,
They saw her Howard traversing the globe,
Mistook a mortal for an angel-guest,
And ask'd, what seraph foot the earth imprest.
Onward he moves. Disease and death retire,
And murmuring demons hate him and admire.*

The benevolent spirit, as its object is the happiness of all who are capable of feeling happiness, is as universal in its efforts as the miseries which are capable of being relieved, or the enjoyments which it is possible to extend to a single human being, within the reach of its efforts, or almost of its wishes. When we speak of benefactions, indeed, we think only of one species of good action; and charity itself, so comprehensive in its etymological meaning, is used as if it were nearly synonymous with the mere opening of the purse. But "it is not money only which the unfortunate need; and they are but sluggards in well-doing," as Rousseau strikingly expresses the character of this indolent benevolence, "who know to do good only when they have a purse in their hand." Consolations, counsels, cares, friendship, protection, are so many resources which pity leaves us for the assistance of the indigent, even though wealth should be wanting. The oppressed often continue to be oppressed, merely because they are without an organ to render their complaints known to those who have the power of succour. It requires sometimes but a word which they cannot say, a reason which they know not how to state, the opening of a single door of a great man, through which they are not permitted to pass, to obtain for them all of which they are in need. The intrepid support of a disinterested virtue is, in such cases, able to remove an infinity of obstacles, and the eloquence of a single good man in the cause of the injured can appal tyranny itself in the midst of its power.

If indeed there be in the heart those genuine wishes of diffusive good which are never long absent from the heart of the virtuous, there will not long be wanting occasions of exertion. It will not be easy for an eye that has been accustomed to the search of objects of generous regard, to look around without the discovery of something which may be

* Botanic Garden, part ii. canto ii. line 439—472.

remedied, or something which may be improved; and in relieving some misery, or producing or spreading some happiness, the good man will already have effected his delightful purpose, before others would even have imagined that there was any good to be done.

It would be a waste of time to attempt to examine with any minuteness of analysis the various ways in which benevolence may be usefully exerted. In considering the species of injury that give rise to our duties of a negative order, I have in some measure considered our positive duties also; since, to abstain from injuring, and to wish to promote the good which we have thus forborne to lessen, are in spirit results of the same species of benevolent regard, and of the same moral principle, that commands us to further the happiness which it would be vice, by any conduct of ours, to diminish.

To pass slightly over these objects of social regard, then, in the order in which they were before considered, the benevolent man will be eager to relieve every form of personal suffering. Public institutions arise, by his zeal, for receiving the sick, who have no home, or a home which it is almost sickness to inhabit, and for restoring them, in health, to those active employments of which they would otherwise have been incapable. In the humblest ranks of life, when no other aid can be given by the generous poor, than that which their attendance and sympathy administer, this aid they never hesitate to afford. When their own toils of the day are over, they often give the hours of a night that is to terminate in a renewed call to their fatiguing occupations,—not to the repose which their exhausted strength might seem to demand, but to a watchful anxiety around the bed of some feverish sufferer, who is scarcely sufficiently conscious of what is around him, to thank them for their care, and whose look of squalid wretchedness seems to be only death begun, and the infection of death, to all who gaze upon it. The same benevolence which prompts to the succour of the infirm, prompts to the succour also of the indigent. Though charity is not mere pecuniary aid, pecuniary aid, when such aid is needed, is still one of the most useful, because one of the most extensive in its application, of all the services of charity. Nor is it valuable only for the temporary relief which it affords to sufferings that could not otherwise be relieved. It has a higher and more comprehensive office. It brings together those whose union seems necessary for general happiness, and almost for explaining the purposes of Heaven in the present system of things. There are everywhere the rich, who have means of comfort which they know not how to enjoy, and scarcely how to waste; and everywhere some who are poor without guilt on their part, or at least rather guilty because they are poor, than poor because they are guilty. All which seems necessary for the comfort of both, is, that they should be brought together. Benevolence effects this union. It carries the rich to the cottage, or to the very hovels of the poor; it allows the poor admission into the palaces of the rich; and both become richer in the only true sense of the word, because to both there is an accession of happiness. The wealthy obtain the pleasure of doing good, and of knowing that there are hearts which bless them; the indigent obtain the relief of urgent necessities, and the pleasure of loving a generous benefactor.

Such are the delightful influences of positive benevolence, in their relation to the personal sufferings and to the pecuniary wants of those who, if they have no property to be assailed by injustice, have at least necessities, the disregard of which is equal in moral delinquency to injustice itself. In its relation to the affections of those around, who are connected with each other by various ties of regard, benevolence is not less powerful as a producer or fosterer of good. Wherever there are causes of future jealousy among those who love each other at present, it delights in dispelling the elements of the cloud, when the cloud itself, that has not yet begun to darken, scarcely can be said to have arisen. If suspicions have already gathered in the breast of any one who thinks, but thinks falsely, that he has been injured, it is quick, with all the ready logic of kindness, to show that the suspicions are without a cause. If it find not suspicion only, but dissension that has burst out, in all the violence of mutual acrimony, it appears in its divine character of a peace-maker, and, almost by the influence of its mere presence, the hatred disappears and the love returns; as if it were as little possible that discord should continue where it is, as that the mist and gloom of night should not disappear at the mere presence of that sun which shines upon them.

"The virtuous man," it has been beautifully said, "proceeds without constraint in the path of his duty. His steps are free; his gait is easy; he has the graces of virtue. He moves along in benevolence, and he sees arising in others the benevolence which is in him. Of all our virtuous emotions, those of kind regard are the most readily imitated. To feel them is to inspire them; to see them is to partake them. Are they in your heart? They are in your looks, in your manners, in your discourse. Your presence reconciles enemies; and hatred, which cannot penetrate to your heart, cannot even dwell around you."*

* De St. Lambert, Œuvres Philosophiques, tome iii. p. 179.

If benevolence is eager to preserve the affection of those who love each other, it cannot fail to be careful of their character, on which so much of affection depends. The whispers of insidious slander may come to it as they pass, with a secrecy which has nothing in it of real secrecy but mere lowness of tone,—from voice to voice in eager publication; but if there be no other voice to bear them farther, they will cease and perish when it is benevolence which has heard. It is not indeed that senseless and indifferent praiser of all actions, which cannot be said to applaud any thing, when it does not know what it is right to condemn. Benevolence itself can despise, can hate, can raise a voice of terrible indignation, when cruelty has been inflicting bodily tortures, or oppression torturing the soul. It is love, however, which is the principle of its very hatred. It hates the oppressors of those whom it loves, and it hates oppression everywhere, because it loves all humankind.

In loving all humankind, and wishing their happiness, it is impossible that the benevolent should not love also the diffusion of knowledge and virtue to humankind; since to wish permanent happiness without these, would be almost to wish for warmth without heat, or colours without light. In my last lecture I considered the motives which lead men to desire that the multitude of their fellow-men should be kept down in a state of intellectual and moral darkness; and the motives which lead to the corruption of individuals,—those who have selfish passions to gratify, by the debasement of some pure and holy principle in some ingenuous heart, or at least in some heart not wholly corrupted, that, if suffered to remain, would be inconsistent with the selfish gratification which they seek. Such motives benevolence cannot feel. The objects which it seeks are of a kind which it would be wisdom to pursue, and virtue to pursue; and wishing, therefore, the universality of such pursuits, it cannot fail to wish, in like manner, the universality of the knowledge and virtue which would see happiness where it is best to be found; and would not seek it therefore where it is often sought, in misery itself, or in the certain causes of misery. It is not easy to imagine a mind that is truly desirous of the good of the world, which can sincerely, in its very desire of this good, recommend ignorance as a purifying principle, essential to the moral civilization of man, who, according to this strange system, is a savage only because he knows too much. It is not easy to give credit to the sincerity of this desire; because one who is desirous of public good, must have felt how often, in his own actions, he has injured when he wished to benefit, merely from the want of some better light which he has since received; and must have seen, in the history of legislation, still more striking proofs of the insufficiency of mere virtuous wishes, for the purposes of virtue, when a very little truth additional might have convinced the planner of much social improvement, that he was ignorantly retarding that very improvement which the individual interests of society itself would have produced far sooner, but for the erring patriotism that laboured to urge it on; and that could not employ its too forcible efforts without breaking some of the delicate springs on which the beautiful mechanism of its seemingly spontaneous progress depended. He who feels in himself, then, the importance of knowledge, even to his more enlightened efforts, to be beneficial, cannot patriotically wish its light to be obscured, or resist the communication of any additional light to those few gleams which, on the greater portion of the surface of the earth, even in nations which we term civilized, show the multitude how to use their hands, indeed, in offices of labour, but scarcely serve to show them more. The virtue of mankind, and the general knowledge which invigorates that virtue, and renders it more surely useful—these are the greatest objects which benevolence can have in view; and a benevolence that professes not to value them, and to look only to the quantity of manual labour which the hand can most expeditiously perform, and the bodily comforts which that more active labour may purchase, even though these objects could be obtained as well without mental light as with it, is a benevolence that is almost as little worthy of the name, as it can ever hope to be worthy of the more useful distinction of beneficent.

These forms of benevolent desire, in their relation to various means of happiness or comfort, lead us naturally to the wish of preserving that tranquillity of mind in others, the violation of which we considered last, in treating, in corresponding order, of the negative duties.

The power which nature has given us over the trains of thought and emotion which we may raise more or less directly, in the minds of others, the benevolent man will employ as an instrument of his gracious wishes, not as an instrument of cruelty. It will be his care to awake in the mind of every one who approaches him, the most delightful feelings which he can awake, consistently with the permanent virtue and happiness of him whom he addresses. He will not flatter, therefore, and speak of faults as if they were excellencies; for this would be to give a little momentary pleasure at the expense of the virtuous happiness of years. But without flattery he will produce more pleasure, even for the time, than flattery itself could give; in the interest which he

seems to feel, he will show that genuine sincerity which impresses with irresistible belief, and of which the confidence is more gratifying to the virtue, I had almost said to the very vanity of man, than the doubtful praises to which the heart, though it may love to hear them, is incapable of yielding itself.

Benevolence, in this amiable form, of course excludes all haughtiness. The great, however elevated, descend, under its gentle influence, to meet the happiness and the grateful affection of those who are beneath them; and in descending to happiness and gratitude which themselves have produced, they do not feel that they are descending. Whatever be the scene of its efforts or wishes, to do good is to the heart always to rise; and the height of its elevation is therefore always in proportion to the quantity of good which it has effected, or which, at least, it has had the wish of effecting.

Politeness,—which is, when ranks are equal, what affability is, when the more distinguished mingle with the less distinguished—is the natural effect of that benevolence which regards always with sympathetic complacency, and is fearful of disturbing, even by the slightest momentary uneasiness, the serenity of others. A breach of attention in any of the common offices of civility, to which the arbitrary usages of social life have attached importance, even when nothing more is intended, is still a neglect, and neglect is itself an insult; it is the immediate cause of a pain which no human being is entitled, where there has been no offence, to give to any other human being. Politeness then,—the social virtue that foresees and provides against every unpleasant feeling that may arise in the breasts around, as if it were some quick-sighted and guardian Power, intent only on general happiness, is something far more dignified in its nature than the cold courtesies which pass current under that name, the mere knowledge of fashionable manners, and an exact adherence to them. It is in its most essential respects what may be possessed by those who know little of the varying vocabulary and varying usages of the season. The knowledge of these is, indeed, necessary to such as mingle in the circles which require them; but they are necessary only as the new fashion of the coat or splendid robe, which leaves him or her who wears it the same human being, in every respect, as before; and are not more a part of either, than the ticket of admission, which opens to their ready entrance the splendid apartment from which the humble are excluded. The true politeness of the heart is something which cannot be given by those who minister to mere decoration. It is the moral grace of life, if I may venture so to term it; the grace of the mind, and what the world counts graces, are little more than graces of the body.

Such is benevolence in the various forms in which it may be instrumental to happiness; and, in being thus instrumental to the happiness of others, it has truly a source of happiness within itself. It may not feel, indeed, all the enjoyment which it wishes to diffuse—for its wishes are unlimited—but it feels an enjoyment that is as wide as all the happiness which it sees around it, or the still greater and wider happiness of which it anticipates the existence. The very failure of a benevolent wish only breaks its delight, without destroying it; for when one wish of good has failed, it has still other wishes of equal or greater good that arise, and occupy and bless it as before.

In considering the various ways in which benevolence may be active, we have seen how extensive it may be as a feeling of the heart. If wealth, indeed, were necessary, there would be few who could enjoy it, or at least who could enjoy it largely. But pecuniary aid, as we have seen, is only one of many forms of being useful. To correct some error, moral or intellectual—to counsel those who are in doubt, and who in such circumstances require instruction, as the indigent require alms—even though nothing more were in our power to show an interest in the welfare of the happy, and a sincere commiseration of those who are in sorrow; in these, and in innumerable other ways, the benevolent, however scanty may be their means of conferring what alone the world calls benefactions, are not benevolent only, but beneficent; as truly beneficent, or far more so, as those who squander in loose prodigalities to the deserving and the undeserving, the sufferers from their own thoughtless dissipation, or the sufferers from the injustice or dissipation of others, almost as much as they loosely squander on a few hours of their own sensual appetites.

Even in pecuniary liberalities, benevolence does not merely produce good, but it knows well, or it learns to know, the greatest amount of good which its liberalities can produce. To be the cause of less happiness or comfort that might be diffused at the same cost, is almost a species of the same vice which withholds aid from those who require it. The benevolent, therefore, are magnificent in their bounty, because they are economical even in bounty itself. Their heart is quick to perceive sources of relief where others do not see them; and the whole result of happiness produced by them, seems often to have arisen from a superb munificence which few could command, when it may, perhaps, have proceeded only from humble means, which the possessor of similar means, without similar benevolence, would think scarcely more than necessary for his

own strict necessities. How beautifully, in Pope's well-known description of an individual, whose simple charities have made him as illustrious as the most costly profusion of charity in other circumstances could have done, is this quick tendency to minister to every little comfort marked, in the provision which he is represented as making, not for gross and obvious miseries only, but for the very ease of the traveller or common passenger.

> But all our praises why should lords engross!
> Rise, honest muse, and sing the Man of Ross!
> Pleased Vaga echoes through her winding bounds,
> And rapid Severn hoarse applause resounds.
> Who hung with woods yon mountain's sultry brow?
> From the dry rock who bade the waters flow?
> Not to the skies in useless columns tost,
> Or in proud falls magnificently lost,
> But clear and artless, pouring through the plain
> Health to the sick and solace to the swain.
> Whose causeway parts the vale with shady rows?
> Whose seats the weary traveller repose?
> Who taught that heaven-directed spire to rise?
> The Man of Ross, each lisping babe replies.
> Behold the market-place with poor o'erspread!
> The Man of Ross divides the weekly bread.
> He feeds yon almshouse, neat, but void of state,
> Where Age and Want sit smiling at the gate.
> Him portion'd maids, apprenticed orphans blest,
> The young who labour, and the old who rest.
> Is any sick? The Man of Ross relieves,
> Prescribes, attends, the medicine makes and gives.
> Is there a variance? enter but his door,
> Balked are the courts, and contest is no more.*

What is it which makes this picture of benevolence so peculiarly pleasing? It is not the mere quantity of happiness produced, even when taken in connexion with the seemingly disproportionate income, the few hundred pounds a-year which were so nobly devoted to the production of that happiness. It is pleasing, chiefly from the air of beautiful consistency that appears in so wide a variety of good, the evidence of a genuine kindness of heart, that was quick, as I have said, to perceive, not the great evils only which force themselves upon every eye, but the little comforts also which might be administered to those, of whom the rich, even when they are disposed to extend to them the indolent succour of their alms, and sometimes, too, the more generous succour of their personal aid, are yet accustomed to think only as sufferers who are to be kept alive, rather than as human beings who are to be made happy. We admire, indeed, the active services with which the Man of Ross distributed the weekly bread, built houses that were to be homes of repose for the aged and indigent, visited the sick, and settled amicably the controversies of neighbours and friends, who might otherwise have become foes in becoming litigants; but it is when, together with these prominent acts of obvious beneficence, we consider the acts of attention to humbler, though less obvious wants, that we feel, with lively delight and confidence, the kindness of a heart which, in its charitable meditations, could think of happiness as well as of misery, and foresee means of happiness, which the benevolent, indeed, can easily produce, but which are visible only to the benevolent. It is by its inattention to the little wants of man, that ostentation distinguishes itself from charity; and a sagacious observer needs no other test, in the silent disdain or eager reverence of his heart, to separate the seeming benevolence, which seeks the applauding voices of crowds, from the real benevolence, which seeks only to be the spreader of happiness or consolation. It is impossible for the most ostentatious producer of the widest amount of good, with all his largesses, and with all his hypocrisy, to be consistent in his acts of seeming kindness; because, to be consistent, he must have that real kindness which sees what the cold simulator of benevolence is incapable of seeing, and does, therefore, what such a cold dissembler is incapable even of imagining.

* Moral Essays, Epistle iii. v. 249—272.

LECTURE LXXXVII.

OF THE POSITIVE DUTIES WHICH WE OWE TO CERTAIN INDIVIDUALS ONLY—ARISING FROM AFFINITY, FRIENDSHIP, BENEFITS RECEIVED, CONTRACT.

In my last Lecture, Gentlemen, I concluded the remarks which I had to offer on the duties, negative and positive, which we owe to all the individuals of mankind; on the species of injury from which we are under a moral obligation to abstain, whoever he may be whom it is in our power to injure, and on the good which we are under a similar obligation to produce to every one who comes within the sphere of our usefulness.

After the consideration of these general duties, then, I proceed to the class of additional duties which we owe to certain individuals only, with whom we are connected by peculiar ties.

These may be considered by us under five heads; as the duties which arise from affinity, from friendship, from benefits received, from contract, from citizenship. The duties of this class, as I have said, are additional duties, not duties exclusive of any of the former. We owe to our relations, to our friends, to our benefactors, to those with whom we have entered into engagements of any sort, to our fellow-citizens, all which we owe to others who are connected with us only as human beings; but we owe them more; and it is this accession of duty which we have now to consider.

If the only moral offices, of which we had been formed by nature to feel the obligation,

were those which connect us alike with every individual of our race, whose happiness we should, in that case, as now, have felt it to be our duty to augment when it was in our power to augment it, and when there was no opportunity of this accession, at least not to lessen its amount, it might perhaps seem to the unreflecting, that a provision as ample would have been made for the happiness of the world, as that which is now so abundantly made for it, under the reciprocal kindness of a system of relative duties that vary in force as the peculiar relation is nearer or more remote, but, in all, add to the general feelings of humanity some new influence of benevolent regard. There have, indeed, even in our own time, been philosophers or moral writers that assume the name, who have contended for this equal diffusion of duty, or at least for a gradation of duty that varies only with the absolute merits of the individual, independently of all particular relationship to the agent,—asserting, in consequence, that every preference to which the private affections lead, is vicious on this very account, as being inconsistent with that exact conformity to the scale of absolute merit, in which alone they conceive virtue to consist. It is right, indeed, on some occasions, according to this system, to do good to a parent or a benefactor, or rather, it is not absolutely impossible that a case should occur, in which it may not be guilt to do good to a parent or a benefactor; but it is only in rare cases that the choice implied in the singling out of such an object, is proper or allowable, in those rare cases, in which it would have been right to prefer to every other individual of mankind, the same individual, though unconnected with us by any tie but our knowledge of his virtues; and when he, with whom we consider ourselves as peculiarly connected, by the mere accident of our birth, or of kindnesses conferred on us, is not the individual whom, in other circumstances, it would have been, in like manner, our duty thus to prefer, it does not become more our duty, on account of these accidental circumstances. Far from being virtuous, therefore, in bestowing on him any limited good which it is in our power to bestow only on one, we are guilty, with no slight degree of delinquency, in the very action which we may strive to cover with the seemingly honourable name of gratitude or filial duty. These names, indeed, are honourable only in sound or semblance; for, to those who are capable of appreciating them ethically, they are as void of moral meaning, as the words tall or short, fat or thin; which, in like manner, express qualities of human beings, whom it may be right to prefer, or wrong to prefer, but not the more right, nor the more wrong, to prefer them on account of any of these physical qualities to those who may be of greater merit, though fatter, or thinner, taller, or shorter.

The errors of this system of sole universal duty I have already endeavoured to point out to you, when I explained the importance to happiness, of all the private affections;—the great accession to the general good which is every moment flowing from the indulgence of a regard that, in thinking with a more lively interest of the individual loved than it would be possible to think of a community, is then, perhaps, the most effective contributor to the happiness of mankind, when the happiness of mankind is most forgotten by it, in the happiness of one or of a few of the number. The human race, as distinguishable from families and individuals, is but a mere abstraction, and expresses truly nothing more than the very individuals who are thus at every moment gratifying and gratified. What produces the greatest amount of good to all, in the enjoyment of the private affections, is not that which we can readily suppose the framer of a world that is blessed by this very production, to have formed every individual to regard as vice; and to regard as virtue only the disregard of that with which the world would be more happy. We find, accordingly, the universal feelings of mankind accordant with the system of particular duties, that is so largely productive of happiness. In every region of the earth, and in all circumstances of society, the indulgence of the private affections is considered not as allowable merely, but as obligatory, so obligatory on all, that the guilt which would produce everywhere the most general abhorrence, would be, not the forgetfulness of the good of the world,—for, of this, the thousands that live around us, in the continued exercise of many virtues, seldom if ever think,—but the violation of some one of these private duties, the injury done to a friend, a benefactor, a parent, or even without positive injury, the mere neglect of them, in circumstances of want or of suffering of any kind, which our bounty, or exertions of active aid, could relieve.

We are to prefer to the happiness of our parent or benefactor, it is said, the happiness of a stranger, who, without any particular relation to us, is a degree or two higher in the scale of absolute merit. But why are we to seek his happiness, and why is it immoral to disregard it? In this system, as in every other system of vice and virtue, there must be some source of the distinctive feelings. It is to our moral emotions, as they rise on the contemplation of certain actions, that the theorist must look; or, if he disregard these, he must allow that vice and virtue are words without a meaning; and if virtue and vice have their sole origin in these moral emotions, is there an observer of our nature who can have the boldness to main-

tain; that, in relation to these feelings, in which all that is morally obligatory is to be found, gratitude to a benefactor is a vice, and the disregard of the sufferings of a parent a virtue, whenever, without the power of relieving both, we see before us, at the same time, a suffering stranger, who is capable of doing a little more good to the world?

The very feeling of duty, then, has its source, and its only source, in the very moral emotions by which the private affections are particularly recommended to us. To exclude therefore from a system of duty, the exercise of the private affections in those preferences which are only the private affections becoming active, and, in excluding these, to maintain at the same time that there is a system of duty, a virtue in certain preferences, a vice in certain other preferences, is to be guilty of inconsistency, far more illogical than the licentiousness which denies all virtue and vice whatever. To prove that there is some truth in moral obligation, this universalist, as we have seen, must necessarily appeal to those moral feelings of which we are conscious, without which it would be vain for him to speak of moral distinction of any sort. For his sole proof, then, of the virtue of disregarding wholly every personal relationship and affection, he appeals to feelings, that, if they establish any obligation whatever, establish none so firmly as that of the private relative duties, which they are every moment sanctioning and approving; and his system, therefore, if we trace its principles to their source, in the approving and disapproving principle within us, is precisely the same in import, as if its radical doctrine were, that it is right for us to do certain actions, because it is wrong for us to do them, or wrong for us to do certain other actions, because to do them would be right.

It is surely, I repeat, by a very strange paralogism, that he would found an assertion of an exclusive universal duty on the moral feelings of our heart, which alone enable us to distinguish what is virtuous from what is vicious, and would yet contend that these very feelings of our heart, which are rising at every moment in the very conception of our parents, our friends, our country, are at every moment to be disregarded. But, even though this radical objection were omitted, and though we were to concede to the universalist, that the private affections are not recommended to us, by nature, on their own account; that to our moral feelings, the equal sufferings of our benefactor, and of a stranger of equal general merit, are exactly of the same interest; and that all which is truly an object of interest to us, is the amount of public happiness of the great community of mankind; still, if we regard the general happiness, are not the means of the greatest amount of general happiness to be valued at least as means? And if the indulgence of the private affections tend, upon the whole, to a greater amount of good, is not our calculating virtue, which should prefer always what is to contribute most largely to the great sum of happiness, to rank as virtuous what is so extensively beneficial?

In treating of our emotions of love, as they vary in relation to their different objects, I endeavoured to exhibit to you that beautiful arrangement, with which, in all these varieties, Heaven has adapted the vividness of our affections, to our power of being beneficial; the love being most lively in those moral connexions, in which the opportunities of usefulness are most frequent, and capable of being most accurately applied, in relation to the peculiar wants of him who is to be benefited. The scale of duty, which corresponds with this scale of affection, and of probable usefulness, the ethical destroyers of private affection of course exclude. We are not to think more of those whom it is in our power, almost at every instant, to make happier than they were, than of those who are at the remotest distance from our sphere of usefulness. We are to view them according to their individual merits, as human beings only; the parent as the stranger, the stranger as the parent; and, when we strive thus to view them with equal affection, it is not difficult to discover which metamorphosis of feeling will be the more probable, in this one equalized emotion. It will be impossible for us to look on a stranger with the emotions of vivid regard, of which we are conscious, as often as we think of those from whom we derived existence, and whatever has made existence a gift of value. It is far from impossible, however, that, by frequently considering these earliest benefactors, as possessing no higher moral claim to our regard and good offices, than those who stand in the same relationship to any other person, we may learn, at least, to make an approximation to this indifference; and to regard a parent with the affection which we now feel for a stranger, more nearly than we regard a stranger with the affection which we now feel for a parent.

In the wide communion of the social world, each individual is, as it were, the centre of many circles. Near him, are those from whom he has derived most happiness, and to whom, reciprocally, it is in his power to diffuse most happiness, in continual interchange of kindness. In the circle beyond, are they who have had less opportunity of such mutual benefits than those who are nearer, but more than the widening number in the circles that progressively enlarge, as the distance from the centre increases, and enlarge in expansion and distance, with a corresponding inverse diminution of benefits

conferred, and of the capacity of being benefited. It would have been a system of very different adaptation for the production of happiness, if the scale of regard had been reversed; so that our benevolent wishes had been more and more vivid, in opposite progression, for those whom it was less and less in our power to serve. In such a case, it is very evident, that the general amount of happiness would have been reduced in two ways, by the omission of many opportunities of doing good to those immediately around us, of which, with livelier affection, we should not have failed to avail ourselves; and still more by the painful wish of relief to sufferers at a distance, to whose miseries this very distance deprived us of all power of contributing even the slightest means of alleviation. The evil of such a reversal of the present scale of affection and duty, is scarcely more than the evil that would arise to the world, from the equalization of regard in the system of universal duty, that excludes from its moral estimate every private affection. I do not speak at present of the impossibility of such a system, as inconsistent with some of the strongest principles of our nature. I proceed on the supposition of its possibility, and consider its influence on the happiness of the world, in comparison with the system on which we at present act. If we are to regard mankind, only according to their individual excellence, as members of one great society, and to sacrifice, therefore, all private feelings to one great public feeling that has this society of mankind for its object, the equal diffusion of our love to all, whose absolute merit is precisely the same, must, if produced at all, be produced in one of two ways; either by increasing, in a very high degree, the liveliness of our regard for those who are strangers to us, at a distance, or by lessening, in an equal degree, the liveliness of our regard for those who surround us in our immediate neighbourhood, and under the very shelter of our domestic roof. If the equality be produced by levelling these kinder feelings, so that, when an opportunity of doing good occurs to us, we think not of those who are beside us, and who may be speedily profited by it, but of some one at a greater distance, whom our action, if deferred, may never profit; if, with a constant moral fear of erring in the allotment of our expressions of benevolence, we look coldly on every one, on whom our eye is every moment falling in the domestic intercourse of the day, and reserve our courtesies, our smiles, our very tones of kindness, for some one of greater absolute merit, whom we expect to see before the day is closed, or whom we have at least a chance of seeing before we quit the world, it is evident that far more than half of the happiness of every day would be destroyed to every bosom, by this calculating appreciation of kindness. It is not a mere faint desire of good to any one, that is quick to find the good which it desires. It is the lively benevolence that sees, in almost every thing, some relation to the happiness of the object loved; because the happiness of the object loved is constantly in the mind of him who feels that liveliness of benevolence. Opportunities of producing good, therefore, are never wanting to him who is strongly desirous of producing it; and to lessen the liveliness or our kind wishes for those who are around us, would, therefore, be to render ineffectual a thousand occasions of enjoyment or relief.

Such would be the evil of reducing the force of the peculiar interest which we feel, in the happiness of our relations, of our friends, of all who are connected with us by any of the closer bonds of social union. But the evil that could not fail to arise in this way, would be slight, compared with that which would arise, in the other circumstances supposed, if our affection for the most distant stranger were raised, so as to correspond in intensity with the liveliness of our feeling for those immediately around us. If it be our duty to wish in as lively a manner the happiness of the natives of some African tribe as of our friend or our father, we must either feel very little interest in the happiness of our friend or our father, or we must have a strong wish of benefiting that tribe of Africans, which, as such a wish must be wholly ineffectual on the part of the greater number of mankind, cannot fail to be a source of continued uneasiness. This would be the case, even though we were to think only of accessions to happiness, without taking into account the absolute misery of those in whose evils of every sort we are to sympathize, with all the quickness of commiseration, which transfers instantly to our own bosom a share of every evil that is suffered by those whom we love. Let us imagine a single individual, who, in accordance with such a system, feels for every wretchedness of every victim of disease, or captivity, or want, in every nation of the globe, a thousandth part of the agony which he would feel, if that victim were his parent, or his dearest friend; and let us then think, what the state of man would be, if all the sympathies of his nature had been thus arranged, in adaptation to a system of duties that excluded every local and accidental influence, and estimated human beings only as human beings. It would, indeed, be no slight evil, if we could learn to look with total disregard on the sorrows of others. But while there was misery in the world, if the misery of all individuals of all nations were to be equally felt by us, or not felt by us at all, an universal indifference would probably be less destructive to general happiness, than the anguish

of sharing so many miseries at the distance perhaps of half the earth, which it would be almost as vain for us to think of relieving, as of relieving the sufferings of the inhabitants of another planet. In proportioning our duties with our affections, to our facilities of affording aid to the miserable, and of affording happiness to the few whom it is most easy to render happy, nature has consulted best for general happiness; all are everywhere most active in administering relief or enjoyment, where activity may be most useful; and the beautiful result of the moral excellence of a state is thus produced in the same way as the political wealth and power of a state are produced, by innumerable little efforts, that individually increase the general amount, which is, at the time, no object of conception, but which, as it rises at last from the efforts of all, attracts the admiration of those who unconsciously contributed to it, and who, in admiring it when it has risen, are scarcely aware that the efforts which raised it were their own. To hope to produce greater virtue and happiness, by the exclusion of every particular duty, is in truth a speculation as wild, as it would be to hope to augment the political resources of an empire, by urging individuals to regard not their own profit in any case, but the profit of their thousand competitors, in the equal market of industry.

It is not evil, then, for man upon the whole, that, in wishing the happiness of all mankind, he should wish, in an especial manner, the happiness of those who are connected with him by peculiar ties,—by those ties of additional duty which I have already enumerated. To the first of these I now proceed.

Of the ties of relationship, and the duties of which that relationship is the source, we may consider, in the first place, those under which man enters into life,—the ties which bind together with reciprocal duties, the parent and the child.

If we consider merely the powers of the individual, in relation to the evils to which he is exposed, man is born the most helpless of all created things. But if we consider the affection that exists in the bosoms to which he is for the first time pressed; the moral principle which, in those bosoms, would render the neglect of his wants one of the most atrocious of crimes; and the eager tendency to anticipate, with the necessary relief, the slightest expression of these wants,—a tendency which is instant of itself, and which requires no moral principle to call it into action,—man, we may truly say, is born as powerful as he is to be in years, when his own wisdom and the vigour of his own arm are to be to him what he may count a surer protection. He may afterwards speak with a voice of command to those whose services he has purchased, and who obey him, because, in the barter which they have made of their services, it is their trade to obey; but he cannot, even then, by the most imperious orders which he addresses to the most obsequious slaves, exercise an authority more commanding than that which, in the first hours of his life, when a few indistinct cries and tears were his only language, he exercised irresistibly over hearts, of the very existence of which he was ignorant.

This feeling of regard is so strong in every breast, and so simple in its relation to the mere sustenance and protection of the little object of so many cares, that it would be a waste of time to treat of the primary obligation under which the parents lie, to save from perishing that human creature to which they have given existence, and which could not fail to perish, but for the aid which it is in their power to give to it. It is only with respect to the more complicated duties of the relation, in maturer years, that any difficulty can be felt.

These duties relate to the education of the child, to the provision which is made for his mere worldly accommodation, and to the expression of that internal love which should accompany all these cares, and without which it would be impossible to feel them as acts of kindness.

That such an education is to be given in every case, as is suitable to the pecuniary circumstances of the parents, and to the rank which the child may be expected afterwards to fill, there is probably no one who would deny, however much individuals may differ as to the meaning of the term education. In the lowest ranks of life, at least in far the greater part even of civilized Europe, it means nothing more than the training of the hands to a certain species of motion, which forms one of the subdivisions of mechanical industry. In the higher ranks, it implies, in like manner, a certain training of the limbs to series of motions, which are however not motions of mere utility, like those of the artisan, but of grace; and, in addition to those bodily movements, a training of the mind to a due command of certain graceful forms of expression, to which, in a few happier cases, is added the knowledge, more or less extensive and accurate, of the most striking truths of science. When all this is performed, education is thought to be complete. To express this completion by the strongest possible word, the individual is said to be accomplished; and if graceful motions of the limbs, and motions of the tongue, in well-turned phrases of courteous elegance, and a knowledge of some of the brilliant expressions of poets, and wits, and orators, of different countries, and of a certain number of the qualities of the masses or atoms which

surround him, were sufficient to render man what God intended him to be, the parent who had taken every necessary care for adorning his child with these bodily and mental graces, might truly exult in the consciousness that he had done his part to the generation which was to succeed, by accomplishing at least one individual for the noble duties which he had to perform in it. But, if the duties which man has to perform, whatever ornament they may receive from the corporeal and intellectual graces that may flow around them, imply the operation of principles of action of a very different kind; if it is in the heart that we are to seek the source of the feelings which are our noblest distinction,—with which we are what even God may almost approve, and without which we are worthy of the condemnation even of beings frail and guilty as ourselves; and if the heart require to be protected from vice, with far more care than the understanding itself, fallible as it is, to be protected from error, can he indeed lay claim to the praise of having discharged the parental office of education, who has left the heart to its own passions, while he has contented himself with furnishing to those passions the means of being more extensively baneful to the world than, with less accomplished selfishness, they could have been?

How many parents do we see, who, after teaching their sons by example every thing which is licentious in manners, and lavishing on them the means of similar licentiousness, are rigid only in one point—in the strictness of that intellectual discipline which may prepare them for the worldly stations to which the parental ambition has been unceasingly looking for them, before the filial ambition was rendered sufficiently intent of itself!—how many, who allow to the vices of the day full liberty, if the lesson of the day be duly meditated, and who are content that those whose education they direct should be knaves and sensualists, if only they be fitted by intellectual culture to be the leaders of other knaves, and the acquirers of wealth that may render their sensuality more delicately luxurious! To such persons, the mind of the little creature whom they are training to worldly stations for worldly purposes, is an object of interest only as that without which it would be impossible to arrive at the dignities expected. It is a necessary instrument for becoming rich and powerful; and if he could become powerful, and rich, and envied, without a soul,—exhibit the same spectacle of magnificent luxury, and be capable of adding to the means of present pomp, what might furnish out a luxury still more magnificent, they would scarcely feel that he was a being less noble than now. In what they term education, they have never once thought that the virtues were to be included as objects; and they would truly feel something very like astonishment if they were told that the first and most essential part of the process of educating the moral being whom Heaven had consigned to their charge, was yet to be begun in the abandonment of their own vices, and the purification of their own heart by better feelings than those which had corrupted it; without which primary self-amendment, the very authority that is implied in the noble office which they were to exercise might be a source not of good but of evil to him who was unfortunately born to be its subject.

Corrumpunt vitiorum exempla domestica, magnis
Cum subeunt animos auctoribus. Unus et alter
Forsitan haec spernant juvenes, quibus arte benigna,
Et meliore luto, finxit praecordia Titan:
Sed reliquos fugienda patrum vestigia ducunt,
Et monstrata diu veteris trahit orbita culpae.
Abstineas igitur damnandis; hujus enim vel
Una potens ratio est, ne crimina nostra sequantur
Ex nobis geniti; quoniam dociles imitandis
Turpidis ac pravis omnes sumus, et Catilinam
Quocunque in populo videas, quocunque sub axe;
Sed nec Brutus erit, Bruti nec avunculus usquam.
Maxima debetur puero reverentia: si quid
Turpe paras, ne tu pueri contempseris annos,
Sed peccaturo obstet tibi filius infans.*

Though the enjoyments of this world, which so many seek as all, were truly all, and we ceased to exist when our mortal existence terminated, it would still be the duty of the parent to consult the happiness of the child, more than those circumstances of accidental happiness which may sometimes lead to it, but often, perhaps as often, are productive of misery; and, even of the short happiness of this short life, how large is the part which we have to ascribe to our virtuous affections, or rather, how very little is there of pure happiness which we can ascribe to any other source. But when we think how small a portion of our immortal existence is comprised in this earthly life; when, amid sensual pleasures that fade almost in the moment in which they are enjoyed, and wealth and dignities that are known more in their rapid changes, as passing from possessor to possessor, than as truly possessed by any one of the multitude, who, in their turns, obtain and lose them, we feel that, amid so many perishable and perishing things, virtue, the source of all which it is delightful to remember, is the only permanent acquisition which can be made,—how completely must he seem to have neglected the duty of a parent, who has thought only of a few years that are as nothing, and neglected that immortality which is all. If we had a long voyage to undertake, it would be but a cruel kindness that should pour forth its bounty on a single day, and

* Juvenal, Sat. xiv. v. 32—49.

provide for us only one repast, however costly. It is surely a kindness not less cruel which, in the common offices of education, thinks but of a single day, and makes provision only for its comfort in that endless course, not of years, but of ages, on which we enter in entering into life.

In giving to society another individual, we owe to it every care, on our part, that the individual, thus given to it, may not be one whose existence may be counted by society, among the evils that have oppressed it.

> Gratum est, quod patriae civem, populoque dedisti,
> Si facis, ut patriae sit idoneus.*

Nor is it only to the country to which we give a new citizen, that our gift is to be estimated, as a blessing or an injury, according to the nature of the living offering that is presented to it. To that very citizen himself the gift of existence is the greatest of all blessings, or the greatest of all injuries, only as his character is to be virtuous or vicious; and whether the character is to be virtuous or vicious, may often depend on circumstances which were almost at the disposal of him by whom the doubtful gift of mere existence was bestowed. "It is not a blessing," says an ancient philosopher, "to live merely, but to live well. Life in itself, if life without wisdom be a good, is a good that is common to me with the meanest reptiles; and he who gave me nothing more than life, gave me only what a fly or a worm may boast. If, in the love and hope of virtue, I have employed that life which my parents conferred on me, in studies that were to render me more noble in the sight of heaven, I have paid back to them more than I have received. My father gave me to myself rude and ignorant, I have given him a son, of whom it may delight him to be the father." "Non est bonum vivere, sed bene vivere. Si vitam imputas mihi, per se, nudam, egentem consilii, et id ut magnum bonum jactas, cogita te mihi imputare muscarum ac vermium bonum. Deinde, ut nihil aliud dicam, quam bonis artibus me studuisse, ut cursum ad rectum iter vitae dirigerim; in ipso beneficio tuo majus quam quod dederas, recepisti. Tu enim me mihi rudem et imperitum dedisti: ego tibi filium, qualem genuisse gauderes."†

The neglect of parental duty, in the comparative inattention to the moral discipline of the mind, may indeed be considered only as a continuation to the offspring of the errors which influence the parent in conduct that relates wholly to himself. He seeks for them what he seeks for himself; and as he is ambitious to be rich or powerful, rather than happy, he wishes to enable them, in like manner, to be rich or powerful, and leaves their happiness, as he has left his own, to be the casual result of circumstances that may or may not produce it.

The importance attached by parents to the mere temporary circumstances of earthly splendour, which leads to one most fatal species of violation of parental duty in the sort of culture which they are most anxious to bestow, aggravates, in a very high degree, the second species of violation of it to which I alluded in enumerating the parental duties, that which consists in inadequate provision of those very means to which they attach so much importance. I do not speak at present of the extreme prodigality of those who think only of themselves, and who scarcely think even of themselves beyond an hour; the prodigality which leaves in indigence those who have been brought up in habits of luxury, that have rendered luxury, like that of their extravagant parents, almost an object of necessity to them. I allude to the intentional deliberate sacrifice which is made of the comforts of many children to the wealth of one,—a sacrifice which has usually, or at least often, tended only to make one less virtuous than he would have been, and many less happy. The national consequences of the privileges of primogeniture and of sex, belong to inquiries in political jurisprudence. At present, it is not of these that I speak. It is only of the wants of the children, and the affection and duty of the parent. These wants are obviously equal in all; and if the merits of all be equal, the affection of the parent should be the same, and his duty equal to all, who, with equal wants and equal merits, are consigned to his equal love. It is vain now to look for a justification of breaches of this equal duty, to periods of violence, in which it was necessary, for the happiness of all, that inequality of distribution should take place, that there might be one sufficiently powerful to protect the scantier pittance of the many. These circumstances of violence are now no more subsisting in the regular politics of Europe. The affections are allowed without peril to exercise themselves freely. The father of many virtuous children may safely be to all what he is to one; and if he lay aside this equal character, and, sheltering himself in the forced manners of barbarous and tumultuous ages, make many poor that he may make one rich, he is guilty of a gross violation of his duties as a parent; and the more guilty, in exact proportion to the value which he attaches to the possession of the wealth so unequally distributed. Nor is it only to those whom he directly wills to impoverish, that he is guilty of a breach of duty; he is equally guilty of

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* Juvenal, Sat. xiv. v. 70.
† Seneca de Beneficiis, lib. iii. cap. xxxi.

it, in many cases, to the single individual whom he exclusively enriches, if, in estimating what he confers, we consider the virtue and happiness, or vice and misery, that may arise from it, and not the mere wealth, which in itself is nothing. The superiority which is thus bestowed on a single individual, is a superiority that may, indeed, like every possession of power, lead to the exercise of corresponding virtues; to the generous mind it may present, as it has often presented, only wider occasions of generosity: yet beautiful as such examples may be, it is not what the general circumstances of our nature authorize us to expect; and the power of being thus generous, when, without that dubious generosity, those who have been made dependent on it may suffer what perhaps it was not intended that they should suffer, is a power of too great peril to human virtue to be rashly imposed upon human weakness.

Such are two of the great duties of parents;—those which relate to provision for the mental culture and temporal accommodation of their offspring. I have mentioned, as a third duty, that of tempering the parental authority with all the kindness of parental love, which, even in exacting obedience only where obedience is necessary for the good of him who obeys, is still the exacter of sacrifices which require to be sweetened by the kindness that demands them. This duty, indeed, may be considered as in some degree involved in the general duty of moral education; since it is not a slight part of that duty to train the mind of the child to those affections which suit the filial nature, and which are the chief element of every other affection that adorns in after-life the friend, the citizen, the lover of mankind. The father who has no voice but that of stern command, is a tyrant to all the extent of his power, and will excite only such feelings as tyrants excite; a ready obedience perhaps, but an obedience that is the trembling haste of a slave, not the still quicker fondness of an ever ready love; and that will be withheld in the very instant in which the terror has lost its dominion. It is impossible to have, in a single individual, both a slave and a son; and he who chooses rather to have a slave, must not expect that filial fondness which is no part of the moral nature of a bondman. In thinking that he increases his authority, he truly diminishes it; for more than half the authority of the parent is in the love which he excites, in that zeal to obey which is scarcely felt as obedience when a wish is expressed, and in that ready imitation of the virtues that are loved, which does not require even the expression of a wish, but without a command becomes all which a virtuous parent could have commanded.

LECTURE LXXXVIII.

OF THE DUTIES OF AFFINITY — PARENTAL DUTIES; FILIAL DUTIES; FRATERNAL DUTIES; CONJUGAL DUTIES.

In my last Lecture, Gentlemen, I arranged the duties which we owe to particular individuals, under five heads: as arising from affinity; from friendship; from benefits received; from contract; from the general patriotism which connects together all the citizens that live on the same soil, or under the protection of the same system of polity.

In considering the duties of affinity, we entered on our inquiry with those which belong to the first relationship of life,—the relationship that connects together, with a tie as delightful as it is indissoluble, the parent and the child. We begin to exist under the protection of the duties of others; the objects of a moral regard, of which we are soon ourselves to share the reciprocal influence; and, from the moment at which we are capable of understanding that there are beings around us who have benefited us, or to whom it is in our power to give a single enjoyment, our duties too commence, and life itself may be said to be a series of duties fulfilled or violated.

We are the objects of duty, however, before we are capable of feeling its force, or of knowing that we have ourselves duties to fulfil; and the nature of this primary obligation of the parent, of which we are the objects as soon as we have begun to breathe, and which death only can dissolve, was considered fully in my last Lecture. The preservation of the mere animal existence of the child is an office of parental obligation too obvious, however, and too simple to require elucidation. Our attention, therefore, was given to the other duties which the parental relation involves:—in the first place, the duty of giving to him, whose wisdom or ignorance, virtue or vice, happiness or misery, may depend in a great measure on the nature of the instruction and example which he may receive, such education as, while it trains him for all the honour and usefulness which his rank in life may seem to promise to the reasonable expectation of the parent, may not forget that this life is but the commencement of immortality, and the thoughts and feelings, therefore, which it is most important to cultivate, not those which have relation only to worldly wealth and dignity, but those to which the proudest honours of earthly life are but the accidents of a day. In the second place, even with respect to the short period of earthly exist-

ence, which, short as it is when compared with immortality, still admits of many enjoyments, which we may supply, or withhold, or lessen, and of many evils which we might have prevented; the duty of affording to the child such a provision of the means of worldly comfort and usefulness, as is suitable to the circumstances of the parent, and of affording this provision to the different members of a family, not in the manner which may seem best fitted to gratify the personal vanity of the provider, but in the manner that is best fitted to contribute to the happiness of all who, with a relationship that is precisely the same, if their merits and wants be equal, have a moral claim to equal regard, in the distribution that is to provide for those wants. In the third place, the duty of exercising with kindness the parental power; of imposing no restraint which has not for its object some good, greater than the temporary evil of the restraint itself, of making the necessary obedience of the child in this way not so much a duty as a delight; and of thus preparing him to be, in other years, the grateful and tender friend of a parent whose authority, even in its most rigid exactions, he has felt only as the watchful tenderness of friendship, that was rigid in withholding only what it would have been dangerous to grant.

Having considered, then, the duties of the parent, in all their relations to the being to whom he has given existence, let us now proceed to consider the reciprocal duties of the child. These arise from two sources,—from the power of the parent, and from his past kindness. As morally responsible, to a certain degree, for the happiness of the child, it is evident that he must have over it an authority of some sort, without which there could be no power of guarding it from the greatest of all dangers, the dangers of its own ignorance and obstinacy. It is equally evident, that, as the author of all the benefits which a parent can confer, he has a just claim to more than mere authority. From the salutary and indispensable power of the parent flows the duty of filial obedience; from the benevolence of the parent the duty of filial love, and of all the services to which that love can lead. Obedience, then, is the first fillial duty,—a duty which varies in the extent of obligation at different periods of life, but which does not cease wholly at any period. The child must obey, with a subjection that is complete, because he is incapable of judging what would be most expedient for him, without the direction of another; and no other individual can be supposed so much interested, in directing to what is expedient for him, as the parent, who must reap an accession of happiness from his happiness, or suffer in his sufferings. The man should obey in every thing, indeed, in which the obedience will not involve the sacrifice of a duty, but only some loss of comfort on his part; yet he is not, like the child, to obey blindly: for the reason which required the blindness of obedience does not exist in his case. He is capable of weighing accurately duty with duty, because he is capable of seeing consequences which the child cannot see. He is not to obey, where he could obey only by a crime; nor, even where the evil to be suffered would be only a loss of happiness to himself, can he be morally bound to make himself miserable for the gratification of a desire that, even in a parent, may be a desire of caprice or folly. Where the duty of obedience, in such cases, should be considered as terminating, it would not be easy to define by words; since the limit varies, not merely with the amount of the sacrifice required, but with the extent of former parental favour, that may have required a greater or less return of grateful compliance from the tenderness of filial obligation. I need not add, that, in any case of doubtful duty, a virtuous son will always be inclined to widen in some degree, rather than to narrow, the sphere of his obedience.

As the duty of obedience flows from the necessary power of the parent, in relation to the ignorance and weakness of those who are new to life, and therefore need his guidance, the filial duties of another class flow from the benefits conferred by the parent, benefits greater than can be conferred by any other; since to them is due the very capacity of profiting by the benefits of others. Of how many cares must every human being have been the subject, before he could acquire even the thoughtless vigour of boyhood; and how many cares additional were necessary, then, to render that thoughtless vigour something more than the mere power of doing injury to itself! They whose constant attention was thus necessary to preserve our very being, to whom we owe the instruction which we have received, and, in a great measure too, our very virtues, may have sometimes, perhaps, exercised a rigour that was unnecessary, or abstained from affording us comforts which we might have enjoyed without any loss of virtue. But still the amount of advantage is not to be forgotten on account of some slight evil. We owe them much, though we might have owed them more; and, owing them much, we cannot morally abstain from paying them the duties of those who owe much. They should have no wants while we have even the humblest superfluity; or rather, while want is opposed to want, ours is not that of which we should be the first to think. In their bodily infirmities, we are the attendants who should be most assiduous round their couch or their chair; and even those

mental infirmities of age which are more disgusting, the occasional peevishness which reproaches for failures of duty that were not intended, the caprice that exacts one day what it would not permit the day before, and what it is again to refuse on the succeeding day, we are to bear, not as if it were an effort to bear them, and a sacrifice to duty, but with that tenderness of affection which bears much because it loves much, and does not feel the sacrifices which it occasionally makes, because it feels only the love which delights in making them.

Lovely as virtue is in all its forms, there is no form in which it is more lovely than in this tender ministry of offices of kindness, where the kindness, perhaps, is scarcely felt, or considered less as kindness than as the duty which might have been fairly demanded, and which there is no merit, therefore, in having paid. Though we have often the gratification of seeing, in the progress of life, many beautiful examples of age that is not more venerable for its past virtues, than amiable with a lasting and still-increasing gentleness, which softens the veneration, indeed, but augments it even while it softens it, it is not always that the last years of life present to us this delightful aspect; and when the temper is, in these last years, unfortunately clouded,—when there is no smile of kindness in the faded eye, that grows bright again for moments, only when there is fretfulness in the heart,—when the voice that is feeble, only in the utterance of grateful regard, is still sometimes loud, with tones of a very different expression,—the kindness which, in its unremitting attention, never shows by a word or look, the sadness that is felt on these undeserved reproaches, and that regards them only as proofs of a weakness that requires still more to be comforted, is a kindness which virtue alone can inspire and animate, but which, in the bosom that is capable of it, virtue must already have well rewarded. How delightful is the spectacle, when, amid all the temptations of youth and beauty, we witness some gentle heart, that gives to the couch of the feeble, and, perhaps, of the thankless and repining, those hours which others find too short for the successive gaieties with which an evening can be filled, and that prefers to the smile of universal admiration the single smile of enjoyment, which, after many vain efforts, has at last been kindled on one solitary cheek!

If filial love be thus ready to bear with bodily and moral infirmities, it is not less ready to bear with intellectual weakness. There is often, especially in the middle classes of life, as great a difference of mental culture in the parent and the child as if they had lived at the distance of many centuries. The wealth that has been acquired by patient industry, or some fortunate adventure, may be employed in diffusing all the refinement of science and literature to the children of those, to whom the very words, science and literature, are words of which they would scarcely be able, even with the help of a dictionary, to understand the meaning. In a rank of life still lower, there are not wanting many meritorious individuals, who, uninstructed themselves, labour indefatigably to obtain the means of liberal instruction for one whose wisdom, in after-years, when he is to astonish the village, may gratify at once their ambition and love. It would, indeed, be painful to think, that any one, whose superiority of knowledge has cost his parents so much fatigue, and so many privations of comforts, which, but for the expense of the means of his acquired superiority, they might have enjoyed, should turn against them, in his own mind, the acquirements which were to them of so costly a purchase, despising them for the very ignorance which gave greater merit to their sacrifice, and proud of a wisdom far less noble, when it can thus feel contempt, than the humble ignorance which it despises.

He who, in the fulfilment of every filial duty, has obeyed as a son should obey, and loved as a son should love, may not, indeed, with all his obedience and affection, have been able to return an amount of benefit equal to that which he has received; but, in being thus virtuous, he has at least made the return that is most grateful to a virtuous parent's heart. He has not been unsuccessful in that contest of mutual love, in which, as Seneca truly says, it is happy to conquer and happy to be overcome. "Alia ex aliis exempla subeunt,"—he remarks, after citing many instances of filial duty,—"eorum qui parentes suos periculis eripuerunt, qui ex infimo ad summum protulerunt, et e plebe acervoque ignobili nunquam tacendos saeculis dederunt. Nulla vi verborum, nulla ingenii facultate exprimi potest, quantum opus sit, quam laudabile, quamque nunquam a memoria hominum exiturum, posse hoc dicere, Parentibus meis parui, cessi: imperio eorum, sive aequum, sive iniquum ac durum fuit, obsequentem submissumque me praebui: ad hoc unum contumax fui, ne beneficiis vincerer. Felices qui vicerint: felices qui vincentur. Quid eo adolescente praeclarius, qui sibi ipsi dicere poterit (neque enim fas est alteri dicere) Patrem meum beneficiis vici! Quid eo fortunatius sene, qui omnibus ubique praedicabit, a filio suo se beneficiis victum!"*

Such is that beautiful arrangement of Heaven, to which I have already so often alluded, that, in adapting the weakness of

* De Beneficiis, lib. iii. cap. xxxviii.

one generation to the strength of the generation which preceded it, and to the love which finds an object of increasing regard in the very wants which are every moment relieved or prevented, has made that which might seem to common eyes a provision only for the continued existence of the race of man, a source of more than half the virtues of mankind. It is thus truly, as Pope says, that he

> Who framed a whole, the whole to bless,
> On mutual wants built mutual happiness.
> So, from the first, eternal order ran,
> And creature link'd to creature, man to man.
> Whate'er of life all-quickening ether keeps,
> Or breathes through air, or shoots beneath the deeps,
> Or pours profuse on earth, one nature feeds
> The vital flame, and swells the genial seeds.
> Thus beast and bird their common charge attend,
> The mothers nurse it, and the sires defend;
> The young dismiss'd to wander earth or air,
> There stops the instinct, and there ends the care,
> The link dissolves, each seeks a fresh embrace,
> Another love succeeds, another race.
> A longer care Man's helpless kind demands;
> That longer care contracts more lasting bands.
> Still as one brood, and as another rose,
> These natural love maintained, habitual those.
> Reflection, reason, still the ties improve,
> At once extend the interest and the love;
> And still new needs, new helps, new habits rise,
> That graft benevolence on charities.*

Next in order to the relationship of the parent and child, may be considered the relation which the child bears to those who are united with him by the same tie, to the same parental bosoms. If friendship be delightful, if it be above all delightful to enjoy the continued friendship of those who are endeared to us by the intimacy of many years, who can discourse with us of the frolics of the school, of the adventures and studies of the college, of the years when we first ranked ourselves with men in the free society of the world, how delightful must be the friendship of those who, accompanying us through all this long period, with a closer union than any casual friend, can go still farther back, from the school to the very nursery which witnessed our common pastimes, who have had an interest in every event that has related to us, and in every person that has excited our love or our hatred, who have honoured with us those to whom we have paid every filial honour in life, and wept with us over those whose death has been to us the most lasting sorrow of our heart. Such, in its wide unbroken sympathy, is the friendship of brothers, considered even as friendship only, and how many circumstances of additional interest does this union receive from the common relationship to those who have original claims to our still higher regard, and to whom we offer an acceptable service, in extending our affection to those whom they love. In treating of the circumstances that tend peculiarly to strengthen this tie, Cicero extends his view even to the common sepulchre that is at last to enclose us: "Sanguinis conjunctio devincit caritate homines. Magnum est enim, eadem habere monumenta majorum, iisdem uti sacris, sepulchra habere communia." It is, indeed, a powerful image, a symbol, and almost a lesson of unanimity. Every dissension of man with man excites in us a feeling of painful incongruity. But we feel a peculiar incongruity in the discord of those whom one roof has continued to shelter during life, and whose dust is afterwards to be mingled under a single stone.

On the fraternal duties, however, I need not dwell, because they may be considered very nearly in the same light as the duties of that friendship to which I have already compared them, the duties of a cordial intimacy rendered more sacred by relationship to the parents from whom we have sprung, and to whom we owe common duties, as we have been objects of common cares. By the peculiar domestic attachments of this sort, and the mutual services thence arising, the world is benefited with the accession to its general happiness, of the reciprocal enjoyments of a regard that has already found friends, before it could have thought of seeking them. Surrounded by the aged, or at least by those who are aged in relation to his first years of boyhood, the child would have learned only to respect and obey. With the little society of his equals around him, he learns that independence and equality of friendship, which train him to the affections that are worthy of a free and undaunted spirit, in the liberty and equal society of maturer years. As a son, he learns to be a good subject; as a brother, he learns to be a good citizen.

The duties which we owe to more distant relations, vary, as might naturally be supposed, with the circumstances of society, according to the varying necessity of mutual aid. Where the protection of law is feeble, and it is necessary therefore for many to unite, in common defence, the families that spring from one common stock continue to cling to each other for aid almost as if they lived together under the same roof; it is truly one wide family rather than a number of families; the history of the tribe, in its most remote years of warfare and victory is the history of each individual of the tribe; and the mere remembrance of the exploits of those who fought with one common object, around the representative of their common ancestor, is, like the feeling of the fraternal or filial relation itself, prolonged from age to age; while the affection thus flowing from the remembrance of other years is continually strengthened by the important services which each individual is still able to perform for the whole, on occasions of similar peril. In

*Essay on Man, Ep. iii. v. 111, &c.

other circumstances of society, the necessity of this mutual aid is obviated by the happier protection of equal law; and objects of new ambition, separating the little community into families that have their own peculiar interests, with little, if any necessity, for reciprocations of assistance, the duty of giving such assistance is at once less important, and no longer receives any aid from the powerful circumstances of association, which, in a different state of manners, rendered the most distant relative an object of almost sacred regard.

"It is not many years ago," says Dr. Smith, "that, in the Highlands of Scotland, the chieftain used to consider the poorest man of his clan as his cousin and relation. The same extensive regard to kindred is said to take place among the Tartars, the Arabs, the Turkomans, and, I believe, among all other nations who are nearly in the same state of society in which the Scots Highlanders were about the beginning of the present century.

"In commercial countries, where the authority of law is always perfectly sufficient to protect the meanest man in the state, the descendants of the same family, having no such motive for keeping together, naturally separate and disperse, as interest or inclination may direct. They soon cease to be of importance to one another; and, in a few generations, not only lose all care about one another, but all remembrance of their common origin, and of the connexion which took place among their ancestors. Regard for remote relations becomes, in every country, less and less, according as this state of civilization has been longer and more completely established. It has been longer and more completely established in England than in Scotland; and remote relations are, accordingly, more considered in the latter country than in the former, though, in this respect the difference between the two countries is growing less and less every day. Great lords, indeed, are, in every country, proud of remembering and acknowledging their connexion with one another, however remote. The remembrance of such illustrious relations flatters not a little the family pride of them all; and it is neither from affection, nor from any thing which resembles affection, but from the most frivolous and childish of all vanities, that this remembrance is so carefully kept up. Should some more humble, though perhaps much nearer kinsman, presume to put such great men in mind of his relation to their family, they seldom fail to tell him that they are bad genealogists, and miserably ill-informed concerning their own family history. It is not in that order, I am afraid, that we are to expect any extraordinary extension of what is called natural affection."*

* Theory of Moral Sentiments, vol. ii. p. 70—72. 10th edition.

The duties to which I next proceed, are those which flow from an affection that is one of the most powerful indeed of the affections which nature prompts, but to which she does not point out any particular individual as demanding it, without our choice. The only influence which she exercises is on our choice itself.

It is the conjugal relation of which I speak, —a relation of which the duties, like the duties of all our other reciprocal affinities, however minutely divided and subdivided, are involved in the simple obligation to make those who are the objects of it as happy as it is in our power to make them.

In these few simple words, however, what a complication of duties is involved, of duties which it is less easy for the ethical inquirer to state and define, than for the heart which feels affection to exercise them all with instant readiness. He who loves sincerely the object of any one of those relations which bind us together in amity, and who is wise enough to discern the difference of conferring a momentary gratification which may produce more misery than happiness, and of conferring that which is not merely present happiness, but a source of future enjoyment, needs no rule of duty, as far at least as relates to that single individual, for the direction of a conduct, of which love itself, unaided by any other guidance, will be a quick and vigilant director.

The husband should have, then, as his great object and rule of conduct, the happiness of the wife. Of that happiness, the confidence in his affection is the chief element; and the proofs of this affection on his part, therefore, constitute his chief duty, —an affection that is not lavish of caresses only, as if these were the only demonstrations of love, but of that respect which distinguishes love as a principle, from that brief passion which assumes, and only assumes the name,—a respect which consults the judgment, as well as the wishes of the object beloved, which considers her who is worthy of being taken to the heart, as worthy of being admitted to all the counsels of the heart. If there are any delights, of which he feels the value as essential to his own happiness, if his soul be sensible to the charms of literary excellence, and if he consider the improvement of his own understanding, and the cultivation of his own taste, as a duty and one of the most delightful duties of an intellectual being; he will not consider it as a duty or a delight that belongs only to man, but will feel it more delightful, as there is now another soul that may share with him all the pleasure of the progress. To love the happiness of her whose happiness is in his affection, is of course to be conjugally faithful; but it is more than to be merely faithful; it is not to allow room

even for a doubt as to that fidelity, at least for such a doubt as a reasonable mind might form. It is truly to love her best, but it is also to seem to feel that love which is truly felt.

As the happiness of the wife is the rule of conjugal duty to the husband, the happiness of the husband is in like manner the rule of conjugal duty to the wife. There is no human being whose affection is to be to her like his affection, as there is no happiness which is to be to her like the happiness which he enjoys. All which I have said of the moral obligation of the husband, then, is not less applicable to her duty; but, though the gentle duties belong to both, it is to her province that they more especially belong, because she is at once best fitted by nature for the ministry of tender courtesies, and best exercised in the offices that inspire them. While man is occupied in other cares during the business of the day, the business of her day is but the continued discharge of many little duties that have a direct relation to wedlock, in the common household which it has formed. He must often forget her, or be useless to the world: she is most useful to the world by remembering him. From the tumultuous scenes which agitate many of his hours, he returns to the calm scene, where peace awaits him, and happiness is sure to await him, because she is there waiting, whose smile is peace, and whose very presence is more than happiness to his heart.

> Here Love his golden shafts employs, here lights
> His constant lamp, and waves his purple wings—
> Here reigns and revels.*

The vows, which constitute a solemn part of the matrimonial engagement, give to this duty of reciprocal love the sanction of an additional authority; but they only give an additional sanction, and increase the guilt of violating duties, which, without these vows, it would still have been guilt to violate.

The husband is to seek the happiness of his wife, the wife to seek the happiness of her husband. This rule is sufficiently simple and efficacious, where affection is sufficiently strong, as in the domestic scenes of harmony and delight which I have pictured. But there may be cases of occasional disagreement, and then what is the duty? In such cases, it is obviously necessary, that, for mutual peace, the will of one should be submitted to the will of the other; and, if a point so important as this were left to the decision of the individuals themselves, without any feeling of greater duty on either side, the disagreement, it is evident, would still be continued, under a different name; and, instead of combating who should concede, the controversy would be, of whom it was the duty to make the concession. It is of most important advantage, therefore, upon the whole, that there should be a feeling of duty to be called in for decision, in such unfortunate cases; and since, from various circumstances, natural and factitious, man is everywhere in possession of physical and political superiority, since his education is usually less imperfect, and since the charge of providing for the support of the family, in almost every instance, belongs to him, it is surely, from all these circumstances, fit, upon the whole, that, if the power of decision, in doubtful matters, should be given to one rather than to the other, it should be with man that it is to rest, whatever number of exceptions there may be, in which, but for the importance of the general rule, it would have been of advantage that woman, in those cases the wiser and more virtuous, were the decider.

The power of decision therefore, which, for the sake of peace, must be understood as resting somewhere, should rest with man; but though it rest with him, it is only in unfortunate cases, as I before said, that the power of authoritative decision should be exercised. In the general circumstances of conjugal life, there should be absolute equality, because, where love should be equal, there should be that equal desire of conferring happiness, which is implied in equality of love; and he who, from the mere wish of gratifying his feeling of superiority, can wilfully thwart a wish of her whose wishes, where they do not lead to any moral or prudential impropriety, should be to him like his own, or even dearer than his own, if they did not truly become his wishes, when known to be hers, would deserve no slight punishment, as the violator of conjugal obligation, if he were not almost sufficiently punished in the very want of that better affection, the delightful feeling of which would have saved him from his tyranny of power.

"The husband, it has been said, should decide in affairs of importance; the wife in smaller matters. But the husband should decide, in consulting his wife, the wife in seeking what is to please her husband. Let them learn often the pleasure of mutual concessions. Let them say often, I wish this because it is right; but let them say sometimes, too, I wish this much, because I love you."†

The great evil, in matrimonial life, is the cessation of those cares which were regarded as necessary for obtaining love, but which are unfortunately conceived to be less necessary when love is once obtained. The carelessnesses of a husband are not less severely felt, however, because they are the neglects of one whose attentions are more

* Paradise Lost, book iv. v. 763—765.

† De St. Lambert, Œuv. Phil. tome iii. p. 38.

valuable, as he who offers them is more valued; and frequent inattentions, by producing frequent displeasure, may at last, though they do not destroy love wholly, destroy the best happiness of love. No advice can be more salutary for happiness, than that which recommends an equal attention to please, and anxiety not to offend, after twenty years of wedlock, as when it was the object of the lover to awake the passion, on which he conceived every enjoyment of his life to depend. We gain at least as much in preserving a heart as in conquering one.

The cessation of these cares would be, of itself, no slight evil, even though love had originally been less profuse of them than it usually is, in the extravagance of an unreflecting passion. She who has been worshipped as a goddess, must feel doubly the insult of the neglect which afterwards disdains to bestow on her the common honour that is paid to woman; and with the ordinary passions of a human being, it will be difficult for her to retain, I will not say love, for that is abandoned, but the decorous and dignified semblance of love, for him who has cared little for the reality of it. It is not easy to say by how insensible a transition, in many cases, this conjugal resentment, or forced indifference, passes into conjugal infidelity; though it is easy, in such a case, to determine to whom the greater portion of the guilt is to be ascribed.

But it will perhaps be said, love is not dependent on our mere will, and how can we continue to love one whom no effort of ours can prevent us from discovering to be unworthy of our continued affection? But by whom is this objection usually made? Not by those who, in engaging to love, and honour, and cherish during life, have been careful in considering who it was to whom they entered under this solemn engagement. It is, in almost every instance, the objection of those who, when they formed the engagement, made a vow, of the real import of which they were regardless; and who afterwards dare to plead one crime as the justification of another. There are duties of marriage which begin before the marriage itself, in the provision that is made for matrimonial virtue and happiness; and he who neglects the means of virtuous love, in a state of which virtuous love is to be the principal charm, is far more inconsiderate and far more guilty than the heedless producer of misery, who forms a matrimonial connexion without the prospect of any means of subsistence for one who is to exist with him, only to suffer with him in indigence, and for the little sufferers who are afterwards to make indigence still more painfully felt. He who has vowed to love one to whom he pledges love, only because he knows that she is worthy of such a pledge, will not afterwards have reason to complain of the difficulty of loving the unworthy.

If, however, it be necessary for man to be careful to whom he engages himself by a vow so solemn, it is surely not less necessary for the gentler tenderness of woman. She, too, has duties to fulfil, that depend on love, or at least that can be sweetened only by love; and when she engages to perform them where love is not felt, she is little aware of the precariousness of such a pledge, and of the perils to which she is exposing herself. It is truly painful then to see, in the intercourse of the world, how seldom affection is considered as a necessary matrimonial preliminary, at least in one of the parties, and in the one to whom it is the more necessary; and how much quicker the judgment of fathers, mothers, friends, is to estimate the wealth or the worldly dignity than the wisdom or the virtue which they present as a fit offering to her, whom wealth and worldly dignity may render only weaker and more miserable, but whom wisdom might counsel and virtue cherish. It is painful to see one who has, in other respects, perhaps, many moral excellences, consent, as an accomplice in this fraud, to forego the moral delicacy which condemns the apparent sale of affection that is not to be sold,—rejoice in the splendid sacrifice which is thus made of her peace,—consign her person to one whom she despises, with the same indifference as she consigns her hand,—a prostitute for gold, not less truly because the prostitution is to be for life, and not less criminally a prostitute, because to the guilt and meanness of the pecuniary barter, are added the guilt of a mockery of tenderness that wishes to deceive man, and the still greater guilt of a perjury that, in vows which the heart belies, would wish to deceive the God on whom it calls to sanction the deceit.

When marriages are thus formed, it is not for the sufferer to complain, if she find that she has acquired a few more trappings of wealth, but not a husband. She has her house, her carriage, and the living machines that are paid to wait around her and obey her; she takes rank in public spectacles, and presides in her own mansion, in spectacles as magnificent; she has obtained all which she wished to obtain; and the affection and happiness which she scorned, she must leave to those who sought them.

"There is a place on the earth," it has been said, "where pure joys are unknown, from which politeness is banished, and has given place to selfishness, contradictions, and half-veiled insults. Remorse and inquietude, like furies that are never weary of assailing, torment the inhabitants. This place is the house of a wedded pair who have no mutual love, nor even esteem. There is a place on the earth to which vice has no entrance,

where the gloomy passions have no empire, where pleasure and innocence live constantly together, where cares and labours are delightful, where every pain is forgotten in reciprocal tenderness, where there is an equal enjoyment of the past, the present, and the future. It is the house too of a wedded pair, but of a pair who, in wedlock, are lovers still."*

LECTURE LXXXIX.

OF THE DUTIES OF FRIENDSHIP; DUTIES OF GRATITUDE.

Gentlemen, in our arrangement of the duties which we owe to particular individuals, as reducible to five orders,—those which arise from affinity, you will remember, constituted the first division.

The particular duties, as yet considered by us, have all belonged to this first division, the duties of relationship, parental, filial, fraternal, conjugal; in the exercise of which, and in the reciprocal enjoyment of them as exercised by others, is to be found that gracious system of domestic virtue, under the shelter of which man reposes in happiness, and resting thus, in the confidence of affection and delight, becomes purer of heart, and more actively beneficent, by the very happiness which he feels.

It is of these domestic virtues that we must think, when we think of the morals of a nation. A nation is but a shorter name for the individuals who compose it; and when these are good fathers, good sons, good brothers, good husbands, they will be good citizens; because the principles which make them just and kind under the domestic roof, will make them just and kind to those who inhabit with them that country which is only a larger home. The household fire, and the altar, which are coupled together in the exhortations of the leaders of armies, and in the hearts of those whom they address, have a relation more intimate than that of which they think, who combat for both. It is before the household fire, that every thing which is holy and worthy of the altar is formed. There arose the virtues that were the virtues of the child, before they were the virtues of the warrior or the statesman; and the mother who weeps with delight at the glory of her son, when a whole nation is exulting with her, rejoices over the same heroic fortitude, that at a period almost as delightful to her, in the little sacrifices which boyish generosity could make, had already often gladdened her heart, when she thought only of the gentle virtues before her, and was not aware of half the worth of that noble offering which she was speedily to make to her country and to the world.

From the domestic affinities, the transition is a very easy one, to that bond of affection which unites friend to friend, and gives rise to an order of duties almost equal in force to those of the nearest affinity.

We are formed to be virtuous, to feel pleasure in contemplating those parts of our life which present to us the remembrance of good deeds, as we feel pain in contemplating other portions of it, which present to us only remembrances of moral evil; and the same principle which makes us love in ourselves what is virtuous, renders it impossible for us to look with indifference on the virtues of another. The principle of moral emotion alone would thus be sufficient to lead to friendship, though there were no other principle in our nature that could tend to make a single human being an object of our regard.

But we are not lovers of virtue only; we are lovers of many other qualities, which add to our happiness, not so much as our own virtues indeed, but often as much as we could derive, in the same space of time, from the mere virtue of those with whom we mix in society. We love gaiety, and we therefore love those who can render us gay, by their wit, by the fluency of their social eloquence, by those never-ceasing smiles of good humour, which are almost, to our quick sympathy of emotion, like wit and eloquence; we hate sorrow, and we love those who, by the same powerful aid, can enable us to shake off the burthen of melancholy, from which our own efforts are, as we have too often found, unable of themselves to free us; we have plans of business or amusement, and we love those whose co-operation is necessary to their success, and who readily afford to us that co-operation which we need; we are doubtful, in many cases, as to the propriety of our own conduct, and if all others acted differently, we should be driven back to the uncertainty or the reproach of our own conscience, without any consolation from without; we therefore love those who, by acting as we act, seem to say to us that we have done well; or who, at least, when it is impossible for us to flatter ourselves with this illusion, comfort us with the only palliation which our conscience can admit, that we are not more reprehensible than others around us. Even without regard to all these causes of love, it is miserable to us to be alone. The very nature of all our emotions leads them to pour themselves out to some other breast; and the stronger the emotion, the more ardent is this propensity. We must make some one know why we are glad, or our gladness will be an oppression to us, almost as much as a delight. If we are

* De St. Lambert, Œuv. Phil. tome ii. p. 63.

in wrath, our anger seems to us incomplete, till not one only, but many, share our resentment. The sovereign would feel little pleasure in all the splendour of his throne, if he were to sit upon it for ever, with subjects around him to whom he was to be always a sovereign, and only a sovereign; and the very misanthrope, who abandons the race of mankind, in his detestation of their iniquity, must still have some one with whom he may give vent to his indignation, by describing the happiness which he feels, in having left the wicked to that universal wickedness which is worthy of them, and which he almost loves, because it enables him to hate them more thoroughly.

Thus lavish has nature been to us of the principles of friendship. With all these causes, that, singly, might dispose to cordial intercourse, and that exert in most cases an united influence, it is not wonderful that the tendency to friendship of some sort should be a part of our mental constitution, almost as essential to it as any of our appetites. It is scarcely a metaphor, indeed, which we employ, when we term it an appetite, an appetite arising from our very nature as social beings; and, if our appetites, like our other desires, bear any proportion to the amount of the good which is their object, it must be one of the most vivid which it is possible for us to feel; because it relates to a species of happiness, which is among the most vivid of our enjoyments; in many cases approaching the delight of the most intimate domestic relations, and scarcely to be counted inferior to the delight arising from any other source, unless when we think of that virtue which is essential to the enjoyment of all. To take friendship from life, says Cicero, would be almost the same thing, as to take the sun from the world. "Solem a mundo tollere videntur, qui amicitiam e vita tollunt." It is, indeed, the sunshine of those who otherwise would walk in darkness; it beams with unclouded radiance on our moral path, and is itself warmth and beauty to the very path along which it invites us to proceed. He knows not how poor all the splendours of worldly prosperity are in themselves, who enjoys them with that increase of happiness which friendship has given to them; and he who is still rich enough to have a friend, cannot know what extreme poverty and misery are; because the only misery which is truly misery, is that which has no one to comfort it.

> Celestial Happiness! whene'er she stoops
> To visit earth, one shrine the goddess finds,
> And one alone, to make her sweet amends
> For absent Heaven,—the bosom of a friend;
> Where heart meets heart, reciprocally soft,
> Each other's pillow to repose divine.*

"Quantum bonum est, ubi sunt praeparata pectora, in quae tutò secretum omne descendat, quorum conscientiam minus quam tuam timeas, quorum sermo solicitudinem leniat, sententia consilium expediat, hilaritas tristitiam dissipet, conspectus ipse delectet." How great a blessing is it, to have bosoms ever ready for receiving and preserving faithfully whatever we may wish to confide; whose conscious memory of our actions we may fear less than our own, whose discourse may alleviate our anxiety, whose counsel may fix our own doubtful judgment, whose hilarity may dissipate our sorrow, whose very aspect may delight.

There is unquestionably, in the very presence of a friend, a delight of this sort, which has no other source than the consciousness of the presence of one who feels for us the regard which we feel for him. "When I ask myself," says Montaigne, after a very lively description which he gives of his affection for his friend,—"When I ask myself whence it is that I feel this joy, this ease, this serenity, when I see him,—it is because it is he, it is because it is I, I answer; and this is all which I can say."

On the delight which friendship affords, however, it would be idle to expatiate. There is no subject, scarcely even with the exception of love itself, on which so much has been written, by philosophers and declaimers of all sorts, in prose and poetry. I might repeat to you innumerable commonplaces on the subject, and prove to you logically, by many arguments, that what you have all felt to be delightful, is delightful. For the evidence of this, however, I may safely leave you to your own consciousness. You have many friendships, and perhaps your most important and permanent friendships still to form; but if you have never yet felt what friendship is, there is little reason to think that you will ever feel it; and if you have felt it, though you may not yet have been in situations that might enable you to derive from it all the advantages which it is capable of yielding, the very consciousness of the regard itself will enable you to anticipate them all. He who has never been in poverty, in long and almost hopeless disease, in any deep distress of any sort, may yet know what consolation the attentions of friendship would administer to the sorrow which he has never felt; and if he ever feel the sorrow and the consolation, will not acquire any new knowledge of the extent of the delightful influence which he had long known how to appreciate, but only a new cause of gratitude to him, who, in doing much, had done only what it was expected of his ready tenderness and generosity to do. "There is, indeed," as it has been truly said, "only one species of misery which friendship cannot comfort,—the misery of atro-

* Night Thoughts, Night ii.

cious guilt; but hearts capable of genuine friendship, are not capable of committing crimes. Though it cannot comfort guilt, however, which ought not to be comforted, friendship is still able to console at least the too powerful remembrance of our faults and weaknesses; its voice reconciles us to ourselves; it shows us the means of rising again from our fall; and our fall itself it leads others to forget, in the same manner as it leads us to forget it, by recalling to us and to others our estimable qualities, and prompting us to the exercise of them. Friendship repairs every thing, remedies every thing, comforts every thing."*

Friendship, however, is not a source of pleasure only; it is also a source of duty; and it is chiefly in this respect that we are now to regard it.

The duties that relate to friendship may be considered in three lights; as they regard the commencement of it, the continuance of it, and its close.

Our first duties are those which relate to the choice of a friend.

If we were sufficiently aware how great a command over our whole life we give to any one whom we admit to our intimacy; how ready we are to adopt the errors of those whom we love; and to regard their very faults, not merely as excusable, but as objects of imitation, or at least to imitate them without thinking whether they ought to be imitated, and without knowing even that we are imitating them; we should be a little more careful than we usually are, in making a choice, which is to decide in a great measure whether we are to be virtuous or vicious, happy or miserable; or which, in many cases, if we still continue happy, upon the whole, must often disturb our happiness, and, if we still continue virtuous, make virtue a greater effort. "The bandage which, in our poetic fictions, we give to Love," says the Marchioness de Lambert, "we have never thought of hanging over the clear and piercing eyes of Friendship. Friendship has no blindness: it examines before it engages, and attaches itself only to merit."†

The picture is a beautiful one; but it is a picture rather of what friendship ought to be, than of what friendship always is. The bandage, indeed, is not so thick as that which covers the eyes of Love, and it is not so constantly worn; but when it is worn, though it admits some light, it does not admit all. We must tear it off before we see clearly; or we must be careful at least what hands they are which we permit to put it on.

It is before we yield ourselves, then, to the regard, that we should strive to estimate the object of it, and to estimate his value, not by the gratification of a single day, but by the influence which he may continue to exercise on our life. If friendship, indeed, were a mere pastime, that ended with the amusement of some idle hours, it might be allowed to us to select, for our companions, those who might best amuse our idleness; it would be enough to us then that our friend was gay, and had the happy talent of making others gay. If it were a mere barter of courtesy, for a little wealth or distinction, it might be allowed to us, in like manner, to select those whose power and opulence seemed to promise to our ambition and avarice the best return of gain; it would then be enough if our friend possessed a station that might enable him to elevate us, not perhaps to his own rank, but at least a little higher than we are. Then, indeed, the propriety or impropriety of friendship might be estimated as readily, and almost in the same manner, as we estimate the worth of any common marketable commodity. But if it be an alliance of heart with heart,—if, in giving our sorrows or projects to be shared by another, we are to partake, in our turn, his sorrows or designs, whatever they may be,—to consider the virtue of him whom we admit to this diffusion with us of one common being, and to yield our affection, only as we discover the virtue which alone is worthy of it, is almost the same thing as to consult for our own virtue. The vice of him whom we love,—the vice which we must palliate to every censurer, and which we strive to palliate even to our own severe judgment, will soon cease to appear to us what it is; and it will require but a little longer habit of palliation, and a little longer intercourse of cordial regard, to win from us that occasional conformity which, with us too, may soon become a habit. Even though we escaped from the vices of the wicked, however, it would be impossible for us to escape from their misery. We must share the embarrassments and vexations, the fear and the disgrace, to which their moral errors must inevitably lead them; and though the friendship of the virtuous had no other superiority of attraction than this one, it would still be enough to determine the choice of the wise, —that, in becoming the friends of the good, they would have nothing to fear but misfortunes, which require pity only and consolation, not shame; that, if they had no reason to blush for themselves, they would have no reason to blush for those whom, by their selection, they had exhibited to the world as images of their own character; nor to feel, in the very innocence of their own heart, by the moral perplexities in which their sympathies involved them, if not what is hateful in guilt, at least all which is wretched in it.

* De St. Lambert, Œuvres Philosophiques, tome iii. p. 82.

† De St. Lambert, Œuvres, tome i. p. 236. Paris, 1761.

A single line of one of our old poets conveys, in this respect, a most sententious lesson, in bidding us consider what sort of a friend he is likely to prove to us, who has been the destroyer, or at least the constant disquieter, of his own happiness.

> See if he be
> Friend to himself, who would be friend to thee.

The necessity of virtue, then, in every bosom of which we resolve to share the feelings, would be sufficiently evident, though we were to consider those feelings only; but all the participation is not to be on our part. We are to place confidence, as well as to receive it; we are not to be comforters only, but sometimes, too, the comforted; and our own conduct may require the defence which we are sufficiently ready to afford to the conduct of our friend. Even with respect to the pleasure of the friendship itself, if it be a pleasure on which we set a high value, it is not a slight consideration whether it be fixed on one whose regard is likely to be as stable as ours, or on one who may in a few months, or perhaps even in a few weeks, withhold from us the very pleasure of that intimacy which before had been profusely lavished on us. In every one of these respects, I need not point out to you the manifest superiority of virtue over vice. Virtue only is stable, because virtue only is consistent; and the caprice which, under a momentary impulse, begins an eager intimacy with one, as it began it from an impulse as momentary with another, will soon find a third, with whom it may again begin it, with the same exclusion, for the moment, of every previous attachment. Nothing can be juster than the observation of Rousseau on these hasty starts of kindness, that "he who treats us at first sight like a friend of twenty years standing, will very probably, at the end of twenty years, treat us as a stranger, if we have any important service to request of him."

If, without virtue, we have little to hope in stability, have we, even while the semblance of friendship lasts, much more to hope as to those services of kindness which we may need from our friends? The secrets which it may be of no importance to divulge, all may keep with equal fidelity; because nothing is to be gained by circulating what no man would take sufficient interest in hearing, to remember after it was heard; but if the secret be of a kind which, if made known, would gain the favour of some one whose favour it would be more profitable to gain than to retain ours, can we expect fidelity from a mind that thinks only of what is to be gained by vice, in the great social market of moral feelings, not of what it is right to do? Can we expect consolation in our affliction from one who regards our adversity only as a sign that there is nothing more to be hoped from our intimacy; or trust our virtues to the defence of him who defends or assails as interest prompts, and who may see his interest in representing us as guilty of the very crimes with which slander has loaded us? In such cases, we have no title to complain of the treacheries of friendship; for it was not friendship in which we trusted: the treachery is as much the fault of the deceived as of the deceiver: we have ourselves violated some of the most important duties of friendship, the duties which relate to its commencement.

When friendship has commenced, after all those necessary cautions which form its first set of duties, a new set of duties begin their obligation. We have chosen cautiously, and we are now to confide: we have chosen one whom it is virtuous to love, and we are to perform to him all the services of love.

We are to confide, in the first place, not with that timid irresolute communication of our plans and wishes, which almost provokes to the very infidelity that appears to be suspected, but with that full opening of the heart, without which there is no confidence, and therefore none of the advantages of confidence. "If you think any one your friend," a Roman moralist says, "in whom you do not put the same confidence as in yourself, you know not the real power of friendship. Consider long, whether the individual whom you view with regard, is worthy of being admitted to your bosom; but when you have judged, and found him truly worthy, admit him to your very heart. You should so live, indeed, as to trust nothing to your own conscience which you would not trust to your enemy; but, at least to your friend, let all be open. He will be the more faithful, as your confidence in his fidelity is more complete. Si aliquem amicum existimas, cui non tantundem credis quantum tibi, vehementer erras, et non satis nôsti vim verae amicitiae. Tu vero omnia cum amico delibera, sed de ipso prius. Post amicitiam credendum est, ante amicitiam judicandum. Isti vero praepostere officia permiscent, qui, contra praecepta Theophrasti, cum amaverint judicant, et non amant cum judicaverint. Diu cogita, an tibi in amicitiam aliquis recipiendus sit; cum placuerit fieri, toto illum pectore admitte. Tam audacter cum illo loquere quam tecum. Tu quidem ita vive, ut nihil tibi committas, nisi quod committere etiam inimico possis; sed quia interveniunt quaedam, quae consuetudo fecit arcana, cum amico omnes curas, omnes cogitationes tuas misce. Fidelem si putaveris, facies."*

He who is worthy of our confidence is

* Seneca, Epist. iii.

worthy of our kindness; and, therefore, of all the aid which our kindness can bestow. I need not say that we are guilty of a breach of duty, if, with the power of furthering his advancement in life, we withhold our assistance. If he be in want, we should consider it not as a favour on our part, but as an additional value which he has conferred on our wealth, that he has given us an opportunity of making a more delightful use of it than any to which we could have known how to apply it in any other circumstances. If he be in grief, we have an affection that knows how to diffuse a tender pleasure over sadness itself; and that, if it cannot overcome affliction, can thus at least alleviate it. If he be suffering unmerited ignominy, we have a heart that knows his innocence, and a voice that can make itself be heard, wherever virtue is allowed to speak. These duties are easy to be performed. The only duty which is not easy, but which is still more necessary than the others, is that which relates to moral imperfections that may truly arise in him, or may become visible in him, only after our friendship has been given and received;—imperfections which, slight as they may be at first, may, if suffered to continue, vitiate that whole character, which it is so delightful to us to love; and which, in every important respect, is still so worthy of being loved. The correction of these is our chief duty; and every effort which it is in our power to use for this moral emendation, is to be employed sedulously, anxiously, urgently; but with all the tenderness which such efforts admit. If, in presenting to him that form of perfect virtue, to the imitation of which we wish to lead him, we make him feel more his own imperfection than the tenderness of that regard which seeks his amendment above every other object, the error is not his alone.

The duty which leads us to seek the moral reformation of our friend, wherever we perceive an imperfection that requires to be removed, is, as I have said, the highest duty of friendship, because it is a duty that has for its object the highest good which it is in our power to confer; and he who refrains from the necessary endeavour, because he fears to give pain to one whom he loves, is guilty of the same weakness which, in a case of bodily accident or disease, would withhold the salutary potion, because it is nauseous, or the surgical operation which is to preserve life, and to preserve it with comfort, because the use of the instrument, which is to be attended with relief and happiness, implies a little momentary addition of suffering. To abstain from every moral effort of this sort, in the mere fear of offending, is, from the selfishness of the motive, a still greater breach of duty, and almost, too, a still greater weakness. He whom we truly offend by such gentle admonitions as friendship dictates, admonitions of which the chief authority is sought in the very excellence of him whom we wish to make still more excellent, is not worthy of the friendship which we have wasted on him; and, if we thus lose his friendship, we are delivered from one who could not be sincere in his past professions of regard, and whose treachery, therefore, we might afterwards have had reason to lament. If he be worthy of us, he will not love us less, but love us more; he will feel that we have done that which it was our duty to do; and we shall have the double gratification of witnessing the amendment which we desired, and of knowing that we have contributed to an effect which was almost like the removal of a vice from ourselves, or a virtue added to our own moral character.

The last set of duties, in relation to friendship, are those which regard its close.

When friendship has been fixed where alone it should be fixed, the close of friendship is only the termination of the existence of those who feel it. But, with all the caution which it is possible for the best and the wisest to employ in selection, it is still possible that they may be deceived, even as to important defects of character; or, though they may not be deceived as to the essential virtues of the character, they may at least have failed to remark unfortunate circumstances of temper or general disposition, which may frustrate afterwards all the care that can be used to avoid what might lead to irritations and fretful suspicions, incompatible with permanent confidence. Friendship, then—that is to say, the cordial intimacy of friendship—may cease, while those still live who were its subjects; but, when it ceases, from causes that would render it impossible to be renewed with the same interest as before, or that would render the renewal of it unwise, even though it were possible, it should be a cessation of intimacy, and nothing more. The great duty of fidelity still remains; and, in some measure too, unless where there has been the provocation of injustice that cancels the past, because it shows the seeming affection of the past, even when affection was credited, to have been deceit, there remains still the duty of an interest stronger than we should feel in the welfare of a stranger who had never been connected with us by any tie of peculiar regard. Even when there has been such a discovery of guilt, as would render immoral this remaining interest, the duty of fidelity, as I have said, remains in all its force. What was confided to us in years of confidence, should still be as safe in our bosom as before. The only dispensation by which it can be morally allowable for us to violate the trust, is the slander of our reputation by the confider

himself, if he dare to assail our character, when the disclosure of the secret which he has trusted to us, would render manifest our innocence. His very attack, in that case, may be considered as a sort of tacit intimation to us that his trust is at an end.

When friendship, after continuing uninterrupted through life, not merely without diminution, but with perpetual accessions of confidence and happiness, is at last broken by the death of one of the parties, its duties do not terminate to the survivor. He has a source of new duties in the remembrances of the past, in the glory of his friend, which is ever present with him, and in the expectation of that future life in which he hopes to rejoin him, and which, by this very hope, presents a new motive to his own virtues.

"Some persons," says the Marquise de Lambert, "believe that there are no longer any duties to be fulfilled beyond the tomb; and there are but few who know how to be friends to the dead. Though the most magnificent funeral pomp be the tears and the silent sorrow of those who survive, and the most honourable sepulture be in their hearts, we must not think that tears which are shed from the sensibility of the moment, and sometimes too from causes which in part at least relate to ourselves, acquit us of all our obligation. The name of our friends, their glory, their family, have still claims on our affection, which it would be guilt not to feel. They should live still in our heart by the emotions which subsist there; in our memory, by our frequent remembrance of them; in our voice, by our eulogiums; in our conduct, by our imitation of their virtues."*

After our consideration of the duties of friendship, which necessarily involve in them many feelings of gratitude for kindnesses received, it cannot require any long discussion to convince you of the duty of gratitude to our benefactors in general.

Of this, indeed, I have already treated so fully in a former part of the course, when, in examining our moral emotions, I considered the emotion of gratitude itself as one of these, that it would be almost superfluous to make any further remarks on it.

It is one of the most pleasing proofs of the benevolence of Heaven, that the very production of good by one human being to another, is not attended with delight only to him who receives the favour, but with equal delight to him who confers it; and with respect to the future also, that the desire of new beneficent exertions is not more deeply impressed on the mind of the beneficent, by every repetition of his kindness, than on the mind of him who is the object of the kindness. Both are made happier; both are made more eager to render happy. Our first emotion, on receiving good, is love of him from whom we receive it; our second emotion is the wish of being able to render to him some mutual service; and he whose generous life is a continued diffusion of happiness, may thus delight himself with the thought that he has not diffused happiness only, but that in diffusing it he has been, at the same time, the diffuser of virtue,—at least, of wishes which were virtue for the time, and required nothing to convert them into beneficence, but the means of exercising them.

So ready is gratitude to arise in almost every mind, that ingratitude to a benefactor, in every age of the world, has been regarded almost with the same species of abhorrence as the violation of the dearest duties of consanguinity itself. He who could plunge a dagger into the heart of one who had conferred on him any signal service, would be viewed by us almost with the same fearful astonishment with which we gaze on the parricide who plunged his dagger into the heart that gave him life.

The tie which connects the benefactor with him on whom he has conferred a kindness, does not, however, give its whole duties to one party, though its principal duties belong to one. It is the duty of one, to love him from whom he has received important kindnesses, to study the interests of him by whom his own have been promoted, and, in every service which requires only zeal, and not a sacrifice of virtue, to be assiduous in repaying what can be repaid, not from an eager wish to shake off the obligation, which is truly in itself a species of ingratitude, but from the sincere desire of increasing the happiness of one who is sincerely loved, and who has given so much reason to love him.

These are the duties of the obliged. But though we are not much accustomed to think of the duties of benefactors, the obliger too has moral obligations to fulfil, and obligations which, while they are as truly incumbent as the duties of the obliged, are far more difficult to be fulfilled; the duty of making his benefits press as lightly as benefits to the same amount can press, by unfailing attentions to him whom he has obliged,—a condescension that makes itself felt, however, not as condescension which would recall the obligation more powerfully, but only as kindness which seems to rise without any thought of former benefits, from the overflowing goodness of a benevolent heart. It would be manifestly cruel to repeat to any one, on whom we had confered an important favour, "Remember the favour which I have conferred upon you;" but since it is not in the direct words only that such a meaning can

* De St. Lambert, Œuvres, tome i. p. 212.

be conveyed, it is cruel also, by excessive and ill-placed forms of ostentatious civility, to seem constantly to say to him, that we are thus very kind, and that we have never forgotten the generosity which we showed him, at the distance, perhaps, of many years.

When a benefactor forgets his duties, and makes a cruel use of the favours which he may have conferred, there is no tyrant whose cruelty is more oppressive, because it is the tyranny of one whom we cannot oppose like other tyrants. They may, indeed, shackle our arms; but the iron clasp of this moral oppressor is placed where it is most powerfully felt, upon the heart itself, that may feel the worthlessness, but that is deprived of all power of rising against it. There are beings of this kind who use the means of beneficence only for purposes the most malevolent, whose very gifts are snares, who oblige, that they may afterwards be malicious with impunity, exacting ever after, from their unfortunate victim, assiduities and services which it is unreasonable to pay, and rejoicing, if he fail in them, that they may have the still greater pleasure of proclaiming his ingratitude.

"Ingratitude, indeed," as Rousseau justly observes, "would be far rarer than it is, if the benefactor were less frequently a usurer. What has done us good, is dear to us, by the very sentiment of our nature. Ingratitude is not in the heart of man; but interest is there; and the obliged who are ungrateful, are far fewer in number than the obligers, who are interested, and who have sold what they have only feigned to give. When is it," he continues, "that we see any one who is forgotten by his benefactor, forget him? A benefactor who can thus forget, the obliged never fails to remember; he speaks of him with pleasure, as he thinks of him with tenderness. If an opportunity occur in which he can show, by any unexpected service, that he remembers the service which was before conferred upon himself, with what internal delight does he then satisfy his gratitude, with what expression of joy does he make himself recognised, with what transport does he say, My turn is come! Such is the genuine voice of nature. A kindness, that was truly a kindness, never yet found a bosom that was ungrateful."*

The expression, if it were meant to be understood strictly, would certainly be a little too strong; since there may be ingratitude, even to the most generous, as there may be any other atrocious offence. But it is only in the bosoms of the most atrocious that such ingratitude can arise: and of this, at least, we may be sure, that the best preservative against a failure of duty on the part of the obliged, is for the obliger himself to fulfil all the duties of a benefactor.

* Emile, liv. iv. Œuvres de Rousseau, tome vii. p. 50. Paris, 1819.

LECTURE XC.

OF THE DUTIES OF CONTRACT; OF THE DUTIES OF CITIZENSHIP.

GENTLEMEN, we have now considered the nature of the duties which arise from our peculiar connexion with certain individuals, as our relatives in consanguinity or wedlock, our friends, our benefactors. There remain still to be considered by us two species of duties, that arise from connexions of a more general kind; the duties of contract, which, of course, vary with the nature of our particul arengagements; and the duties of citizenship, or of patriotic regard, which extend to all the individuals that are comprehended with us under one system of government.

Though the practical rules of morality, which regard contracts, strictly as contracts, are all founded on the great principle, that each party in the contract is under a moral obligation to fulfil what he has undertaken to perform, in the manner in which he had reason to believe the engagement to be understood by the party with whom he contracted, it may be of advantage to consider, separately, the contracts which relate to objects of commercial barter, and those which relate to personal service. Some personal services, indeed, are truly objects of barter, as much as any of the articles of daily sale, of which we usually think when we speak of commerce; but still there are so many other circumstances of moral influence connected with the contracts of service, that they may very fairly, at least the most important of them, which connects the master and the servant, and admits a stranger into the general system of domestic relationships, be regarded, in ethics, as constituting a species apart.

The command which mere barter gives us, even when the objects of the barter are present objects exchanged for present objects, is no slight accession to the comfort of mankind. What is useless to ourselves is thus instantly invested with utility, by becoming the medium of acquiring for us what is directly useful. But such direct barter, of present objects for present objects, would be only a small part of the commerce from which our wants might receive aid, if no more than the possessions of the present moment were allowed to enter into the mutual transference. We may have present wants, which the superfluities of others might gratify, though we may be, at present,

without the possession of any thing which can purchase them as a fair equivalent; and we may have this inability of present purchase, with the certainty, that we shall, at some period more or less near, have that which, if possessed by us now, would be gladly purchased from us, by the cession of those articles of use or luxury, which our wants of the moment require. A contract is truly, in its moral operation, such a transfer of the future for the present, or of some future object which we value less, for a future object which we value more. Its effect is to free us, in a great measure, from the influence of time, as far as our mere commerce is concerned; to render every thing which our power, in any moment of our life, may command, present, as it were, at the very hour in which we make our purchase; enabling us thus to form, of all the property which we are ever to possess, and of all the energies which we are ever to be capable of exerting, one great fund, which we may employ with equal and ready command, for all the purposes that seem to us, at any one moment, most essential to our happiness.

If that power, by which we are thus enabled to bargain for the future, be so important an instrument of public convenience, the breach of the contracts, on the stability of which, that is to say, on the good faith of which, the power is founded, we may well suppose, will be regarded by the community as an injury to its essential interests; and the individual guilty of it, should feel, not merely the self-disapprobation which arises from the thought of having deceived, for purposes of selfish profit, any one member of the community, but that also which arises from the thought of having contributed to weaken the great support of public confidence, and to reduce the whole power of society to those few exertions which it is capable of making at any one instant, or the few immediate objects of barter which are at any one instant absolutely possessed.

Of that most useful power, which the general system of contracts gives us over time itself, he does all which an individual can do to deprive us; for he does that which, if all other individuals did in like manner, the power of bargaining for the future, which exists only by mutual confidence, would cease instantly in mutual distrust. From a command over every moment of our life, we should be reduced to a single moment of it, the moment in which we could give with one hand, while we received with the other.

Man, therefore, is morally bound to perform the engagements which he has undertaken to fulfil, whether there be or be not, in the individual with whom the contract was made, any power of enforcing the fulfilment. In this obligation, where it has been voluntarily made, there are truly no limits but the physical power of the individual, and the independent morality of that which is undertaken to be performed. Where we have undertaken to perform what no exertions on our part, however active and unremitting, could accomplish, we cannot feel remorse at not having done what we were unable to do; whatever moral disapprobation we may feel of our engagement itself, as undertaken rashly, and as tending to excite expectations in others, which, as they were beyond our power of gratifying them, we had no title to excite. In like manner, when the action which we have undertaken to perform is one which, as affecting the happiness or means of happiness of others whose happiness we have no title to disturb, it would be immoral in us to perform, if we had not entered into the engagement, the performance of it would be immoral still, though we may have entered into the most solemn engagement; for there is no form of words, no promise, no oath, which can render just, what was injustice to others before. In such a case it cannot excite our remorse, that we have not done what it would be remorse to have done: our moral disapprobation of ourselves may arise indeed, and should arise; but it arises at the remembrance of the engagement itself, not at the thought of the failure in the engagement. We have now to regret one delinquency. But if we had performed what we had engaged to do, we should then, instead of one species of moral regret, have been subject to two feelings of that sort. We should have had to repent, as now, of the guilt of engaging to do what was morally wrong, and to repent also of the continued guilt of wilfully persisting in an action which we feel to be iniquitous.

When that which we have engaged to do is truly within our power, when it is undertaken voluntarily, and when the performance involves no violation of moral duty, it would be a violation of moral duty not to perform it; or, though perhaps with more verbal exactness, to perform it less fully than we know to have been understood and intended, in the spirit of the mutual convention. The contract may, indeed, if we consider the mere words of it, often imply more or less than was understood by the parties at the time; and though, in some cases, it may be legally expedient, for the advantage of the general rule, as applicable to cases in which the discovery of the intended meaning would not be easy, and in which, notwithstanding, it is necessary that some exact meaning should be presumed,—that that meaning should be presumed to be what the strict grammatical or technical construction of the language bears,—it is legally only, not morally, that this forced interpretation in the particular case is put on words which, in that particular case, were intended to convey a different

sense; and he who, with perfect certainty of the intended meaning, shelters himself under the mere forms of legal construction, and does only what the law, in its necessary limitation to general rules and general forms of expression, obliges him to do, is, in every important respect, as truly a violator of the duty of contract, as if the construction of the law had exactly corresponded with that real meaning of the parties at the time of their mutual engagement, which, after entering into the engagement, he has refused to fulfil.

The contract of personal service, even of that domestic service which is the most complete of all voluntary servitudes, is, I have said, as a mere contract, precisely of the same nature as our other contracts. The servant who engages to obey the will of the master, that is to say, of one who, on his part, engages to furnish the servant with maintenance, and a pecuniary remuneration corresponding with the nature of the services performed, makes a barter of advantage for advantage. He gives up his liberty, for the time bargained, to receive, in return, what he values still more than liberty.

That the master and the servant are mutually bound to discharge to each other the peculiar offices which they have engaged to discharge, is a moral truth which flows from the very nature of a contract, and which needs no peculiar elucidation. But as, in the fulfilment of this particular contract, individuals are brought together who may be mutually benefited, in various ways, which the contract itself cannot strictly be understood as comprehending, and benefited, without injury to him who confers the benefit, nature has not allowed this power of doing good to be wasted in unproductive idleness.

By various beautiful processes which take place in the mechanism of the moral universe,—by the influence of the associating principle, and by all those emotions of regard which the presence of familiar objects, merely as familiar objects, excites,—still more by that moral esteem, which it is impossible not to feel for the virtues that are frequently before us, whatever the rank may be which those virtues adorn, she has provided a source of peculiar duties, which make man, who lives with man, in the intercourse of mutual services, an object of a deeper interest than that which begins and ends with the few services which were reciprocally bartered.

That it is the duty of the servant, independently of the cold fulfilment of the mere drudgery which he executes for us—as he would have executed it for any other who paid the same price for each motion of his arm—to feel, too, some interest in our prosperity and general happiness; in our sickness, for example, not merely to watch around our bed, and to wish for his own sake that we were again enjoying health and easy slumbers as before, but to form that wish with sincere regret for the parched lip, and burning eye, and the feverish lassitude, that robs us of rest, even in rendering us incapable of action; that he should rejoice at our recovery, before he thinks that our recovery will restore him to the less fatiguing duties that are comparatively freedom; all this, though it formed no part of our original contract with him, we are sufficiently ready to claim, or at least to expect, because the duties of affection which we claim are duties which are to be profitable to ourselves. We are not quite so ready to admit, however, that our own duties to him are more than those for which we directly contracted, and that, without violating the obligation which the law would discover in the very words or implied conditions of our bargain, we may yet violate the moral obligation which truly subsists in it, according to that only just interpretation which our own hearts, if we consulted them, would afford.

There are duties, then, which we owe to the lowest of those who serve us, that are not fulfilled by the most bountiful allotment of wages, and lodging, and sustenance. Of these duties, which are not duties of supererogation, but flow from the very nature of the bond which connects the master and the servant by reciprocal benefits, the surest rule is to be found in that brief direction, which Seneca, in the spirit of the noble Christian precept of morals, has so happily given us in one of his Epistles, in which he treats of the cruelty and the contumely of Roman masters. "So live with your inferior, as you would wish your superior to live with you. Sic cum inferiore vivas, quemadmodum tecum superiorem velles vivere."—"In a servant," says Marivaux, "I see a man; in his master I see nothing more. Every one has his office to perform; one serves at the table, one serves at the bar, one in the council, another in the field; and he whom we call a servant, is perhaps the least a servant of the whole band of menials."

Those who serve us, it is impossible even for the haughtiest pride to deny, are indeed men like ourselves, differing from us, originally at least, only in the circumstances of their external condition, and differing, even in these, only for a period, that, in relation to the immortality of which it is a part, is scarcely more lasting than that short voluntary transformation of character, in which, for the amusement of a few hours, the richest and mightiest sometimes condescend to assume a servile garb, and act the part which their servants on the stage of life are acting in a drama a very little longer. They are masquers, whose masquerade does not finish in an evening; but will finish when a few evenings are over, and when all will re-

turn to their original state of man. But without insisting on this similarity of state, the human equality which is soon to level the distinctions that at present are regarded by us with so much pride, it will be enough to insist on the similarity of the principles on which their feelings and ours depend. They are capable, like us, of many pleasures, and of more than pleasure in receiving approbation; they have passions that mislead them as we have, and from us those passions may derive mitigation, or additional violence. On these considerations our duties to them are founded.

They are capable of enjoyment like ourselves; and there are many enjoyments of which we may legally deprive them, by the constraints to which they have submitted themselves, according to the common usage of such personal contracts; but which are not incompatible with the fulfilment of all their duties to us; and which it would therefore, morally, be as wrong to prevent, as it would be to prevent a similar amount of enjoyment, when the power of preventing it was not legally ours. He who, to the utmost of his power, converts the freedom of domestic service into slavery, who allows no liberty, no recreation, no pleasure which he can interdict, has all the guilt of a tyrannical master of a slave; or rather, has a guilt that exceeds the guilt of such oppression, because it is an oppression that is exercised in a land of freemen. Every indulgence, therefore, which does not interfere with the domestic duties, and which does not tend to vitiate the character, is a duty which the master owes.

As beings capable of pleasure, then, servants are to us the objects of this duty of reasonable indulgence. There is a certain moral pleasure, however, which we particularly owe to them.

They may do well; and in doing well, they have the same title to our praise which our best actions have to the glory with which we expect the world to be ready to reward us. If we withhold the approbation which is due, we take from them one powerful incentive to continuance of that species of conduct which rendered them worthy of approbation; and, at the same time, we take from them one of the most delightful feelings of which he who has sold his freedom is still capable—the feeling, that he has done something, which was not actually sold with the very labour of his hands—that in the additional duties performed by him, he has been free still—and that our praise is something, which, as it was not an actual condition, like the livery and the daily bread, is an offering to his own gratuitous virtue.

The duty of approbation, then, when approbation is due, is another of the duties which the master owes to the servant, and a duty which, though he may legally withhold it, he is not entitled morally to withhold.

But servants, as I have said, share not our love of praise only, but passions of a less commendable kind. They are assailed by temptations like those which assail us; and they sometimes fall as we too fall. They neglect to do what we have desired; and they often do what is positively injurious to us. In such cases, they might deserve all our severity of punishment, if we were not men, and they were not men. Our reproof they unquestionably deserve, not merely because they have failed in their part of our mutual contract, but also because our reproof may, even to them, be attended with moral advantage. Yet though our reproof of any gross inattention is not excusable only, but, if we consider all its consequences, an act of humanity, it is not to be the reproof of one who seems almost pleased with the offence itself in the eagerness which is shown to reprehend it. In censuring, we are silently to have in mind the human weaknesses of our own moral nature; and to remember, that if even we, with better light and nobler recreations, err, the ignorant who, by their very ignorance, are incapable of seeing many of the consequences of actions, and who have few recreations but those which seduce them from what is good, may still more naturally be imagined to err. In condemning them, therefore, we condemn ourselves; or we declare that we are frail creatures, of whom less knowledge and less virtue are to be expected than of them. There are beings with gentle voices, and still gentler eyes, and with smiles that seem never to be willed, and scarcely even to fade and brighten again, but to be almost the native character of the countenance, like the very lustre that is ever blooming on the cheek and on the lip. There are beings who seem to exist thus only in a perpetual moral atmosphere of radiance and serenity, that on the sight of a single particle of dust on a book, or a table, or a chair, as if in that particle a whole mountain of misery were before them, can assume in an instant all the frowns and thunders of all the furies, whose delicate frame is too weak to bear the violent opening of a door, but not too weak, after the door is opened, to shake the very floor with the violence of their own wrath on the unfortunate opener of it.

Indulgence to the lighter imperfections of servants is then an important part of our moral obligation in that temporary domestic relationship which we have contracted. But, though it is a duty which we owe to them, it is as least as much a source of tranquillity to ourselves. A life of constant upbraiding is very far from being a life of happiness. When we make them miserable, they have

had already too good a revenge in the very fretfulness of the anger that is wreaked on them.

If the mere human tendency to evil that exists in the bosom of the servant, as it exists in his master's bosom, be a sufficient cause for the duty of indulgence, when indulgence would not be attended with hurtful consequences, as much to him whose offences are suffered to pass unrebuked, as to him who is directly injured; this tendency to evil is a source also of another duty, which is, in truth, the most important of all the duties that attend this domestic relation; the duty of not corrupting the virtue of him whose services only we have purchased; and whose moral part, which was not, and could not be sold to us, we are not to enfeeble, if we do not strengthen it. He who, after living under the same roof with us for years, quits our door without the amiable qualities with which he first entered it,—every pure wish polluted, and new habits of licentiousness formed, while all that remains of early habits is a little remorse that is soon overwhelmed in the turbulence of vulgar dissipation, though he may be far better skilled than before in all the fashionable frivolities of his craft, and though he may have acquired, in our service, by plunder, not by economy, what would enable him to rise to a better station, if it were not soon to be exhausted by the vices which he gathered at the same time, quits us poorer upon the whole, and, as a mere human being, far lower in the scale of dignity than when, with all his clownish awkwardness, he had virtues which it has been our misfortune, or rather our guilt, to destroy.

The only remaining set of duties to particular individuals or classes of individuals which we have to consider, are those which connect us with our fellow-citizens.

That we should love the land of our birth, of our happiness, of that social system under which our happiness has been produced and protected, the land of our ancestors, of all the great names and great deeds which we have been taught most early to venerate, is surely as little wonderful as that we should feel, what we all truly feel, a sort of affection for the most trifling object which we have merely borne about with us for any length of time. Loving the very land of our birth, we love those who inhabit it, who are to us a part as it were of the land itself, and the part which brings it most immediately home to our affection and services. It is a greater recommendation to our good will, indeed, to be a relative, or a friend, or a benefactor; but it is no slight recommendation, even without any of these powerful titles, to be a fellow-countryman, to have breathed the same air, and trod the same soil, and lent vigour to the same political institutions, to which our own aid has actively or passively contributed. While all are fellow-citizens around us, indeed, we scarcely feel the force of the tie which binds us to each, because we are bound equally to all. But, let our relative situation be changed: place us on some shore at a distance, in a society as civilized as that which we have left with a brighter sky and warmer air, and all the occupations which business can give, or all the amusements with which elegant frivolity can render days and evenings short to us;—in the very hurry of pleasure, that scarcely allows us time to think of home, let but a single accent be heard of the native dialect familiar to our ear; and, if we have been long absent from our country, what benefactor or friend is there, or almost I may say, what relative, however near to us in consanguinity and affection, who is for the moment or the hour so interesting to our heart as the stranger of whom we know nothing, but that he comes from the land which we love above every other land, and is to us almost the representative of that land itself?

Affection, though not the direct and exclusive source, is at least, by the bountiful provision of Heaven, the great accompaniment of duty; and where affection so strong is universally felt, there must be duties of no slight obligation.

Our countrymen may be considered by us individually, or as constituting one great community, in which the obligations due by us to all the separate individuals are concentred, so as to form together an amount of obligation which those who would think but little of their duties to a single member of the community, cannot, with all their indifference, wholly disregard.

As individuals, their claim to our services is the same in kind, however weaker in degree, as that which a common descent gives to those who are connected with us by remote affinities of blood. We are not merely to abstain from injuring, and to wish and endeavour to promote their happiness when means of promoting it are in our power; for these duties we owe to all mankind; but when there is a competition of interests, and no obligations of more important duty are concerned, which should influence our choice, we are to prefer them to others who compete with them, our country being to us as it were a parent, and they, with us, its common offspring.

Beside this general interest in the happiness of all who live with us under the same government,—an interest in which you perceive the same beautiful relation of our affections to our means of readiest and most frequent usefulness, which we have traced in all the other species of peculiar regard,—there are patriotic duties which we owe to

some of our countrymen only; though, in truth, when we trace even these duties to their source, we find them too to have their origin in that equal regard for the happiness of all, which we owe to all our fellow-citizens. The duties to which I allude are the offices of external respect which we pay to those who are invested with high stations; offices of respect which the multitude pay, without any very nice analysis of the obligation, and which it is of the highest importance to public order, and to public happiness, that they should be ready thus to yield to the external symbols of authority; and which a wise and good man pays with the same readiness as the multitude, because he knows at once how important they are to national tranquillity, and how very little it is which, in the external forms of respect, is paid to the real happiness of the individual.

Such are the civic duties which we owe to individuals. The duties which we owe to our fellow-citizens, as constituting one great community, may be considered as reducible to three: first, the duty of obedience to the system of laws under which we live, the benefit of which all enjoy, and according to which all regulate their plans and expectations; secondly, the duty of defending that social system of which we are a part, from violent aggressions, foreign or internal; and, thirdly, the duty of endeavouring, as far as we possess any power that can be beneficially exerted, to increase the means of public prosperity; and above all, where political evils exist, to ameliorate a system of polity, which, though it produce much happiness, may still, by reformations, as far as these are practicable, be capable of producing more.

Our first patriotic duty of this general kind, is the duty of obedience.

Why is it that we term obedience a duty; what circumstances are there in the nature of a system of government, by which, under certain limitations, it has a claim to our submission, merely because it already exists and has long existed?

The answer to this question was, for a long time, even in our own land, a very simple one, —that power established was established by God, and that disobedience to the individual whom he had established to exercise this power, would be a rebellion against right divine.

> Who first taught souls enslav'd, and realms undone,
> The enormous faith of many made for one;
> That proud exception to all Nature's laws,
> To invert the world, and counterwork its cause!
> Force first made conquest, and that conquest law,
> Till Superstition taught the tyrant awe,
> Then shared the tyranny, then lent it aid,
> And Gods of conquerors, slaves of subjects made.*

The argument for the right divine of established power, which is in logic little better than any other argument for the right divine of any thing that exists, whether good or evil, merely as existing,—for the prevalent system of manners, virtuous or vicious, or even, as has been truly said, for the right divine of a wide-spread fever or any other pestilence,—is as wretched in its moral consequences, as it is ridiculous in logic; and it is painful to peruse the writings on the subject which at one period, and that not a very distant one, were so prevalent, and in some cases were the works of authors whom we are accustomed to venerate, not merely as philosophers, but as men who have given undoubted proofs of the most benevolent interest in the human race. Berkeley, the author of the Theory of Vision,—Berkeley, the generous possessor of "every virtue under heaven," is the same Berkeley who endeavours to demonstrate to us, that it is as much our duty to submit to the most ferocious tyrant as to submit to the supreme benevolence of God; or rather, that to obey such a tyrant, is to obey Supreme Benevolence.

That God, the equal God of all mankind, has not formed us to be the slaves of any one individual, and in furnishing our minds with so many principles that insure our progress in less important sciences, has not abandoned us, in the most important of all, to the selfishness of a power which may prefer the present misery of its own despotic sway to all that can be offered for its reformation, because the reformation would abridge an authority which it is more convenient for the possessor of it to exercise with no limit but that of will, I surely need not now attempt to prove to you. On the right divine of authority, whatever vague allusions to it we may sometimes find in courtly flatterers of the day, we have no writers now who require to be confuted.

There is, indeed, one species of right divine which established authority does possess,—its tendency to the peace of those who submit to it, and, consequently, in that respect to their happiness, which, as the object of our Creator, has the sanction of divine will. But it possesses this right divine, only as tending to public happiness; it is secondary only, not primary: and when the public happiness, instead of being, upon the whole, promoted by obedience, would, upon the whole, when every consequence, indirect as well as direct, is taken into account, be promoted, by shaking off that power which is inconsistent with its great object, remonstrance, even rebellion itself,—if that name can justly be given in such circumstances of dreadful necessity to the expression of the public will,—has as truly its right divine, as established authority, even in its best state, could be said to have it, when,

* Pope's Essay on Man, Ep. iii. 241—248.

as exercised with happier tendencies, it was productive of that good in which alone the divinity of its right is to be found.

We have no need, then, of all those fictions to which political writers, in periods in which the true source of political obligation was less distinctly perceived, were obliged to have recourse, in asserting the rights of the governed, as paramount to the claims of mere possession in the tyrannical governor. We have no need to speak of original compacts of those who obey with those who command, understood as prior to the existing forms of social institutions, and the violation of which by one party might be considered as a warrant to the other party for resuming the original rights of which they had consented, through their ancestors, to divest themselves. Such compacts never existed, and could not, independently of the good that might flow from them, be of obligation on the new individuals who form the present race of mankind, though they had truly taken place at some remote period. The only reason for which we could conceive it necessary for men at present to pay the obedience which another number of men, at any other period, paid to a certain number of their fellow-creatures who lived in their time, is, that a failure in this obedience, of the propriety of which the existing generation are equally capable of judging, or better capable, if political knowledge have made the slightest progress, would seem to be injurious to the society in which they live; and if this reason be valid, it is valid without the necessity of the compact supposed. It is our duty to obey, because mankind, at least that large part of mankind which we term our country, would suffer, upon the whole, if we were not to obey. This is the powerful hold which even imperfect governments possess on the obedience of the wise and good; and the stronger holds which they may seem to have, by corruption, or by mere usage of unreflecting veneration, on the profligate and the ignorant, is truly not half so strong. The profligate supporter of a system, for which he cares only as it ministers to his vices, may see perhaps some more tempting promise of wealth and power in a rebellion against that very authority, the slightest attempt to ameliorate which he has been accustomed to represent as a species of treason. The ignorant, who fall on their knees to-day, merely because something is passing which is very magnificent, and before which other knees are bent or bending, may, to-morrow, when other arms are lifted in tumultuous rebellion, join their arms to the tumult and the dreadful fury of the day. It is only in the bosom of the wise and good, as I have said, that any security of obedience is to be found. He who is worthy of those honourable names, who is wise to consult for the public weal, which his goodness wishes, has no object but the happiness of the community; and though he may see imperfections in government which tend to lessen this happiness, he yet knows how much is to be hoped from the calm influence of diffusive knowledge, and how very little is to be hoped from the exercise of force, which would be opposed not by mere force of arms, but by the force of as many bad passions as could be summoned to resist it; and which would too often, also, be obliged to call to its own aid passions, as little worthy of the sacred cause in which they might be engaged, as the very passions that were opposed to him. He weighs good with good, evil with evil; and the oppression must indeed be severe and the prospect of relief from it by other means be truly gloomy, before he will lift his voice to call his fellow-citizens to arm against their fellow-citizens. "The speculative line of demarcation, where obedience ought to end, and resistance must begin, is," as Mr. Burke truly says, "faint, obscure, and not easily definable. It is not a single act, or a single event, which determines it. Governments must be abused and deranged, indeed, before it can be thought of; and the prospect of the future must be as bad as the experience of the past. When things are in that lamentable condition, the nature of the disease is to indicate the remedy to those whom nature has qualified to administer, in extremities, this critical, ambiguous, bitter potion to a distempered state. Times, and occasions, and provocations, will teach their own lessons. The wise will determine from the gravity of the case; the irritable, from sensibility to oppression; the high-minded, from disdain and indignation at abusive power in unworthy hands; the brave and bold, from the love of honourable danger in a generous cause;—but, with or without right, a revolution will be the very last resource of the thinking and the good."*

A revolution, indeed, even in such circumstances, as this eloquent writer well says, should be, and will be, the last resource of the thinking and good. But, though it will be the last resource, it still is a resource; a resource in those miserable circumstances, in which times, and occasions, and provocations, teach their terrible lesson. When the rare imperious cases do occur, in which the patriotism that before made obedience a duty, allows it no more, to him who feels that he has now another duty to perform,—when he sees, with sorrow, that a cause which is good in itself, will demand the use of means from which, with any other motives, he would

* Burke's Works, vol. v. p. 73. Lond. 1803, 8vo.

have shrunk with abhorrence, he will lift his voice, sadly indeed, but still loudly,—he will lift his arm with reluctance, but, when it is lifted, he will wield it with all the force which the thought of the happiness of the world, as perhaps dependent on it, can give to its original vigour; he has made that calculation in which his own happiness and his own life have scarcely been counted as elements. If he survive and prevail, therefore, though in anticipating the prosperity which he has in part produced, he may sometimes look back on the past with melancholy, he cannot look back on it with regret; and if he fall, he will think only of the aid which his life might have given to that general happiness which he sought,—not of his life itself, as an object of regard, or even as a thing which it would have been possible for him to preserve.

LECTURE XCI.

OF THE DUTIES OF CITIZENSHIP—OBEDIENCE TO THE LAWS—DEFENDING OUR COUNTRY—AUGMENTING THE GENERAL HAPPINESS.

In the close of my last Lecture, Gentlemen, I had begun the consideration of those duties which we owe to the community of our fellow-citizens, the duties understood as comprehended under the single term patriotism.

These duties of man, as a citizen, are considered as referable to three heads; first, the duty of obedience to the particular system of laws under which he may live; 2dly, the duty of defending the social system under which he lives, from every species of violent aggression; and, 3dly, the duty of increasing, to the best of his power, the means of public happiness in the nation, by every aid which he can give to its external or internal resources, and especially, as the most important of all ends, by every amelioration which it can be nationally prudent to attempt, of any existing evils, in its laws and general forms of polity.

In examining the first of these duties, we were, of course, led to inquire into the nature of that principle, from which existing institutions derive a moral authority. Of the divine right, to which it was long the easy and courtly practice of almost all the writers on this subject, to refer what, as divinely constituted, was therefore, they contended, to be deemed sacred from all human interference of the governed, as truly sacred as religion itself, I did not think it necessary to occupy your time with any long and serious confutation. "The right divine of kings to govern wrong" cannot be a right derived from the Divinity. He who attached the delightful feeling of moral approbation to every wish of diffusing happiness, cannot give the sanction of his own pure authority to crimes which, as established, have nothing to distinguish them from other crimes that have not been established, except that their atrocious oppression has been more lastingly and extensively injurious. When a whole nation is bowed down in misery and intellectual and moral darkness, which, by the length of its uniform and dreary continuance, marks only what principles it contains of a servitude that may be perpetuated for ages as uniformly wretched, if a single effort, the elevation of a single standard, the utterance of a single word, were all which was necessary to give to millions that exist, and millions of millions that are afterwards to exist, not the happiness of freedom only, but with freedom all that light of thought and purity of generous devotion, which liberty never fails to carry along with it; would it indeed be virtue to keep down that standard, to refrain from uttering that word so productive, and rather to say calmly to the world, be miserable still? The God who is the God of happiness and truth and virtue, could not surely in such circumstances have made it guilt in the patriot to wish the single effort made; or guilt in him, if he wish it made, to give his own heart, and arm, or voice, to that effort which he wished.

It is vain for us, when our object is to discover, not what man has done, but what man ought to do, to think of the origin of power, as if this were sufficient to determine the duty of our present acquiescence. Where all were not equal in every physical energy, one individual must soon have begun to exercise authority over other individuals. If we consider a number of children at play, where all may at first have the appearance of the most complete equality, we shall soon be able to discover how the stronger, in any period of life, or in any circumstances of society, might, in some cases, assume dominion which, in some other cases, might be given to superior skill. But, in whatever way power may have begun among mankind, it has usually, at least for many ages in countries that suffer under despotism, been perpetuated by the submission on the part of the slave to the mere might of its hereditary or casual possessors: the history of power is, therefore, the history of that to which men have, generally or individually, considered it expedient to submit; but it is not on that account necessarily the history of that to which it was the duty of man to submit. It leaves to the race of man, in every age, and in all the varying circumstances of their external and internal condition, to consider the duties of mankind in the same manner as they would have considered them in any former age; and the duty of man as a citizen, is not to prefer the hap-

piness or supposed happiness of one to the happiness or supposed happiness of many, but the happiness of many to the happiness of one, when these are opposed and incompatible. The happiness of many may, indeed, be best consulted, and truly is best consulted, by distinctions and honours, which may seem to the inconsiderate as if existing only for the happiness of one or of a few. But still it is of the wider happiness produced by them which the patriot is to think, when he establishes these very distinctions, or wishes them to be prolonged.

It is vain, then, to have recourse to any fictions to prove the duty either of obeying the sovereign power of the state in ordinary circumstances, or, in rare and unfortunate circumstances, of occasional resistance to it; since these duties must always be reducible to the paramount obligation on the citizen, to consult the good, not of a few of his fellow-citizens, but of all, or the greater number; an obligation, without which the fiction would be worse than absurd, and with which it is unnecessary.

The theory of a social contract of the governed and their governors, for example, in which certain rights were supposed to be abandoned for certain purposes of general advantage, we found to be, even when considered as a mere fiction, (and it is only as a mere poetic fiction, that it can be considered,) but an awkward circuitous mode of arriving at a truth, without the previous belief of which, the very contract supposed would be absolutely nugatory. It assumes, in this contract, original rights of the community, which, but for the contract, it would have been unjust in the governors to arrogate to themselves; and if these be assumed as inherent in the very nature of man, independently of all social institutions, we must still, as men, have the rights which mankind, simply as mankind, originally possessed. The feigned contract adds nothing, it presupposes every thing. The power which we obey, is a power which exists by our will, as much as the power which our earliest ancestors obeyed, existed only by the will of the subjects, who at once formed it, and gave it their obedience.

The fictionof a social contract, then, as I have before said, is only a circuitous mode of asserting the original rights, which that very contract takes for granted in the contractors. Equally false is the supposed analogy, by which political writers would argue, from mere prescription in cases of property, for a similar prescriptive right to sovereign power, as implied in the long-continued possession of it. There still remains the inquiry why prescription itself is legally recognised. It is for the good of the state, and only for the general good, to prevent the evil of insecure possession, and frequent litigation, that such a bar to judicial scrutiny is allowed; and if it were for the good of all the citizens, that prescription should not operate, even in cases of property, there can be little doubt that it would not have been legally established. The legal authority of prescription then, when we trace it to its source, is not a proof of the moral right of the exerciser of hereditary tyranny, to continued violation of public happiness, and therefore, to unlimited submission, from the nation of slaves, the offspring of a nation of slaves. It is, on the contrary, a proof of the paramount obligation of that general good, which in the right of prescription, as in every other legal right, has been professedly the great object of legislation, and which, in some circumstances, may render resistance a duty, as, in the ordinary circumstances of society, it renders obedience a duty, and resistance a crime.

That the power of the sovereign exists by our will, however, is not enough of itself to confer on us the right of disobeying it; and this, for a very plain reason, that, even when the government obeyed is not, like that of our own noble constitution, one which is a source of greater happiness to him who obeys than to him who governs, the disobedience may be productive of misery, which even the slave of a bad government has no right to produce. Our duties are not all dependent on our mere power or our mere will. If I learn that my benefactor is in indigence, it depends on my will whether I afford any relief to his wants; but it does not therefore follow that I have a moral right to refuse relief. In like manner, I have no moral right to produce that wild disorder, which mere disobedience to law, if general, would occasion; still less to produce the bloodshed and the desolation, and the bad passions, worse than mere bloodshed and desolation, which would be the inevitable consequence of long-protracted civil dissensions. This general tendency of obedience to power and happiness is, as I remarked in my last Lecture, the true right divine of authority; a right which is divine, because the virtue which loves the peace and happiness of all, is itself of divine obligation.

Since the duty of political obedience, however, important as it is in the list of moral duties, is still a duty which derives its force from our general regard for the happiness of the community, this happiness of the community, which, in ordinary circumstances, gives obligation to the claim of mere power to our obedience, in other circumstances limits the obligation, and produces a moral duty that is altogether opposite. On the duties of the citizen, in circumstances so different from those in which our inestimable constitution has placed us, we may still ethically speculate, as in our systems of meteo-

rology we treat, under our own temperate sky, of the sultry heats and hurricanes of a tropical climate.

The cases, however, in which it is morally right to resist, by other means than those which the established constitution itself affords, the tyranny of a government, are, in any situation of society, but of rare occurrence; since it is not tyranny alone which justifies rebellion, but tyranny in circumstances in which rebellion against its cruel and degrading power affords a prospect of success, not merely in the removal of a single tyrant, but in the establishment of a happier system. In every insurrection against the most cruel despot, a certain quantity of evil must be produced; and the evil is sure, while the good that is hoped is doubtful. If the insurrection fail, the evil is produced, and produced without any compensation, or rather, perhaps, serves only to render oppression more severe, and the hearts of the oppressed more fearful. The tyrant, after he has crushed all the little virtue that existed within the sphere of his dark dominion, may do, in the insolence of his triumph, what before he would have feared to do: he may destroy at once what, by a little longer continuance, could scarcely have failed to diffuse a wider virtue, which his efforts would have been powerless to crush. The increased severity of the oppression, then, is one evil of such unsuccessful attempts; and it is not less an evil, that they render for ever after, as I have said, the oppressed more fearful. The image of past defeat rises with an enfeebling influence on those who otherwise would have lifted a far stronger arm; while the remembrance of the treacheries which probably attended that defeat, and sometimes of the treacheries of those whose enthusiasm in the cause seemed most generous and daring, diminishes the confidence which man might otherwise be inclined to place in man. The resistance which might speedily have been successful, but for a rash attempt in unfortunate circumstances, may thus prove unsuccessful, merely because others had essayed and failed. Without the high probability, therefore, of a great preponderance of good, it cannot be morally right, in any circumstances, even of the most afflicting tyranny, to encourage a disobedience which the good that is to flow from it alone can justify. In the despotisms of the East, and in all the savage despotisms in which men, accustomed to look on power only as something that is to be endured, obey as brutally as they are brutally governed, what virtue could there be in rousing a few wretches to attempt what could not but fail in their hands, even if their number were comparatively greater, and in thus producing a few more murders, and a little more terror than would have existed, but for the foolish effort?

> True fortitude is seen in great exploits,
> Which justice warrants, and which wisdom guides;
> All else is towering phrenzy and distraction.*

In ages of extreme luxurious profligacy, it would be, in like manner, vain to call to those who have no virtues, to arm themselves, from a virtuous hatred of oppression, against a tyrant whom other tyrants would speedily replace. Truth in the one case, in the other case virtue, must be previously diffused; and if truth and virtue be diffused, their own silent operation may gradually succeed in producing that very amendment, which mere force, with all the additional evils which its violence produces, would have failed to effect. They form, indeed, the only useful, because the only permanent force, operating on the mind, in which all real strength is, and operating on it for ever.

The great evil is, that for the diffusion of truth and virtue, a certain portion of freedom is necessary, which may not everywhere be found; but, where there is not the truth or virtue, nor so much freedom as would allow the diffusion of them, what lover of the temperate liberty of mankind could hope, by mere violence, to produce it! A single tyrant, indeed, may be hurled from his throne; for this the very ministers of his power, by whom he has been what he was, themselves may do, while they bow the knee the very moment after to some new tyrant of their own number; but it is tyranny which the patriot hates, and if that still subsist, the murder of a thousand tyrants would make tyranny an object only of more sickly loathing.

It is enough, then, to find in the source of political authority, a justification of disobedience to it, in the extreme cases, in which alone it is morally allowable, or rather morally incumbent on the oppressed to disobey. It is in extreme cases only, that this sanction can be required; and, in all the ordinary circumstances of society, to yield to the authority which all have concurred in obeying, when every constitutional method of obviating or mitigating the evil has been exerted, is at once the most virtuous, as it is the simplest mode of conduct that can be pursued..

The next patriotic duty which I mentioned, was the duty of defending the state against every aggressor.

This duty of defending the land which we love, may indeed be considered as implied in the very love which we bear to it. It is not necessary that we should think of what we have personally to lose before we con-

* Tragedy of Cato.

sider the invader of our country as our enemy. It is not necessary even that we should image to ourselves the desolation which he is to spread, the miseries of blood and rapine by which his conquest would be perpetrated, and the deeper miseries of oppression which would follow it. It is enough for us to think of him as the invader of our land; and in thus thinking of him, we have already felt the duty of opposition. We may indeed afterwards trace in our imagination the sad series of consequences to those whom we directly love, and to those whom we love with a sort of indirect and borrowed affection, when we know nothing more of them than that they are our countrymen. We may think more abstractly of the excellences of our frame of laws which would be broken down. and feel an indignation at the outrage, as if this very frame of beautiful mechanism which we admire were itself a living thing. But though our indignation may thus be more fully developed, as we develope new causes of indignation, the strong emotion itself existed before. If the foot of an enemy, with an enemy's purpose, be pressing our soil, we feel in the very moment in which we learn it, if our hearts be not thoroughly corrupt, that he who has presumed thus to advance, must either retreat or perish.

In states in which the citizens themselves are trained to habits of military defence, the emotion of course is stronger, because the importance of individual exertions is there most powerfully felt. But the feeling is one which exists in some degree in every people. Even under the most wretched system of government, which has united men as a nation, only to make the congregated multitude of slaves an easier instrument of tyrannic power than if they existed as individuals apart, there is still some patriotic reluctance felt to allow the ingress of a foreign tyrant, though only a tyrant of the same species with him who is obeyed with ready submission, merely because he is a part of the country itself; and he who in such a case has calmly suffered the march of the invader, which he might have assisted in repelling, will, in seeing him take possession of a land which he can scarcely make more desolate than its own sovereign had allowed it to continue, feel some little portion of that self-disapprobation which the inhabitant of a land of freedom would have felt, if, in similar circumstances of aggression, he had given the aggressor as little reason to know, that the land which he was invading was not a land of slaves, but the birth-place of men, and the dwelling-place of men.

The citizen, then, is to obey the laws and to defend them. These two duties relate to the political system that exists. He has still one other great duty, which relates not to things as they are, but to things as they may be. He is not to preserve the present system only; he is to endeavour, if it require or admit of amelioration of any sort, to render it still more extensively beneficial to those who live under it, and still more worthy of the admiration of the world than with all its excellence it yet may be.

He is justly counted a benefactor to his nation, who has been able to open to its industry new fields of supply, and to open to the products of its industry new distant markets of commercial demand. He too is a benefactor to the community who plans and obtains the execution of the various public works that facilitate the intercourse of district with district, or give more safety to navigation, or embellish a land with its best ornaments, the institutions of charity or instruction. In accomplishing, or contributing our aid to accomplish these valuable ends, we perform a part of the duty which we are considering, the duty of augmenting to the best of our ability the sum of national happiness. But important as such exercises of public spirit are, they are not so important as the efforts of him who succeeds in remedying some error in the system of government, some error, perhaps, which has been, in its more remote influence, the retarding cause, on account of which those very public plans, which otherwise might have been carried into effect many ages before, were not even conceived as possible, till they were brought forward by that provident wisdom and active zeal which have obtained, and justly obtained, our gratitude.

The reform of a single political grievance may, in its ultimate effects, be the producer of all which we admire in the thousand acts of individual patriotism,—the opener of fields of industry,—the diffuser of commerce,—the embellisher of a land,—the enlightener and blesser of those who inhabit it.

It is not possible, indeed, to estimate how valuable an offering he makes to society, who gives it a single good law. There are but a few words, perhaps, that compose it, but, in those few words may be involved an amount of good, increasing progressively with each new generation; which, if it could have been made known, in all its amplitude, to the legislator at the time when he contrived his project, would have dazzled and overwhelmed his very power of thought. What is true of a new law that relates to some positive institution is, as may be supposed, equally true of those laws which merely repeal and remedy the past; since a single error in policy may, in its long continuance, produce as much evil as a single wise enactment may, in its long continuance, produce of good.

He, then, is not a true lover of the society to which he belongs, nor faithful to those duties which relate to it, who contents

himself with admiring the laws which he might amend; and who, far from wishing to amend them, regards perhaps, or professes to regard, every project of reformation, not as a proposal which is to be cautiously weighed, but as a sort of insult to the dignity of the whole system, which is to be rejected with wrath, and treated almost as a subject of penal censure. This blind admiration is not patriotism, or, if it be patriotism, it is, at least, only that easy form of it which the most corrupt may assume, without any diminution of their own political profligacy. He who does not feel, in his whole heart, the excellence of a wise and virtuous system of polity, is indeed unworthy of living under its protection. But he who does feel its excellence, will be the swiftest to discern every improvement that can be added to it. It is the same in the humbler concerns of private life. It is not the indifferent stranger, who on seeing any one suffer from inconvenience of any kind, perceives most quickly the first involuntary intimation of uneasiness, and discovers, too, most quickly, what may be the best remedy. It is he who loves best the sufferer, and who sees best every noble endowment possessed by him. It is the mother watching her child,—the friend visiting his friend,—the son, the lover, the husband. The very nature of affection is to render us quick to imagine something which may make still better what is good; and though he who admires least a system, may innovate most extensively, there can be no question that the most continued tendency to innovate, in some slight degree, is in him who admires most, upon the whole, what he therefore wishes most ardently to improve.

If such be, as I cannot but think, the tendency of affection, the loud and haughty patriotism of those who profess to see in any of the systems of human policy, which as human, must share in some degree the general frailty of humanity, no evil which can require to be remedied, and even no good which can by any means be rendered still more ample in extension or degree, seems to me, for this very reason suspicious; at least as suspicious as the loud and angry patriotism of those who profess to see in the whole system, nothing which is not a fit subject of instant and total alteration. If they loved truly what they praise so highly, they would not praise it less indeed, but they would wish, at least, to see it still more worthy of praise; there would be a quickness, therefore, to discover what would make it more worthy; and, though they might be fearful of innovating, they would yet have many wishes of innovating, which nothing but the value of the subject of experiment, as too noble to be put in peril, could operate to suppress.

It is this high importance of the subject of experiment, which is the true check on the innovating spirit, that, but for such a check, would be constantly operating in man, though there were no other inducement than the mere eagerness of curiosity, which wishes to see constantly new results, and is therefore constantly employed in placing objects in new circumstances. If the happiness and misery of nations were not dependent on the varying movements of the political machinery, or were dependent only for a few moments, so that, by the mere will of replacing all things in their former situation, we could truly replace them without any diminution of good or increase of evil, the game of legislation would indeed be the most magnificent game which could amuse our idleness or activity. But since happiness, which has once been injured, cannot be easily, if at all repaired, nor misery, once produced, be immediately dissipated, with the same ease with which we can shuffle kings, and queens, and knaves, and all the more insignificant cards, from the top to the bottom of the pack, or from the bottom to the top, and find the whole, after these successive changes, the same cards as before, with the same gaudy colouring and insignia of distinction, the game is too costly a one for human benevolence to wish to play.

The same principle, I may remark, directs the patriot in the reformations which he wishes to produce, without departing from the regular usages of the constitution, that directs him in those rare and dreadful cases, in which it becomes to him a question of virtue, whether he is not to throw off the whole entanglement of usage, and reduce society again for a time to a state of barbarous contention of man with man, that, from this temporary disorder, a better and more regular system may arise. The directing principle, in both cases, is the love of the good of the state and of mankind, that total and ultimate result of good on which it may be reasonable to calculate, after every deduction has been made of the evil that may, directly or indirectly, flow from the trial. It is not enough, then, that there is a great and manifest defect in any part of the political system; a source of evil as manifest perhaps as the evil itself. This may be sufficient to the demagogue, whose only object is to produce popular discontent with a system in which he has no part to act; and who is, therefore, rather pleased to discover the evil that may give a few animated periods to his eloquence, than grieved at the miseries on which so much of his logic and rhetoric depends. But, to the sincere lover of the happiness of the community, there must be not only the certainty of existing evil, but an obvious facility, or at least a very high probability of amendment; and a probability of this, without an amount of accompanying

evil equal, or even nearly equal, to the evil which he wishes to remove, before he will attempt a reformation that may be so perilous to the very happiness which it is his great ambition to promote. In calculating the results of good and evil, he will be careful too to make allowance for the influence of habit itself; and will consider an evil that is new, such as his wished reformation might possibly produce, as when all other circumstances are the same, a greater evil than that which already exists, and to which the mind of the sufferer has learned, by long usage, to accommodate itself. Above all, he will make allowance for the possible fallacies of his own judgment. That others have not before regarded as evil, that which appears to him to be evil, though not enough to alter his judgment, will at least be felt by him as a circumstance which should render caution in this case more necessary than it would have been, if there had before been no existing government; but all was to be the instant result of one act of legislation.

The remarks which Dr. Smith has made on the peculiar danger of the reforming spirit in princes, in reference to this deduction from the amount of incitement to innovate, which the possible fallacy of our opinion should produce,—a possibility which they who are accustomed to constant obsequiousness and adulation of all around, are not very ready to suspect,—are fully justified by the history, with very few exceptions, of all such attempts of royal or imperial reformers.

"It is upon this account," he says, "that of all political speculators, sovereign princes are by far the most dangerous. This arrogance is perfectly familiar to them. They entertain no doubt of the immense superiority of their own judgment. When such imperial and royal reformers, therefore, condescend to contemplate the constitution of the country which is committed to their government, they seldom see any thing so wrong in it as the obstructions which it may sometimes oppose to the execution of their own will. They hold in contempt the divine maxim of Plato, and consider the state as made for themselves, not themselves for the state. The great object of their reformation, therefore, is to remove those obstructions, to reduce the authority of the nobility, to take away the privileges of cities and provinces, and to render both the greatest individuals, and the greatest orders of the state, as incapable of opposing their commands, as the weakest and most insignificant."*

In these cases, however, it is not, I conceive, the mere arrogance of opinion of which Dr. Smith speaks, that renders princes such rash and rapid innovators. Much of the tendency, I have no doubt, arises from the facility which they have found in executing the smaller matters, which they are in the hourly habit of willing and producing; a facility which they naturally extend to other matters, in which they suppose that all things will arrange themselves as readily, according to their will, as the actions and looks of those whose courtly ministry it is to do and look as they are ordered. They do not merely think themselves better movers of the machinery than others, but the machinery of national happiness seems to them more simple and easy of management than it is; because they have been able, in innumerable cases, to produce the very object which they desired, in all the circumstances which they desired, or to prevent what they considered as an evil to themselves or others, in the very way in which it seemed to them necessary or most expedient to prevent it. They innovate, therefore, with a more fearless spirit, because they think that the political machine will readily produce whatever they wish it to produce; or, at any rate, that the touch of a single spring, or the application of a weight to a single pulley, will be sufficient to put the machine in its former state, if the movement which they have attempted should be found ineffectual to produce that particular equilibrium, or disturbance of equilibrium, which they desired to effect by it.

The reformations which alone a sincere patriot will think of attempting, must be preceded, then, by much cautious examination of all the evils which the very desire of producing good, and good only, may often tend to occasion, almost as certainly as if the desire had had in view evil, and nothing more. I need not surely add, since it is of a moral duty I am treating, that the patriotic reformer will not be influenced by his own private views of ambition or factious dislike; though these, it must be confessed, are the great movers of far more than half of that declamatory eloquence on public abuses, which, as we cannot see the heart, is often honoured with the name of patriotism. "Arsaces," says Montesquieu, in his political romance of that name, "Arsaces loved so much to preserve the laws and ancient customs of the Bactrians, that he trembled always at the very name of reform of abuses: for he had often remarked, that every one called that law, which was conformable to his personal views, and called an abuse whatever was likely to thwart his own interests."

It is this hypocrisy of patriotism, which has been the most fatal of all evils to the reformation of a country. It is so easy to declaim against abuses, and so many personal objects may be attained by the declamation, that, to the unreflecting, it seems almost a sort of logical victory for the defender of

* Theory of Moral Sentiments, vol. ii. p. 96.

real abuses to ascribe to such ambitious or sordid or factious motives the genuine hatred of corruption, and genuine love of man, in those who oppose the evils by which the defender of them exists. This imputation of unworthy designs or wishes is one of the greatest, or rather, is truly the greatest evil which a patriot, who is at heart a patriot, has to dread. But it is an evil which, like all other evils that are personal to himself, he is to brave, in that calm and temperate course of public virtue, in which he feels himself called to move. He loves, indeed, the esteem of mankind much, but there is something which he loves still more; and he will not suffer the world to be miserable, that he may run a little less risk of being accounted a hypocrite.

I now, then, conclude the remarks which I had to offer on all the duties which we owe to others; whether they relate to mere abstinence from injury, or to positive beneficence; and whether they relate to all the individuals of mankind, or merely to a limited number of them that are connected with us by peculiar ties.

I have treated, as you must have perceived, of our moral duties, with only few remarks on what are commonly denominated rights; for this best of reasons, that the terms right and duty are, in the strictest sense, in morality at least, corresponding and commensurable. Whatever service it is my duty to do to any one, he has a moral right to receive from me: there is one moral emotion, one simple feeling of approvableness which constitutes to our heart, in the consideration of any action, the right or the duty, according as we view the agent, or him to whom his action relates. I do not speak at present, it is to be remembered, of the additional force of law as applied to particular moral duties, a force which it may be expedient variously to extend or limit, but of the moral duties alone; and in these, alike in every case, the moral duty implies a moral right, and the moral right a moral duty. When I say that it is my duty to perform a certain action, I mean nothing more than that if I do not perform it, I shall regard myself, and others will regard me, with moral disapprobation. When I say that any one has a moral right to my performance of a certain action, do I mean any thing more than was said by me, in the former case; or rather, do I not simply mean still, that if I do not perform the action, the feeling of moral disapprobation will arise in myself and others?

The laws, indeed, have made a distinction of our duties, enforcing the performance of some of them, and not enforcing the performance of others; but this partial interference of law, useful as it is in the highest degree to the happiness of the world, does not alter the nature of the duties themselves, which, as resulting from the moral nature of man, preceded every legal institution.

The facility of determining certain duties in all their circumstances, and the impossibility of determining others which vary with circumstances that cannot be made the subjects of judicial inquiry, and into which, for the general tranquillity of a state, it would not be expedient to make a nice inquiry, even though they could be made subjects of it, have been, of course, the great reason for which certain duties only are enforced by law, and others left to the morality of individuals themselves. It is easy, at least in most cases, and in all cases comparatively easy, to ascertain the obligation to the duties ranked together under the name justice,—the duties of abstaining from positive injury of every sort, and of fulfilling precise conventional engagements. It would not be easy to ascertain, in like manner, what number of injuries, on the part of a benefactor, lessened, and perhaps destroyed altogether, the obligation to a grateful return of services for some early benefit received; and an inquiry into such circumstances, as it might extend to many of the most delicate and confidential transactions of a long life, would, as inquisitorial, be productive of more evil, than it could be productive of good, as judicial. Gratitude, therefore, is left, and wisely left, to the free moral sentiments of mankind: justice is enforced by the united power of the state.

On this very simple distinction of duties which the law enforces, and of those which, for obvious reasons, it does not attempt to enforce, and on this alone, as I conceive, is founded the division of perfect and imperfect rights, which is so favourite a division with writers in jurisprudence, and with those ethical writers whose systems, from the prevailing studies and habits of the time, were in a great measure vitiated by the technicalities of law. The very use of these terms, however, has unfortunately led to the belief, that in the rights themselves, as moral rights, there is a greater or less degree of perfection or moral incumbency, when it is evident that morally there is no such distinction; or, I may say even, that if there were any such distinction, the rights which are legally perfect would be often of less powerful moral force than rights which are legally said to be imperfect. There is no one, I conceive, who would not feel more remorse, a deeper sense of moral impropriety, in having suffered his benefactor, to whom he owed all his affluence, to perish in a prison for some petty debt, than if he had failed in the exact performance of some trifling conditions of a contract, in the terms which he knew well that the law would hold to be definite and of perfect obligation.

It is highly important, therefore, for your

clear views in ethics, that you should see distinctly the nature of this difference, to which you must meet with innumerable allusions, and allusions that involve an obscurity, which could not have been felt, but for the unfortunate ambiguity of the phrases employed to distinguish rights that are easily determinable by law, and therefore enforced by it, from rights which are founded on circumstances less easily determinable, and therefore not attempted to be enforced by legal authority.

It is, as I have said, on the one simple feeling of moral approvableness, that every duty, and therefore every right, is founded. All rights are morally perfect; because, wherever there is a moral duty to another living being, there is a moral right in that other; and where there is no duty, there is no right. There is as little an imperfect right in any moral sense, as there is in logic an imperfect truth or falsehood.

Actions of which the right is clearly determinable in all its circumstances, or may be imagined at least to be clearly determinable, the law takes under its cognizance. But, into the greater number of our virtues or vices, it makes no judicial inquiry. And though it might seem, on first reflection, to be more advantageous, if all which is morally due to us, might have been judicially claimed, it is well that so many virtues are left at our own disposal. But for this freedom from legal compulsion, there could be no virtue, at least no virtue which could to others be a source of delight, however gratifying the conscious disinterestedness might be to the breast of the individual. What pleasure could we derive from the ready services of affection, if the failure of one of them would have subjected the delinquent to personal punishment; if we could not distinguish, therefore, the kindness of the heart, from the selfish semblance of it which it was prudence to assume, and if the delightful society under the domestic roof had thus been converted into a college of students of domestic law, calculating smiles and proportioning every tone of tenderness to the strict requisitions of the statute-book?

LECTURE XCII

OF THE EXISTENCE OF THE DEITY.

My last Lecture, Gentlemen, brought to a conclusion my remarks on the various moral relations which connect every individual of mankind with every other individual, some by ties of peculiar interest, but all by the obligation of benevolent wishes and of benevolent efforts, when it is in our power to free even a stranger from suffering, or to afford him any gratification which he could not have enjoyed but for us.

The ethical inquiries which have of late engaged us, may be considered, then, as developements of one great truth, which it is impossible for man to consider too often; that he does not enter life to be an idle spectator of the magnificence of the universe, and of the living beings like himself that dwell with him on that globe which is his temporary home, but that he has duties to perform as well as pleasures to enjoy and pains to avoid; that he has it in his power to relieve the sufferings of others and to augment their happiness, and that, having this power, he must be an object of approbation to himself, if he use it for those noble purposes, or of disapprobation to himself, if he neglect to use it; still more, if, instead of merely neglecting the happiness of others, he exert himself, intentionally, to lessen it, and add to the sufferings that exist in the world, independently of him, the sufferings which it is in his power to inflict on others, and the more dreadful sufferings of remorse and despair that must be felt by his own guilty heart.

I should now, in regular order, proceed to the consideration of that propriety of conduct with respect to the individual which constitutes what has been termed our duty to ourselves. But, as this inquiry involves chiefly the consideration of happiness, and as so much of human happiness has relation to our notions of the Divinity and our prospects of immortal life, it seems to me better, upon the whole, to deviate in a slight degree from our regular plan, and to give our attention, first, to those great subjects, before entering on the inquiry which must have relation to them.

We have already considered man in various aspects; as a sensitive being, capable of being affected by the things around him, and deriving from them not pleasure, and pain, and sustenance merely, but the elements of his knowledge; as an intellectual being, capable of discovering the relations of things, comparing, generalizing, forming systems of truth, and almost creating worlds of fiction that arise with the semblance of truth at the mere will of his fancy; and, lastly, as a moral agent, connected with other moral agents, by ties that are innumerable as the living objects to whom they relate. We have now to consider the more important relation, which, as a created and dependent, but immortal being, he bears to that supreme being, who is the great source of all existence.

On this subject, that comprehends the sublimest of all the truths which man is permitted to attain, the benefit of revelation may be conceived to render every inquiry superfluous, which does not flow from it. But to those who are blessed with a clear-

er illumination, it cannot be uninteresting to trace the fainter lights, which in the darkness of so many gloomy ages, amid the oppression of tyranny in various forms, and of superstition more afflicting than tyranny itself, could preserve, still dimly visible to man, that virtue which he was to love, and that Creator whom he was to adore. Nor can it be without profit, even to their better faith, to find all nature thus concurring, as to its most important truths, with revelation itself; and every thing living and inanimate announcing that high and holy one, of whose perfections they have been privileged with a more splendid manifestation.

We have to consider, then, not the tie which connects man with his parents only, and with that race of mortal ancestors by whom a frail existence has been successively transmitted from those who lived for a few feeble years, to those who lived afterwards for a few feeble years, but that far nobler principle of union, by which he is connected with him who has existed for ever, the Creator of the universe, and the Preserver of that universe which he has created. The inquiry into the existence of the noblest of beings, into the existence of him to whom we look as the source of every thing which we enjoy and admire, is itself surely the noblest of all the inquiries on which man can enter; and the feelings with which we enter on it should be of a kind that is suitable to the contemplation of a nature so noble, even as possibly existing. "Si intramus templa compositi," says an eloquent pagan writer when beginning an inquiry into some of the mere works of God, "si ad sacrificium accessuri vultum submittimus, si in omne argumentum modestiae fingimur; quanto hoc magis facere debemus, cum de sideribus, de stellis, de deorum natura disputamus, ne quid temere, ne quid impudenter, aut ignorantes affirmemus, aut scientes mentiamur."*

The universe exhibits indisputable marks of design, and is therefore not self-existing, but the work of a designing mind. There exists, then, a great designing mind. Such is the first truth with respect to the indication of divinity in the universe, to which I would direct your attention.

If the world had been without any of its present adaptation of parts to parts, only a mass of matter, irregular in form, and quiescent,—and if we could conceive ourselves, with all our faculties as vigorous as now, contemplating such an irregular and quiescent mass, without any thought of the order displayed in our own mental frame, I am far from contending that, in such circumstances, with nothing before us that could be considered as indicative of a particular design, we should have been led to the conception of a Creator. On the contrary, I conceive the abstract arguments which have been adduced to show that it is impossible for matter to have existed from eternity, by reasonings on what has been termed necessary existence, and the incompatibility of this necessary existence with the qualities of matter, to be relics of the mere verbal logic of the schools, as little capable of producing conviction as any of the wildest and most absurd of the technical scholastic reasonings on the properties or supposed properties of entity and nonentity. Eternal existence, the existence of that which never had a beginning, must always be beyond our distinct comprehension, whatever the eternal object may be, material or mental; and as much beyond our comprehension in the one case as in the other, though it is impossible for us to doubt that some being, material or mental, must have been eternal, if any thing exists.

> Had there e'er been nought, nought still had been;
> Eternal these must be.†

In the circumstances supposed, however, it is very probable that if we formed any thought at all upon the subject, we should have conceived the rude quiescent mass to have been itself eternal, as, indeed, seems to have been the universal opinion of the ancient philosophers, with respect to the matter of the universe, even though they admitted the existence of divine beings as authors of that beautiful regularity which we perceive. The mass alone would have been visible,—creation, as a fact, unknown to our experience,—and in the mass itself, nothing which could be regarded as exhibiting traces of an operating mind.

But though matter, as an unformed mass, existing without relation of parts, would not, I conceive, of itself have suggested the notion of a Creator,—since in every hypothesis, something material or mental must have existed uncaused, and mere existence, therefore, is not necessarily a mark of previous causation, unless we take for granted an infinite series of causes,—it is very different when the mass of matter is considered as possessing proportions and obvious relations of parts to each other, relations which do not exist merely in separate pairs, but many of which concur in one more general relation, and many of these again, in relations more general still. In short, when the whole universe seems to present to us, on whatever part of it we may look, exactly the same appearances as it would have presented if its parts had been arranged intentionally, for the purpose of producing the results which are

* Seneca, Naturales Quaestiones, lib. vii. cap. xxx.

† Night Thoughts, Night ix.

now perceived,—when these appearances of adaptation are not in a few objects out of many, but in every thing that meets our view, and innumerable, therefore, as the innumerable objects that constitute to us the universe, we feel an absolute impossibility of supposing that so many appearances of design exist without design; an impossibility against which it may not be difficult to adduce words in the form of argument, but which it would be as difficult to endeavour not to feel, as to divest ourselves of that very capacity of reasoning to which the negative argument must be addressed. It would be absurd to attempt to state how many proportions may coexist, and yet be imagined by us not to imply necessarily any design in the production of them. A few types, for example, may be thrown loosely together, and some of them may form a word. This we can believe, without any suspicion of contrivance. If many such words, however, were to be thrown together, we should suspect contrivance, and would believe contrivance, with the most undoubting conviction, if a multitude of types were to be found, thus forming one regular and continued poem. This instance, I may remark by the way, is one which is used by Cicero; though it is one which we should little have expected to find in an ancient writer, in ages when the blessing of the art of printing was unknown. In speaking of the opinion of those who contend that the universe was formed by a fortuitous concourse of atoms, he says, "Hoc qui existimat fieri potuisse, non intelligo, cur non idem putet, si innumerabiles unius et viginti formae literarum, vel aureae vel qualeslibet, aliquò conjiciantur, posse ex his in terram excussis, annales Ennii ut deinceps legi possent effici; quod nescio, an, ne in uno quidem versu, possit tantum valere fortuna."*

Such is our nature, then, that it would seem as truly impossible that a number of types thrown together, should form the Iliad or Odyssey, as that they should form Homer himself. We might assert, indeed, that it was by chance that each type had found its way into its proper place; but, in asserting this, our understanding would belie our sceptical assertion. A certain continued series of relations is believed by us to imply contrivance, as truly as the sensations produced in us are conceived to imply the existence of corresponding sensible qualities in the object without; or as any conclusion in reasoning itself is felt to be virtually contained in the premises which evolve it. The great question is, whether, in the universe, there be any such continued series of relations?

* De Natura Deorum, lib. ii. p. 509. Ernest. Lond. 1819.

Strange as it may seem, that, by knowing more and more fully all the uses which the different parts of the universe fulfil, we should be less disposed to think of the contrivance which those concurring uses indicate, the fact is certain. As often as we do think of them, indeed, in relation to their origin, and say within ourselves, is this admirable seeming arrangement fortuitous or the work of design? we feel more profoundly, that there must have been contrivance, in proportion as we have discovered more traces of harmony in the disposition of the parts subservient to certain uses. But still we think of these less frequently, merely because they have often been before us. We have all some particular objects on which we are intent, of pleasure, or business, or what at least we take to be business. It requires some astonishment, therefore, to make us pause and suspend our thoughts, which we have already given to some other object; and astonishment requires, that the object which excites it should be new. If it had been possible for the generations of mankind to have existed in society in a world of darkness, and that splendid luminary, by the regular appearances of which we now date our existence, had suddenly arisen on the earth, how immediately would it have suspended every project and passion, all those projects, and passions, and frivolities, which fill our hearts at present with their own petty objects, so as scarcely to leave room for a single better thought. The gayest trifler would, for an instant, have ceased to be a trifler. The most ambitious courtly sycophant, who had been creeping for years round the throne, labouring to supplant rivals whom he never had seen, with the same assiduity as that with which competitors for royal favour, in a world of sunshine, labour to supplant rivals whom they have seen, would have thought of something more than of himself and them at such a moment. The very atheists of such a world, whose chief amusement, in their blindness, had been the ingenuity of proving that the world must have existed for ever, as it existed then, would almost have felt, on such an appearance, that there is a Power which can create, and would have been believers in that power, for some moments at least, though they might have hastened, as soon as their superstitious fear permitted them, to accommodate the new phenomenon to their system. The sudden appearance, then, of the sun, as it rose in all its magnificence, on beings who had never before enjoyed a single ray of its profusion of splendour, would have led every heart to think of some mighty Power that had formed it. It would have produced that great effect, which Lucretius and Petronius, taking a casual concomitant for the cause, very falsely ascribe to fear, but which is, in truth,

the effect of that admiration of the great and new, which may be combined with fear, though not necessarily, as it may be combined with feelings of a very different kind.

Primus in orbe Deos fecit timor; ardua coelo
Fulmina quum caderent, discussaque moenia flammis,
Atque ictus flagraret Athos.

Fear of supernatural power, in such a case, it is very evident, must be the effect of previous belief of the existence of that Power which is feared, for no one can fear that which he does not conceive to exist. It was not the fear, therefore, but the previous admiration of the new phenomenon, which, in Petronius's sense, "made the Gods;" and but for this admiration of what was new and great, the fear of the thunderbolt could as little have produced fear of a Divine Being, before unknown and unsuspected, as the fear of being burnt to death when our house was on fire, could, of itself, have suggested the notion of a Divinity.

The sudden appearance of the sun, then, in a case like that which I have supposed, would have led every mind to some thought as to its origin. It would have indicated power of some sort. But the sun would have gone down; and, though there might be some little hope that what had once appeared might reappear, it could have been only a slight hope. The night once passed, however, it would return in its former magnificence; and, after a few successions of days and nights, its regularity would add to the previous conception of power, some conception of corresponding order, in the power whatever it might be, which sent it forth with so much regularity. Such would have been our feelings, if we had not known the sun ever since we remember existence. Its rising and setting are now, as it were, a part of our own life. We arrange the labours of the day, so as to bring them to a conclusion before the darkness with which evening is to close; and we lie down at night full of projects for the morning, with perfect reliance that the light which guided us during the past day, will guide us equally in that which is soon to shine upou us. Yet this very circumstance, the regularity with which the sun has appeared to distribute to us its innumerable blessings, a regularity which gives to the splendid phenomenon itself more indubitable marks of the power which is its source, is the circumstance that prevents us from thinking of this divine source. "Sed assiduitate quotidiana," says Cicero, "et consuetudine oculorum, assuescunt animi, neque admirantur, neque requirunt rationes earum rerum, quas semper vident; proinde quasi novitas nos magis quam magnitudo rerum, debeat ad exquirendas causas excitare."*

Even if, when we first beheld the wonderful appearances of nature, our faculties had been such as they are when matured in after-life, though the phenomenon must, of course, have become equally familiar to us, we should still have retained some impression of those feelings which the aspect of the universe must have excited in us when we first entered into this world of glory. "The miracles of nature," says Diderot, "are exposed to our eyes, long before we have reason enough to derive any light from them. If we entered the world with the same reason which we carry with us to an opera, the first time that we enter a theatre,—and if the curtain of the universe, if I may so term it, were to be rapidly drawn up, struck with the grandeur of every thing which we saw, and all the obvious contrivances exhibited, we should not be capable of refusing our homage to the Eternal power which had prepared for us such a spectacle. But who thinks of marvelling at what he has seen for fifty years? What multitudes are there, who wholly occupied with the care of obtaining subsistence, have no time for speculation: the rise of the sun is only that which calls them to toil, and the finest night in all its softness, is mute to them, or tells them only that it is the hour of repose."†

When we read, for the first time, the account which Adam gives to the angel of his feelings, when, with faculties such as we have supposed, and every thing new before him, he found himself in existence in that happy scene of Paradise which Milton has described, we are apt to think that the poet has represented him as beginning too soon to reason with respect to the power to which he must have owed his existence; and yet, if we deduct the influence of long familiarity, and suppose even a mind less vigorous than that of Adam, but with faculties such as exist now only in mature life, to be placed in the first moment of existence in such a scene, we shall find, the more we reflect on the situation, that the individual scarcely could fail to philosophize in the same manner.

As new wak'd from soundest sleep,
Soft on the flow'ry herb I found me laid,
In balmy sweat, which, with his beams the sun
Soon dry'd, and on the reeking moisture fed.
Strait toward heaven my wond'ring eyes I turn'd,
And gaz'd awhile the ample sky, till rais'd
By quick instinctive motion, up I sprung,
As thitherward endeavouring, and upright
Stood on my feet. About me round I saw
Hill, dale, and shady woods, and sunny plains,
And liquid lapse of murmuring streams: by these
Creatures that liv'd and mov'd, or walk'd or flew,
Birds on the branches warbling: all things smil'd;
With fragrance, and with joy my heart o'erflow'd.
Myself I then perus'd, and limb by limb
Survey'd, and sometimes went, and sometimes ran,
With supple joints, as lively vigour led:
But who I was, or whence, or from what cause,
Knew not; to speak I tried, and forthwith spake.
My tongue obey'd, and readily could name

* De Natura Deorum, lib. ii. p. 510.

† Œuvres de Diderot, tome i. p. 100. Amst. 1772, 12mo

Whate'er I saw. Thou sun, said I, fair light!
And thou, enlighten'd earth, so fresh and gay,
Ye hills and dales, ye rivers, woods, and plains,
And ye that live and move, fair creatures, tell,
Tell, if ye saw, how came I thus, how here;
Not of myself; by some great Maker then,
In goodness and in power pre-eminent;
Tell me how may I know him, how adore,
From whom I have, that thus I move and live,
And feel that I am happier than I know.*

Refined as this reasoning may seem in such circumstances of new existence, it seems to us refined only because, on imagining the situation of our first Parent, it is difficult for us to divest ourselves of long-accustomed feelings, and to suppose in his vigorous mind the full influence of that primary vivid admiration which we have never felt, because our minds had become accustomed to the sublime magnificence of the world before they were capable of feeling the delightful wonder which, if it had been felt by us as he who is so poetically described must have felt it, would have led us too to reason in the same manner, and to feel perhaps that instant gratitude to which his tongue was so ready to give utterance.

All the impression then, which the wonders of nature would produce upon us, as new, is of course lost to us now. What would have forced itself upon us, without reflection, requires now an effort of reflection. But, when we make the reflection, the contrivance does not appear to us less irresistibly marked. We have, indeed, many more proofs of such contrivance, than we could possibly have had, but for that experience which has been adding to them every day.

If a multitude of parts, all manifestly relating to each other, and producing a result which itself has as manifest a relation to the results of other proportions, cannot be observed by us without an irresistible impression of design; if it is impossible for us to conceive that nine millions of alphabetic characters could fall of themselves into a treatise or a poem; that all the pictures, I will not say in the whole world, but even the few which are to be found in a single gallery, were the product of a number of colours thrown at random from a brush upon canvass; that a city, with all its distinct houses, and all the distinct apartments in those houses, and all the implements of domestic use which those apartments contain, could not have existed without some designing mind, and some hands that fashioned the stone and the wood, and performed all the other operations necessary for erecting and adorning the different edifices; if it be easier for us to believe that our senses deceived us in exhibiting to us such a city,—and that there was truly nothing seen by us,—than to believe that the houses existed of themselves without any contrivance; the only question, as I have already said, is, whether the universe itself exhibits such combinations of parts relating to each other, as the poem, the picture, the city, or any other object for which we find it necessary to have recourse to designing skill. It is quite evident that, in such a case as this, all abstract reasoning is superfluous. We have not to investigate the relation which harmony of parts bears to design, or to enter into nice disquisitions on the theory of probabilities. We are addressing men, and we address therefore beings to whom doubt of such a relation is impossible, who require no abstract reasoning to be convinced that the Iliad of Homer, or Euclid's Elements of Geometry, could not be formed by any loose and casual apposition of alphabetic characters after characters, and who, for the same reason, must believe that any similar order implies similar design. If this connexion of a regular series of relations with some regulating mind, is not felt, there is at least as much reason to suspect that any abstract reasoning on probabilities will be as little felt, since every reasoning must assume a principle itself unproved, and as little universal as such belief in such circumstances. Still more superfluous must be all those reasonings with respect to the existence of the Deity, from the nature of certain conceptions of our mind, independent of the phenomena of design, which are commonly termed reasonings a priori,—reasonings that, if strictly analyzed, are found to proceed on some assumption of the very truth for which they contend, and that, instead of throwing additional light on the argument for a Creator of the universe, have served only to throw on it a sort of darkness, by leading us to conceive that there must be some obscurity in truths which could give occasion to reasoning so obscure. God, and the world which he has formed—these are our great objects. Every thing which we strive to place between these is nothing. We see the universe, and, seeing it, we believe in its Maker. It is the universe, therefore, which is our argument, and our only argument; and, as it is powerful to convince us, God is, or is not, an object of our belief.

If proportion, order, subserviency to certain uses that are themselves subservient to other uses, and these to others, in a regular series, be then what it is impossible for us to consider, without the belief of design, what is the universe but a spectacle of such relations in every part? From the greatest masses that roll through space, to the slightest atom that forms one of their imperceptible elements, every thing is conspiring for some purpose. I shall not speak of the relations of the planetary motions to each other; of the mutual relations of the various parts of our globe; of the different animals of the

* Paradise Lost, book viii. v. 253—282.

different elements, in the conformity of their structure to the qualities of the elements which they inhabit; of man himself, in all the nice adaptations of his organs, for purposes which the anatomist and physiologist may explain to us in more learned language, but which even the vulgar, who know only the thousandth part, or far less than the thousandth part, of the wonders of their own frame, yet see sufficiently, to be convinced of an arrangement which the physiologist sees more fully, but does not believe more undoubtingly. To these splendid proofs, it is scarcely necessary to do more than to allude. But, when we think of the feeblest and most insignificant of living things—the minutest insect, which it requires a microscope to discover; when we think of it, as a creature, having limbs that move it from place to place, nourished by little vessels, that bear to every fibre of its frame some portion of the food which other organs have rendered fit for serving the purposes of nutrition,—having senses, as quick to discern the objects that bear to it any relative magnitude, as ours, and not merely existing as a living piece of most beautiful mechanism, but having the power which no mere mechanism, however beautiful, ever had, of multiplying its own existence, by the production of living machines exactly resembling itself, in all the beautiful organic relations that are clustered as it were in its little frame; when we think of all the proofs of contrivance which are thus to be found in what seems to us a single atom, or less than a single atom, and when we think of the myriads of myriads of such atoms which inhabit even the smallest portion of that earth which is itself but an almost invisible atom, compared with the great system of the heavens, what a combination of simplicity and grandeur do we perceive! It is one universal design, or an infinity of designs: nothing seems to us little, because nothing is so little as not to proclaim that omnipotence which made it; and, I may say too, that nothing seems to us great in itself, because its very grandeur speaks to us of that immensity before which all created greatness is scarcely to be perceived.

On particular arguments of this kind, that are as innumerable as the things which exist, I feel that it is quite idle to dwell. Those whom a single organized being, or even a single organ, such as the eye, the ear, the hand, does not convince of the being of a God,—who do not see him, not more in the social order of human society, than in a single instinct of animals, producing unconsciously a result that is necessary for their continued existence, and yet a result which they cannot have foreknown,—will not see him in all the innumerable instances that might be crowded together by philosophers and theologians. If, then, such be our nature, that regularity of parts subservient to certain uses, impresses us necessarily with a feeling of previous contrivance, we speak against the conviction of our own heart as often as we affect to shelter ourselves in the use of a frivolous word, and say, of all the contrivance of the universe, that it is only the result of chance,—of chance to which it would seem to us absurd to ascribe the far humbler traces of intellect that are to be found in a poem, or a treatise of philosophy. What should we think of any one who should ascribe to chance the combinations of letters that form the Principia of Newton! and is the world which Newton described less gloriously indicative of wisdom than the mere description? The word chance, in such a case, may be regarded as expressive only of unwilling assent. It is a word easily pronounced, but it is nothing more.

"How long," says Tillotson, in one of his Sermons, "might twenty thousand blind men, which should be sent out from the several remote parts of England, wander up and down before they would all meet upon Salisbury Plains, and fall into rank and file in the exact order of an army? And yet this is much more easy to be imagined, than how the innumerable blind parts of matter should rendezvous themselves into a world. A man that sees Henry the Seventh's chapel at Westminster, might, with as good reason, maintain, (yea, with much better, considering the vast difference betwixt that little structure and the huge fabric of the world,) that it was never contrived or built by any man, but that the stones did by chance grow into those curious figures into which they seem to have been cut and graven; and that upon a time (as tales usually begin) the materials of that building, the stone, mortar, timber, iron, lead, and glass, happily met together, and very fortunately ranged themselves into that delicate order in which we see them now so close compacted, that it must be a very great chance that parts them again. What would the world think of a man that should advance such an opinion as this, and write a book for it? If they would do him right, they ought to look upon him as mad; but yet with a little more reason than any man can have to say that the world was made by chance."*

The world, then, was made: there is a designing Power which formed it,—a Power whose own admirable nature explains whatever is admirable on earth, and leaves to us, instead of the wonder of ignorance, that wonder of knowledge and veneration which is not astonishment, but love and awe.

"The impious," says an eloquent French

* Tillotson's Works, vol. i. sermon i. p. 12. Lond. 1752, folio.

writer, "are struck with the glory of princes and conquerors that found the little empires of this earth; and they do not feel the omnipotence of that hand which laid the foundations of the universe. They admire the skill and the industry of workmen, who erect those palaces which a storm may throw down; and they will not acknowledge wisdom, in the arrangements of that infinitely more superb work which the revolutions of ages have respected, and must continue to respect till he who made it shall will it to pass away. In vain, however, do they boast that they do not see God; it is because they seek him, who is perfect holiness, in a heart that is depraved by its passions. But they have only to look out of themselves, and they will find him everywhere: the whole earth will announce to them its maker; and if they refuse still their assent, their own corrupted heart will be the only thing in the universe which does not proclaim the author of its being."*

So completely do we feel this universal assent of nature, in acknowledging the existence of its author, that we enter readily into those poetic personifications which animate every object, and call on them to mingle as it were in worship with mankind.

To Him, ye vocal gales
Breathe soft, whose spirit in your freshness breathes!
O talk of Him in solitary glooms,
Where, o'er the rock, the scarcely waving pine
Fills the brown shade with a religious awe.
And ye, whose bolder note is heard afar,
Who shake the astonish'd world, lift high to Heaven
The impetuous song, and say, from whom you rage.
His praise, ye brooks, attune, ye trembling rills,
And let me catch it, as I muse along.
Ye headlong torrents, rapid and profound;
Ye softer floods, that lead the humid maze
Along the vale;—and thou, majestic main,
A secret world of wonders in thyself,
Sound His stupendous praise, whose greater voice
Or bids you roar, or bids your roarings fall.†

To that power which we thus call on them to attest, they all truly bear witness. We assign to them feelings which they have not, indeed, as much as we assign to them a voice which they have not; but, so strong is the evidence of mind which they bear, that it seems as if we merely give them a voice expressing, in our language, what they mutely feel.

LECTURE XCIII.

OF THE EXISTENCE,—THE UNITY,—THE OMNISCIENCE,—THE OMNIPOTENCE,—AND THE GOODNESS OF THE DEITY.

My last Lecture, Gentlemen, was employed in considering the evidence which the frame of nature exhibits, of the being of its divine Author.

Of this there appears to me to be only one argument which can produce conviction, but that an argument so irresistible, as to correspond, in its influence on the mind, with the power of him whose existence it forces even the most reluctant to acknowledge. The arguments commonly termed metaphysical, on this subject, I have always regarded as absolutely void of force, unless in as far as they proceed on a tacit assumption of the physical argument; and, indeed, it seems to me no small corroborative proof of the force of this physical argument, that its remaining impression on our mind has been sufficient to save us from any doubt as to that existence, which the obscure and laborious reasonings a priori, in support of it, would have led us to doubt rather than to believe.

The universe is that which shows the existence of the Author of the universe. It exhibits a harmony of relations, to perceive which is to perceive design; that is to say, it is impossible for us to perceive them without feeling immediately, that the harmony of parts with parts, and of their results with each other, must have had its origin in some designing mind. I did not conceive it necessary to occupy much of your time in tracing the various relations of this sort which the universe presents, in the small as in the great, in the simple as in the complicated, for there is no need to exhibit a multitude of contrivances to prove a contriver. "Nec avis pennulam," says St. Austin, "nec herbae flosculum, nec arboris folium, sine partium suarum convenientia reliquit." It is pleasing, indeed, to trace, in every part of the creation, the wisdom by which it was created, as often as any new proof of beneficent intention is discovered by us, in some part, of which the uses were before unknown; but it is pleasing, only from the accession which is thus made to our physical knowledge, and from the interest which we feel in contemplating the works of a Power which we love, not from any stronger faith which we thence derive in the existence of that Power. He who can examine anatomically, I will not say the whole frame of a single organized being, but even a single organ, and not perceive design,—who can look, for example, at the different parts of the eye, and believe that they exist as they are, without any adaptation to the light which they refract, and to the sentient mind; who can see the bony socket which defends so precious an organ from external violence, the flexible covering in the lid, which can be raised or depressed at pleasure, that preserves it from injuries of a different kind, the apparatus for preparing a due quantity of moisture to lubricate the ball, and the conduit for car-

* Massillon. † Thomson, Hymn on the Seasons.

rying away all superfluous moisture, the muscles that enable us to vary at our pleasure the field of vision, by giving ready motion to the visual orb, and the soft cushion on which it rests, that these motions, however swift, may be performed without injury,—who, after observing these various provisions that are merely external to it, considers what it is which is to be found within the little orb itself, the wonderful apparatus, by which the rays of light from a wide field, that comprehends in it objects at many distances, are all made to converge, so as to form one distinct image on the small expansion of the optic nerve, and the apparatus as wonderful, by which the quantity of light admitted or excluded is tempered to the delicate sensibility of the nerve, and this, not tardily at our bidding, since the injury might then be done before we were able to know the danger, but instantly, without our volition, and even without our knowledge that any such process is taking place,—he who can consider the small compass within which so many wonders are condensed, and ascribe to chance, what, if invented by a human being, he could not fail to regard as the noblest instrument which wisdom, in all its ingenuity, had ever invented, may indeed be an atheist; but such an atheist would continue an atheist, though the whole wonders of the living and inanimate universe were exhibited in succession to his view.

To such a being, if such a denier of the slightest intentional adaptation of parts to parts in the frame of the universe were truly to exist, it would, indeed, be as difficult to prove the existence of God, as to prove the truths that are evolved from any process of arithmetical or geometrical reasoning, to one who denied in words the elementary relations which the separate propositions of the reasoning involve; but we do not rely the less on those truths of demonstration, on account of the mere verbal sophistry which denies them, or professes to deny them; and, notwithstanding the similar profession of scepticism as to design, it is equally impossible for us to consider a single organ like the eye, without believing that there was some one by whom the beautiful apparatus was contrived. We cannot read a poem or a treatise, without believing that it is a work of human art; nor read the characters of divinity in the universe, without thinking of its divine Author.

The manifest order of the universe, in the relation of parts to parts, and of their joint results to other joint results of other parts, is a proof then of some designing power, from which all this magnificent order took its rise: and the great Being, to whom, in discovering design, we ascribe the designing power, is the Being whom we denominate God. The harmony which is the proof of design, is itself a proof of the relative unity of that design. This designing power is one then, in the only sense in which we are entitled to speak either of divine unity or plurality, as indicated by the frame of nature before us; for it is only from the phenomena of the universe that we are capable of inferring the existence of any higher being whatever; and, therefore, as we have no traces of any other being, than the universe, directly or indirectly, exhibits to us, the designing power is not to our reason more than one; since in every thing which we behold, there is unity of that design, from which alone we have any reason to infer a designer. The laws of motion which prevail on our earth, prevail equally wherever we are capable of discovering motion. On our own earth, where our observation is so ample in the infinity of objects around us, there is no irregularity or opposition of contrivances, but all have proportions or analogies which mark them as the result of one harmonious design. There may be many spiritual beings of greater or less excellence, though there is no evidence of them in nature; for where there is no evidence whatever, it is as absurd to deny absolutely as to affirm. But there is, as I have said, no evidence of any such beings; and the designing power then, as marked to us by all which we perceive in nature, is one, in the only sense in which the unity of the Supreme Being can be demonstrable, or even at all conceivable by us. The power of which we speak, exists to our reason, only as the author of the design which we trace; and the design which we trace, various as it may be in the parts to which it extends, is all one harmonious contrivance.

This designing unity, that is relative to what we see, is all, however, which we are logically entitled to infer from the phenomena; for the absolute and necessary unity of the divine Power, as attempted to be proved by metaphysical arguments a priori, that are at best only a laborious trifling with words which either signify nothing or prove nothing, is more than, in our state of ignorance, independently of revelation, we are entitled to assert. The unity, which alone, from the light of nature, we can with confidence assert, is hence not strictly exclusive, but wholly relative to that one design which we are capable of tracing in the frame of the universe.

This one designing Power, we are accustomed to say, is omniscient; and, in the only sense in which that phrase can have any meaning, when used by creatures so ignorant as ourselves, to signify our impossibility of discovering any limits to the wisdom which formed the magnificent design of the world, the phrase may be used as expressive only of admiration that is justly due to wisdom so sublime. He who formed the universe,

and adapted it, in all its parts, for those gracious purposes to which it is subservient, must, of course, have known the relations which he established; and knowing every relation of every thing existing, he may truly be said to be omniscient in his relation to every thing which exists. But it is in this definite sense only that the phrase has any meaning, as used by creatures, whose knowledge is itself so very limited. Beyond this universe, it is presumptuous for man to venture, even in the homage which he offers. The absolute wisdom of the Deity, transcendent as it may be, when compared even with that noble display of it which is within us, and without us wherever we turn our eyes, we are incapable even of conceiving; and admiring what we know, an awful veneration of what is unknown is all that remains for us. Our only meaning of the term omniscience, then, does not arrogate to us any knowledge of those infinite relations which we assert the Deity to know. It is merely that the Supreme Being knows every relation of every existing thing, and that it is impossible for us to conceive any limit to his knowledge.

His omnipotence, in like manner, as conceived by us, whatever it may be in reality, is not a power extending to circumstances, of which, from our own ignorance, we must be incapable of forming a conception; but a power which has produced whatever exists, and to which we cannot discover any limit. It may be capable of producing wonders, as far surpassing those which we perceive, as the whole fabric of the universe surpasses the little workmanship of mortal hands; but the relation of the Deity to these unexisting or unknown objects, is beyond the feebleness of our praise, as it is beyond the arrogance of our conception.

God, then, the Author of the universe, exists. He exists, with a wisdom which could comprehend every thing that fills infinity in one great design; with a power which could fill infinity itself with the splendid wonders that are, wherever we endeavour to extend our search. We know no limit to his wisdom, for all the knowledge which we are capable of acquiring flows from him as from its source; we know nothing which can limit his power, for every thing of which we know the existence, is the work of his hand.

God, then, thus wise and powerful, exists, and we are subject to his sway. We are subject to his sway: but, if all which we knew of his nature were his mere power and wisdom, the inquiry most interesting to us would still remain. The awful power, to which we perceive no limit, may be the sway of a tyrant, with greater means of tyranny than any earthly despot can possess, or it may be the sway of a father, who has more than parental fondness, and a power of blessing far more extensive than any parental power, which is but a shadow, and a faint shadow, of the divine goodness that has conferred it. If we were suddenly carried away into captivity, and sold as slaves, how eager should we be to discover whether our taskmaster was kind or cruel, whether we could venture to look to him with hope, or only with the terror which they feel, who are to see constantly above them a power which is to be exercised only in oppression, or whose kindness of a moment is the short interval of hours of tyranny! But I will not use such an illustration in speaking of God and man. The paternal and filial relation is the only one which can be considered as faintly representing it; and to what son can it be indifferent whether his father be gentle or severe? The goodness of God is, of all subjects of inquiry, that which is most interesting to us. It is the goodness of him to whom we owe, not merely that we exist, but that we are happy or miserable now, and, according to which we are to hope or fear for a future that is not limited to a few years, but extends through all the ages of immortality. Have we, then, reason to believe that God is good? that the designing power, which it is impossible for us not to perceive and admit, is a power of cruelty or kindness? Of whom is this the question? Of those whose whole life has been a continued display of the bountiful provision of Heaven, from the first moment at which life began.

It is the inquiry of those who, by the goodness of that God whose goodness they question, found, on their very entrance into this scene of life, sources of friendship already provided for them, merely because they had wants that already required friendship; whose first years were years of cheerfulness almost uninterrupted, as if existence were all that is necessary for happiness; to whom, in after-life, almost every exertion which they were capable of making was a pleasure, and almost every object which met their eye, a sense of direct gratification, or of knowledge, which was itself delightful; who were not formed to be only thus selfishly happy, but seemed called, by some propitious voice of nature, to the diffusion of happiness, by the enjoyment which arose from that very diffusion, and warned from injuring others, by the pain which accompanied the very wish of doing evil, and the still greater pain of remorse, when evil had at any time been intentionally inflicted. Nor is it to be counted a slight part of the goodness of God, that he has given us that very goodness as an object of our thought, and has thus opened to us, inexhaustibly, a pure and sublime pleasure in the contemplation of those divine qualities, which are themselves the source of all the pleasures that we feel.

Such is the goodness of God, in its relation to mankind, in infancy, in manhood, in every period of life. But we are not to think that the goodness of God extends only to man. The humblest life, which man despises, is not despised by him who made man of nothing, and all things of nothing, and "whose tender mercies are over all his works."

Has God, thou fool, work'd solely for thy good,
Thy joy, thy pastime, thy attire, thy food?
Who for thy table feeds the wanton fawn,
For him as kindly spread the flow'ry lawn.
Is it for thee the lark ascends and sings?
Joy tunes his voice, joy elevates his wings.
Is it for thee the linnet pours his throat?
Loves of his own and raptures swell the note.
The bounding steed you pompously bestride,
Shares with his lord the pleasure and the pride.
Is thine alone, the seed that strews the plain?
The birds of heaven shall vindicate their grain.*

In vain do we strive to represent to ourselves all nature as our own, and only our own. The happiness which we see the other races around us enjoying, is a proof that it is theirs as well as ours; and that he, who has given us the dominion of all things that live on earth, has not forgotten the creatures which he has intrusted to our sway. Even in the deserts, in which our sway is not acknowledged, where the lion, if man approached, would see no lord before whom to tremble, but a creature far feebler than the ordinary victims of his hunger or his wrath,—in the dens and the wildernesses there are pleasures which owe nothing to us, but which are not the less felt by the fierce hearts that inhabit the dreadful recesses. They, too, have their happiness; because they too were created by a Power that is good, and of whose beneficent design, in forming the world, with all its myriads of myriads of varied races of inhabitants, the happiness of these was a part.

"Nor," as it has been truly said, "is the design abortive. It is a happy world after all. The air, the earth, the water, teem with delighted existence. In a spring noon, or a summer evening, on whichever side I turn my eyes, myriads of happy beings crowd upon my view. 'The insect youth are on the wing.' Swarms of new-born flies are trying their pinions in the air. Their sportive motions, their wanton mazes, their gratuitous activity, their continual change of place without use or purpose, testify their joy, and the exultation which they feel in their lately discovered faculties. A bee amongst the flowers in spring, is one of the most cheerful objects that can be looked upon. Its life appears to be all enjoyment; so busy and so pleased: yet it is only a specimen of insect life, with which, by reason of the animal being half-domesticated, we happen to be better acquainted than we are with that of others."†

Such is the seemingly happy existence of that minute species of life which is so abundant in every part of the great scene in which we dwell. I shall not attempt to trace the happiness upward, through all the alacrity and seeming delight in existence, of the larger animals,—an ever-flowing pleasure, of which those who have had the best opportunities of witnessing multitudes of gregarious animals feeding together, and rejoicing in their common pasture, will be the best able to appreciate the amount. All have means of enjoyment within themselves; and, if man be the happy sovereign of the creation, he is not the sovereign of miserable subjects.

Ask for what end the heavenly bodies shine,
Earth for whose use? Pride answers, 'tis for mine.
For me, kind nature wakes her genial power,
Suckles each herb, and spreads out every flower;
Annual for me, the grape, the rose renew
The juice nectareous, and the balmy dew;
For me, the mine a thousand treasures brings;
For me, health gushes from a thousand springs;
Seas roll to waft me, suns to light me rise:
My footstool earth, my canopy the skies.‡

All these sources of blessings that are infinite as the living beings that enjoy them, were made, indeed, for man, whose pride makes the arrogant exclusive assumption; but they were also made for innumerable beings, whose very existence is unknown to man, and who know not in their turn, the existence of him who supposes that all these means of happiness are for himself alone. There is at every moment an amount of happiness on the earth, of which the happiness of all mankind is an element, indeed, but only one of many elements, that perhaps bears but a small proportion to the rest; and it is not of this single element that we are to think, when we consider the benevolence of that God who has willed the whole.

It is this element of the universal happiness, however, with which we are best acquainted; and when man is the inquirer, it is to this human part of course that we may suppose his attention to be chiefly turned. But man the enjoyer is very different from man the estimator of enjoyment. In making our estimate of happiness, we think only or chiefly of what is remarkable, not of what is ordinary; as, in physics, we think of the rarer phenomena far more than of the appearances of nature, which are every moment before our eyes. There are innumerable delights, therefore, of the senses, of the understanding, of the heart, which we forget, because they are delights to which we are every hour accustomed, and which are shared with us by all mankind, or the greater

* Pope's Essay on Man, Ep. iii. v. 27—38.

† Paley's Natural Theology, p. 392.
‡ Essay on Man, Ep. i. v. 131—140

number of mankind. It is what distinguishes us from our fellows that we consider; and this, the very circumstance of distinction necessarily limits to a few; not what is common to us with our fellows, which, by the very wideness of the participation, is of an amount that is incomparably greater. We think of the benevolence of the Author of the whole race of mankind, therefore, as less than it is, because it is a benevolence that has provided for the whole race of mankind; and if the amount of good provided for every living being had been less in the extent of its diffusion, we should, in our erring estimate, have regarded it as more, at least if ourselves had been of the number of the privileged few, who alone enjoyed those general blessings of nature which now are common to all.

"Non dat Deus beneficia?—unde ergo ista quæ possides, quæ das, quæ negas, quæ servas, quæ rapis? unde hæc innumerabilia, oculos, aures, animum mulcentia? unde illa luxuriam quoque instruens copia? Neque enim necessitatibus tantummodo nostris provisum est: usque in delicias amamur.—Si pauca quis tibi donâsset jugera, accepisse te diceres beneficium: immensa terrarum latè patentium spatia negas esse beneficium!"* It is truly, as this eloquent writer says, the possession of the common glories of the earth, the sky, of all nature that is before us and above us, which is the most valuable possession of man; and the few acres which he enjoys, or thinks that he enjoys exclusively, compared with that greater gift of heaven to all mankind, are scarcely worthy of being counted as a proof of divine beneficence.

But though life to man, and to his fellow-inhabitants of earth, be a source of happiness upon the whole, it is not always, and in every instance, a source of happiness. There is not a moment, indeed, in which the quantity of agreeable sensation felt by myriads of creatures, may not be far greater than all the pain which is felt at the same moment. But still there is no moment in which pain, and a very considerable amount of pain, is not felt. Can he be good, then, under whose supreme government, and therefore almost, it may be said, at whose bidding, pain exists? Before entering on this inquiry, however, it may be necessary to obviate an objection that arises from the mere limitation of our nature as finite beings.

Many of the complaints of those who are discontented with the system of the universe, arise from this mere limitation of our faculties and enjoyments; a limitation in which ingratitude would find an argument, in whatever state of being short of absolute divinity it might be placed; and even though possessing all the functions of divinity from the moment at which it was created, might still look back through eternity, and complain with the same reason, that it had not been created earlier to the exercise of such sublime functions.

It surely is not necessary, for the proof of benevolence on the part of the divine Being, that man should be himself a god; that he should be omniscient or omnipotent, any more than that he should have existed from eternity. His senses, with all his other faculties, are limited, because they are the faculties of a created being; as even his immortality may, in one sense of the word, be said to be limited, when considered in relation to the eternity that preceded his existence. But how admirably does even the limitation of his nature demonstrate the gracious benevolence of Heaven, when we consider the innumerable relations of the universe that must have been contrived, in adaptation to the exact degree of his capacity, so as to be most productive of good in these particular circumstances. If we think only how very slight a change in the qualities of external things, though perfectly suitable, perhaps, to a different degree of sensitive and intellectual capacity, might have rendered the existence of man absolutely miserable, how sublimely benevolent seems that wisdom, in the very minuteness of its care, which, by proportioning exactly the qualities of atoms to the qualities of that which, in the world of spirits, may be considered as scarcely more than what an atom is in the material world, has produced, amid so many possibilities of misery, this result of happiness.

You are probably all acquainted with the lines of Pope, so often quoted on this subject, that express briefly, and with great poetic force, the reasoning of Mr. Locke on this subject, which, perhaps, suggested them.

> The bliss of man, could pride that blessing find,
> Is, not to act or think beyond mankind;
> No powers of body or of soul to share,
> But what his nature and his state can bear.
> Why has not man a microscopic eye?
> For this plain reason, Man is not a fly.
> Say, what the use, were finer optics given,
> To inspect a mite, not comprehend the heaven?
> Or touch, if tremblingly alive all o'er,
> To smart and agonize at every pore:
> Or, quick effluvia darting through the brain,
> Die of a rose in aromatic pain?
> If Nature thundered in his opening ears,
> And stunn'd him with the music of the spheres,
> How would he wish that heaven had left him still
> The whispering zephyr and the purling rill!†

We see, then, the advantage of the adaptation of our limited powers to the particular circumstances of nature.

But appearances of evil unquestionably exist, that are not to be ascribed to the mere

* Seneca de Beneficiis, lib. iv. cap. v. vi.

† Essay on Man, Ep. i. v. 189—204.

limitation of our faculties, in relation to the finite system of things in which they are to be exercised. Let us now, then, proceed in part to the consideration of the question, as to the compatibility of these appearances with benevolence in the contriver of the universe.

The objection to the goodness of the supreme Being, involved in this question, of course proceeds on the supposition that the Deity had the power of forming us differently; a power, therefore, which I need not stop to attempt to prove, since, unless this be taken for granted by the objector, the objection would be nugatory.

But if the Deity had the power of forming us differently—if, for example, he could have so constituted our nature, that every object amid which we were placed must have been a source of pain—that habit, instead of lessening the sense of pain, had continually increased it—that, instead of an almost constant tendency to hope, we had had an equally constant tendency to the most gloomy apprehension—that we had felt pleasure in inflicting pain gratuitously, and remorse only if we had inadvertently done good,—if all this had been, it would surely have been a conclusion as just as obvious, that the contriver of this system of misery was, in his own nature, malevolent; and any happiness which seemed slightly felt at times—especially if the happiness was the manifest result of a contrivance that, upon the whole, tended far more frequently to the production of pain—might, without any violation of the principles of sound philosophy, have been ascribed to an intention purely malevolent, as indicated by the general contrivance obviously adapted for the production of pain. If, in such a system of things, any one had contended for the benevolence of the Deity from these few instances of pleasure, it would have been counted, as I cannot but think, a satisfactory answer, to have proved that the ordinary result of the contrivance must be pain; and to have pointed out the manifest subserviency of the different parts of the contrivance to this cruel purpose.

If this answer would be held valid, in the case now supposed, the opposite answer cannot be less valid, in the opposite circumstances in which we exist. I need not repeat, how much gratification we receive from the objects around us, nor fill up that antithesis to the former statement, which would probably occur to yourselves, while I imagined and stated its various circumstances. I shall dwell only on the pain, that is the occasional result of the system of things as it is. Is this the result of a contrivance, of which pain seems to be the manifest object, or of a contrivance which is manifestly, in its general and obvious appearances, adapted for purposes of utility, and consequently of goodness? "Evil, no doubt, exists," says Paley, "but is never, that we can perceive, the object of contrivance. Teeth are contrived to eat, not to ache; their aching now and then is incidental to the contrivance, perhaps inseparable from it; or even, if you will, let it be called a defect in the contrivance; but it is not the object of it. This is a distinction which well deserves to be attended to. In describing implements of husbandry, you would hardly say of the sickle, that it was made to cut the reaper's hand; though, from the construction of the instrument, and the manner of using it, this mischief often follows. But, if you had occasion to describe instruments of torture, or execution, this engine, you would say, is to extend the sinews; this to dislocate the joints; this to break the bones; this to scorch the soles of the feet. Here pain and misery are the very objects of the contrivance. Now, nothing of this sort is to be found in the frame of nature. We never discover a train of contrivance to bring about an evil purpose. No anatomist ever observed a system of organization calculated to produce pain and disease; or, in explaining the parts of the human body, ever said, this is to irritate, this to inflame, this duct is to convey the gravel to the kidneys, this gland to secrete the humour which forms the gout. If, by chance, he come to a part of which he knows not the use, the most he can say is, that it is useless; no one ever suspects that it is put there to incommode, to annoy, or to torment."*

When the direct object of all the great contrivances of nature, then, is so manifestly for beneficial purposes, it would be reasonable, even though no advantage could be traced, as the consequence of the occasional evils of life, to ascribe these rather to purposes unknown to us, than to purposes that were malevolent. If the inhabitant of some other planet were to witness the kindness and solicitude of a father for his child in his long watchfulness of love, and were then to see the same parent force the child, notwithstanding its cries, to swallow some bitter potion, he would surely conclude, not that the father was cruel, but that the child was to derive benefit from the very potion which he loathed. What that benefit was, indeed, it would be impossible for him to conceive, but he would not conceive the less that the intention was benevolent. He would feel his own ignorance of the constitution of things on earth, and would be confident, that if he knew this constitution better, the seeming inconsistency of the affection, and the production of suffering, would be removed.

Such a presumption would be reasonable,

* Moral and Political Philosophy, book ii. chap. v.

even though we were incapable of discovering, in many cases, the advantage to which the seeming evil is subservient. It is very evident, that he only who knows all the relations of the parts of the universe, can justly appreciate the universe, and say with confidence of any part of it, It were better that this had not been. In our state of partial and very limited knowledge, if we say this of any part of the wonderful mechanism, we may perhaps say it of that, which not being, the happiness of millions would have been destroyed; we may say it even of that, the loss of which would be the confusion of all the systems of the universe.

> Let earth unbalanced from her orbit fly,
> Planets and suns run lawless through the sky;
> Let ruling angels from their spheres be hurled,
> Being on being wrecked, and world on world;
> Heaven's whole foundations to their centre nod,
> And nature tremble to the throne of God.
> All this dread order break, for whom? for thee?
> Vile worm! Oh! madness, pride, impiety!*

What should we think of him, who, fixing his whole attention on the dim figures in the background of a great picture, should say, that the artist had no excellence, because these figures had little resemblance to the clear outline of the men and horses that seemed intended to be represented by them! All which would be necessary to vindicate the artist, would not be to make the slightest alteration in these figures, but to point out to the observer the foreground, and to bid him comprehend the whole picture in a glance. The universe is, if I may so express it, such a picture, but a picture far too large to be comprehended in our little gaze; the parts which we see have always some relation to parts which we do not see; and, if all these relations could be seen by us, there can be no doubt that the universe would then appear to us very different, as different, perhaps, as the picture seems to him who has looked only on the background, and who afterwards surveys the whole.

All reasoning of this kind, however, that is founded merely on our impossibility of accurate knowledge, is, I am aware, and am ready to admit, of little weight, unless where there is so decided a superiority of good or evil in the parts that may be conceived to be in a great measure known, as to leave no reasonable doubt as to the nature of the parts or relations of parts that are unknown. It is on this account, and on this account only, I consider it as of peculiar force in the present instance; for I surely need not say, after the remarks already made, how strong are the appearances of benevolent intention in the system of the universe, in all those manifest contrivances, of which we are able clearly to discover the object.

The divine Being who has contrived a system, that must thus, on every hypothesis, be allowed to be productive of much good to man, must be benevolent, malevolent, or indifferent, or capriciously benevolent and malevolent. That he is not indifferent, every contrivance itself shows. That he is not capricious, is shown by the uniformity of all the laws of nature, since the world has been a subject of human observation. That he is not malevolent, the far greater proportion of the marks of benevolent intention sufficiently indicates; and since his benevolence, therefore, is not capricious, the only remaining supposition is, that it is the permanent character of the divine mind.

The presumption, then, as to the goodness of God, even in the apparent evils of the system in which man is placed, would be a reasonable presumption, though, with our limited comprehension, we were incapable of discovering the advantages that flow from these particular seeming evils. What we see clearly might be regarded as throwing light on other parts of the immense whole, which are too dim for our feeble vision.

When a fair estimate, then, has been made of all the indications of the moral character of its author, which the universe exhibits, it is logically wise to infer, in many cases, a goodness that is not immediately apparent in the particular results. But, feeble as our faculties are, they are not so weak of vision and comprehension as to be incapable of distinguishing many of the relations of apparent evil to real good. There are many evils, that is to say, qualities productive of uneasiness, which the ignorant, indeed, might wish removed, but which those who have a little more knowledge would wish to continue, though the continuance or the disappearance of them depended on their mere will; and every discovery of this sort which we make, adds new force to that general presumption of goodness, which, even though we had been incapable of making any such discovery, would have been justified by the general character of benevolent intention, in the obvious contrivances of the universe. In treating of our appetites, I took occasion to explain to you the importance of the uneasy feelings which form a part of them. The ignorant, perhaps, might wish these removed, merely because they are uneasy feelings, though it is only as uneasy feelings they are valuable. The evils which we too might wish removed, are, perhaps, as important in their general relations, which we do not perceive, as hunger and thirst are in those relations, of which the vulgar do not think, and may almost be said, from their habits, to be incapable of thinking.

The analogy of many of the ills of life in their beneficial relation to our pains of appe-

* Pope's Essay on Man, Ep. i. v. 251—258.

tite, is, indeed, very striking. Without the uneasiness of ungratified desire in general, how feeble, in many cases, would be the delight of the gratification itself! He, certainly, would not consult well for human happiness, by whom every human desire, if it were in his power, would be rooted from the breast.

It is, in its relation to the enjoyments of conscious moral agency, however, that the existence of so much seeming evil in the world finds its best solution. To this I shall proceed in my next Lecture.

LECTURE XCIV.

OF THE GOODNESS OF THE DEITY—OBJECTIONS OBVIATED.

In my last Lecture, Gentlemen, I considered the evidence which the universe exhibits of the goodness of its Author,—a goodness which, limited in its extent only by the limits of the universe itself, is present with us wherever we turn our eyes; since there is not a result of the wisdom and power of God which is not, in its consequences, direct or indirect, an exhibition of some contrivance, for the moral or physical advantage of his creatures.

Though every thing which we behold, however, may, in its general relations, tend to this benevolent purpose, good, or at least what seems to be good, is far from being in every case the immediate result. There is misery in the world, as truly as there is happiness in the world; and he who denies the one, as a mere phenomenon of the living scene in which he is placed, might with as much reason deny the other. Whence, then, is this evil, has been the question of every age, that has been capable of inquiries beyond those which originate in mere animal necessity.

> That eternal mind,
> From passions, wants, and envy, far estranged,
> Who built the spacious universe, and decked
> Each part so richly with whate'er pertains
> To life, to health, to pleasure,—why bade he
> The viper evil, creeping in, pollute
> The goodly scene; and, with insidious rage,
> While the poor inmate looks around and smiles,
> Dart her fell sting, with poison to his soul?*

Such has been the question of ages; and if, for answer to it, in accordance with belief of the goodness of the Deity, it be necessary that the particular advantage of each particular seeming evil be precisely demonstrated, it must be confessed that no answer has yet been given to it by philosophy; and that, in this sense, probably the question must continue unanswered, as long at least as man is a creature of this earth. To be able to answer it in this sense, indeed, would imply a knowledge of all the relations of all existing things, which is possible only to a being that can look upon the future still more clearly than man with his dim memory is permitted to look upon the past. But though we cannot state precisely a particular advantage of each seeming evil, we can at least infer, from the general appearances of nature, and the more minute and intimate contrivances which it exhibits, the moral character of that Power which has formed us; so as to know of any particular contrivance, the particular effects of which we may be incapable of tracing, whether he who designed it as a part of a system was one who willed, or did not will, the happiness of mankind. We may infer it certainly with as great accuracy, or far greater, than that with which we infer the benevolent or malevolent disposition of our friends or foes; and, if it be reasonable in the case of a friend, whose kindness has been the source of the chief happiness of our life, to infer, in some cases, in which we might have doubted of the intentions of others,—that his intentions might have been friendly to us, even when we suffer by the immediate results of his actions; that confidence which we should blush not to feel in the case of an earthly friend, who, though known to us by long intimacy of mutual regard, may yet have been influenced by rivalries of interest or momentary passion, is surely not less reasonable, when he, in whom we confide, is the only friend that cannot have with us any rival interests,—a friend to whom we are indebted for every thing which we possess, even for the delights of those cordial intimacies, and for that very confidence which we think it the baseness of dishonour to withhold from any friend, but from that one who alone deserves it fully. It is surely not too much to claim for God, what, in the ordinary circumstances of society, we should regard as in some measure ignominious to deny to man; or at least, if it seem too much for human gratitude to extend this trust to its first of benefactors, let us not have the selfish inconsistency of daring to claim from our own friends a confidence, which, in circumstances of far less equivocal obligation, we consider it only as wise and virtuous to deny to God.

That, in all the innumerable contrivances of nature, in the wonderful mechanism of the living frame, there is not one of which the production of injury seems to have been the direct object, whatever occasional evil may indirectly arise from it; and that there are innumerable contrivances, of which the direct object is manifestly beneficial, may be regarded as a sufficient proof of the general disposition and gracious intention of him, to

* Pleasures of Imagination, book iii.

whose power and wisdom we ascribe these contrivances. In my lecture yesterday, I endeavoured to picture to you a constitution of things, exactly the opposite of that which at present subsists; in which the evident direct object of every contrivance was the production of misery,—in which, in this misery, man, instead of the constant tendency to hope which now comforts him in affliction, had an equally constant tendency to despair, and become more keenly sensible to pain, the more he had been habituated to it; and as, in that case, where the direct object of every contrivance was manifestly injurious, no one would infer benevolence from any occasional tendency of the laws of that contrivance, to produce some slight gratification to the sufferer, when the incidental pleasure flowed from the same principle which produced the general anguish; so, in the present constitution of things, in which the direct object of every contrivance is beneficial to man, there is surely as little reason to infer any malevolent desire, from evils that arise in consequence of a general provision, which is, in all those general circumstances, to which it manifestly relates, decidedly productive of good.

The supreme orderer of the frame of nature, as I have said, is not capricious; for the laws which now regulate the universe, are the same which have been observed since man was an observer. He is not indifferent to the happiness or misery of man, for man exists as a being capable of happiness or misery; and every relation, or almost every relation, which connects man with the living or inanimate objects around him, is productive to him, directly or indirectly, of some pleasure or pain. Equally evident is it, that He, whose general arrangements are all directly indicative of purposes of utility, that are only incidentally combined with any seeming evil, is not one who has willed, as the object of those arrangements, the misery of his living creatures; and if he be not malevolent, indifferent, nor capricious, he is and must be permanently benevolent, and the seeming evil has not been willed as evil. We are bound, therefore, not more by gratitude than by sound philosophy, to confide in the gracious intentions of Heaven, even when the graciousness of those intentions is to be determined, not by a particular result, that of itself,—if it had existed alone,—might not have seemed indicative of it, but by the general indications of moral character which the system, as a whole, exhibits.

An inference and extension of this kind, I have admitted, would not be reasonable, however, unless when the indications of gracious intention prevailed with indubitable superiority. But of this superiority, in the physical relations of things, who can doubt, who estimates the beneficent arrangements of the Author of the universe with half the candour with which he estimates the conduct and the character of a common earthly friend?

The operations of nature are not arbitrary, so as to vary with the particular circumstances of the individual and of the moment; and if it be of importance for man to be a designing agent, to have the noble consciousness of acting according to his own desire, and not to be the mere passive subject even of pleasure itself,—which he who can doubt is scarcely worthy of the name of man,—it is evidently of importance that the phenomena of nature should thus take place, according to general laws, that, by his foresight of their results, he may regulate his conduct in adaptation to them. The law, or regular arrangement of the sequences of events in nature, which produces good upon the whole, is not to be suspended, because it may, to an individual in particular circumstances, be productive of evil; since, if it were thus variable, no one could even guess what the result could be in any combination of circumstances; and the evil which would arise from this uncertainty to the whole race of mankind, would unquestionably be far greater than the evil that might arise to a single individual, from the uniformity in cases in which it might, to that particular individual, at that particular moment, have been profitable that the law were suspended.

> Think we, like some weak prince, the Eternal Cause,
> Prone for his fav'rites to reverse his laws?
> Shall burning Ætna, if a sage requires,
> Forget to thunder and recall her fires?
> On air or sea, new motions be imprest,
> O blameless Bethel, to relieve thy breast?
> When the loose mountain trembles from on high,
> Shall gravitation cease, if you go by?*

It is quite evident that even Omnipotence itself, which cannot do what is contradictory, cannot combine both advantages,—the advantage of regular order in the sequences of nature, and the advantage of an uniform adaptation of the particular circumstances of the moment, to the particular circumstances of the individual. We may take our choice, but we cannot think of a combination of both; and if, as is very obvious, the greater advantage be that of uniformity of operation, we must not complain of evils to which that very uniformity, which we could not fail to prefer if the option had been allowed to us, has been the very circumstance that gave rise. You cannot fail to perceive of yourselves how much of that which we term evil is referable to this circumstance alone,—a circumstance which, in every instance, occasions to us momentary suffering indeed, but which, in every instance, leaves to us, or rather confers on us, the glorious privilege

* Essay on Man, Ep. iv. v. 121—128.

of conscious agency, of that agency with design, which implies a foreknowledge of certain events, as the consequents of certain other antecedent events. That the phenomena of nature should take place, then, according to general laws, and should not be various according to the particular circumstances of the individuals, to whom a temporary accommodation of them might seem more advantageous in some particular cases, is so obvious, if man is to be at all a reflecting and conscious agent, that I conceive it unnecessary to dwell at any length on the demonstration of it.

But general laws, it will be said, might have been framed, possessing all the advantages of regularity, and productive of less suffering. Is there any advantage, then, of suffering itself, that may reconcile it, more readily at least, with that divine goodness, the reality of which, as a quality of him to whose sway we are subject, it is so delightful to believe?

There are such relations of occasional suffering to lasting advantage, which, in many most important respects, could not exist but for the suffering, and for which all the suffering itself is not too dear a price.

The great advantage is to be found in the exercise of virtues, to which suffering, or the risk of suffering, is essential, and in all the enjoyment that flows from the conciousness of these virtues in ourselves, and from our admiration of them as displayed by others.

But, though this relation to moral character is unquestionably the chief advantage, and that which might of itself be sufficient to account, in a great measure, for the mixture of apparent evil in the universe, it is not perhaps all. I cannot but think likewise, that, independently of such moral advantages, some estimate is to be made of the relation which many of our physical evils bear to our mere mortality, as necessary for the production of successive races of mankind. On this relation, therefore, inconsiderable as it is, when compared with the moral advantage which we are afterwards to examine, a few remarks may not be absolutely unimportant.

It is of advantage, upon the whole, if the earth, in either way, were to support exactly the same number of inhabitants, that there should be a succession of races, rather than one continued race. In the case of man, for example, of which we can best speak,—though we omit all consideration of the multitude of beings who are thus transmitted, after what is perhaps a necessary preparation, to a scene of higher existence, and think merely of the circumstances of this earth, how much of human happiness would be destroyed, but for such a provision of alternate weakness to be sheltered, and love to be the guardian of weakness. Where there is no succession of races, all filial and parental and consanguineal relations of every sort are, of course, out of the question; and, consequently, all the happiness which such relations bestow. Indeed, in a long life of this kind, all the associations which are now productive of so much delight, would probably be wholly powerless. The home of fifty or a hundred years would cease perhaps to be our home; and be succeeded by so many other homes of the same period, that the effect on our feelings, thus divided among so many scenes, would be the same as if we had no country or home whatever. As things are at present, there is not a moment in which thousands of our kind are not deriving pleasure from an infinity of objects, that, to an immortal race of beings similar to us in every respect but mortality, would long have ceased to afford gratification. There is a constant succession of new spirits, full of all the alacrity of new existence, and enjoying the delight of new objects; and the contemplation of this very scene, so beautifully diversified with the quick hopes of youth, and the slower deliberative wisdom of manhood, is one of the chief pleasures which the universe, as an object of thought, affords. But, though nothing more were gained than the mere relations of consanguinity, to which the present system gives rise, who could hesitate for a moment in determining by which of the two systems the greater good would be produced,—by an almost immortal earthly existence, coeval with the whole system of earthly things, or by that shorter mortality which allows, therefore, room for successive generations, and for all the kind affections which these generations, as they successively arise, evolve? To remove from life that tenderness which flows from the protection and instruction of infancy, and that tenderness which is reflected back from the little smiler who is the object of it, to all who are smiling around him, would be, in its ultimate effects on the maturer feelings of manhood, to destroy not the happiness merely, but half the virtue of mankind.

The very briefness of life, afflicting as it is in many cases, is, in some cases,—which, comparatively few as they may be, are not to be neglected in our general estimate,—essential to comfort. There are situations in which hope, that is so little apt to desert the afflicted, scarcely arises, unless when it speaks of other scenes, and in which death, the opener of immortality, is hailed as that gracious comforter who receives the combatant when the warfare of life is over; and, preparing for him at once the couch and the laurel, leads him to glory in leading him to repose.

I need not pause, however, to state the various advantages arising from a succession

of races on earth, rather than an unvarying number. I may very safely consider you as taking this for granted.

If it be of advantage, then, that one generation of mankind should successively yield its place to another generation, the question comes to be, in what manner it is most expedient that death should take place? That, in whatever way it take place, it is most expedient, upon the whole, that it should occur according to some general law, and not capriciously, I may consider as already proved; and the question therefore is, what general provision for this great change would be most advantageous?

It is evident, in the first place, that if life had followed a certain exact proportion in point of time,—if, like a clock for example, that is wound up so as to tell the hour for a certain number of days, and then to cease wholly its motion, human life had ceased at a certain exact beat of the pulse, and could not cease but at that particular moment; all the advantage which arises from the uncertainty of the period of death must have been lost. Till the moment approached there could be no fear, and consequently no restraint, which fear alone imposes; and when the period approached, life, if its continuation were at all an object of desire, could be only the sad calculation of the condemned criminal, who makes miserable every moment that passes, by the thought that he is on the point of losing it; though to lose such a moment, or at least a succession of such moments, is itself no slight gain. By that provision which has made death uncertain in its period, man does not suspend his labours, and consequently withdraw his portion of service from mankind, till the last moment in which he can be useful. "Sepulchri immemor, struit domos." He may toil for himself, indeed, in executing these vain projects; but, in toiling for himself he toils also for society.

It is of no slight importance, then, for the happiness both of the individual himself, and of those around him, and thus of society in general, that the moment of death should not be exactly foreseen. It must be made to depend, therefore, on circumstances in the physical constitution of individuals, which may arise or be readily induced at any time. It becomes a question, accordingly, whether these circumstances should be agreeable, indifferent, or disagreeable,—in short, whether there should be any malady preceding death.

If the train of symptoms that constitute what we now term disease were indifferent or agreeable, I need scarcely say how much of the salutary fear of death itself would be removed. It is not a mere separation from life, which is commonly considered under that name, but a combination of many images, which produce a far more powerful effect than the single image of death. The brave man, in the most perilous field of battle, it has hence often been remarked, is a coward, perhaps, on the bed of sickness. There was death, indeed, or the very near prospect of death, before him in both cases; but in the one case, death was combined with images that made it scarcely terrible; in the other case, with images more terrifying than itself. If, by exposure to the common causes of disease at present, we were to expose ourselves only to a succession of delightful feelings, how rash would those be, who are even at present rash; and, even when the series of delightful feelings had begun, how little power comparatively would these have in exciting to the exertion that might be necessary for suspending their course. If hunger had been pleasing, who would have hastened as now to satisfy the appetite?—and, with respect to mortality, all the slight maladies resulting from exposure to causes of injury, may be considered as resembling the pain of hunger, that points out approaching evil, and warns how to obviate it. It is necessary, indeed, for the welfare of society, that death should not be exactly foreseen; but it is necessary for its welfare also, that it should not be so very sudden and frequent, as to prevent a sufficient reliance on the continued co-operation of others, in the ordinary business of the world. The present constitution of things seems, even when considered only in its civil relations, admirably adapted for such a medium as is requisite; giving to the circumstances that precede death that moderate terror which is necessary for saving from rash exposure to them, and still leaving death itself as an event, which it is in our power to avert perhaps for a time, but not wholly to avoid.

All the advantage, however, which is thus produced by the painful maladies of life, I readily confess, would be too slight to put in the balance with the amount of pain which arises from these maladies. But it is still a circumstance, and an important one, to be placed in the scale, though it be not sufficient to produce a preponderance or an equipoise. The true preponderating weight, compared with which every other circumstance seems almost insignificant, is that which I have next to consider—the relation of pain to moral character.

It is of advantage to the moral character in two ways; as warning from vice by the penalties attached to vicious conduct, and as giving strength to virtue, by the benevolent wishes which it awakes and fosters, and by the very sufferings themselves which are borne with a feeling of moral approbation

That pain, in many instances, warns and saves from vice, I scarcely stop to prove. It is in this way, indeed, that our bodily ailments become morally so important. How much of temperance arises from them! The headach, the sickness, the languor, the more lasting disease, may, indeed, have little effect in overcoming habits of confirmed debauchery; but, which is of far more importance, how many slight and temporary indulgences in vice do they prevent from being confirmed into habits! How many ingenuous and noble minds are there, which, at a period of life when it is so difficult to resist example that offers itself in the seductive form of pleasure, would pass from excess to excess, and lose gradually all capacity of better wishes, but for those ailments which may be considered almost as a sort of bodily conscience—a conscience that reproaches for the past, and that, in reproaching for the past, calls to beware of the future! In addition to this, however, as warning not from intemperance merely, but from every species of vice, is the conscience which most truly deserves that name—the sense of self-degradation, when we have acted in a manner unworthy of a being so nobly gifted; that dreadful voice which it is impossible to fly, because it is with us wherever we may fly, and which we can still only in one manner—by acting so as to merit, not its silence only, but its applause.

Such, independently of the beneficial influence of the fears of futurity which religion superadds, are the advantages of pain, as warning from vice. By the kindness of our Creator there is a connexion established between that bodily indulgence, which does not merely occupy the time of virtue, but renders us incapable of virtue, and a bodily uneasiness, that reminds us for what more important purposes we were formed; and, by a still more salutary provision, there is a connexion still more permanent, by which the commission of a single crime is to us for ever after, in the painful remorse that is felt by us, an exhortation to virtue, and an exhortation that is more urgent and efficacious as the painful remorse itself is more severe.

The advantage of suffering, then, as a warning from vice, is sufficiently obvious; at least in that constitution of things in which man is capable of vice and virtue.

But, in such a constitution of things, is it less necessary for the formation of virtue itself; of that noble virtue which alone is worthy of man—a virtue that feels for the sorrows of others, and that bears its own, that can see a thousand pleasures tempting it from duty, and can look on them with as little desire as it would feel to quit its path when hastening to discharge some high office, merely to gather a few wild-flowers that were blooming at a distance—a virtue, to which there may be peril but not fear, that sees nothing truly worthy of being dreaded but vice, and that counts no suffering above its strength which has conscience for its support, and God for its approver?

When we look on some father of a family on his bed of sickness, what is it that we see? There are, indeed, the obvious characters of suffering. On his own countenance there is that paleness which seems as if it scarcely knew how to smile, and there is, perhaps, in his eye a sadness of more than disease; a sadness which has its cause, not in his own heart, but in the hearts of others. On the faces of those around him there is no look but of grief; for the hope that may rise at times is but the feeling of a moment, and is not sufficiently lasting to alter the fixed character of the melancholy countenance. All that our mere eyes behold then is grief. But do our hearts, when our eyes are thus occupied with an aspect of evil, see nothing more? Do they not look beyond the moment, and perceive virtue present as truly as sorrow, and diffusing her better influence, which is not to be lost even when the grief has passed away? The little bosoms around that bed have already acquired a benefit of which they are not conscious; and, even when this hour is not present to them, the gentleness of this hour will still remain. There will be a quicker disposition to feel for others what they have themselves suffered, a warmer love for those who have wept with them together, a patience more ready to endure, from the remembrance of that venerable form, who, in resigning his spirit to God, resigned with meek submission, to the same almighty care, the happiness of many, whose happiness, far dearer to him than his own, was the last object which earth presented to his thought.

If the kind affections be blessings to the heart which feels them—blessings, of which the heart must be unworthy, indeed, that would divest itself of them, for all the happiness of another kind with which the most sensual would decorate to themselves a world of gaudy felicity, in which passive pleasure was all that was to be known, without one virtue to be felt, and consequently, without one virtuous act to be remembered,—if the kind affections be so inestimable, that also must be inestimable, by which these affections are best promoted. The grief of one, it must be remembered, may be the pity of many, and may foster, therefore, the benevolence of many,—so careful is nature to produce what is good in itself, at the least expense of individual suffering. But there must be grief if there be pity, and without occasional feelings of pity there is comparatively little regard. For which child is it, that the heart of the mother, who strives to

divide her attentions equally, feels in secret, notwithstanding every effort to equalize her love, the warmest attachment? It is for that one which has been feeble from infancy, which has existed only by her continued care, which has deprived her of most hours of occupation or amusement abroad, of most hours, at night, of repose. This single instance might be sufficient to show the relation of pity to the growth of benevolent affection in general. There is not a house of suffering, which is not, by the very suffering which it presents, a school of virtue; and we do not distinguish the influence on our moral character which such lessons produce, merely because the influence is the result of innumerable lessons, the effect of each of which is slight, though, without the whole, there could be little affection of any sort. It is like the influence of the dew on the plant. We do not trace the operation of a single drop of moisture; but we know that, without the cherishing influence of many such drops, there could not be that flower which is at once so beautiful and so fragrant.

If we love, then, the benevolent affections, we must not repine that there exists, in nature, that which gives birth to those affections, and which calls them into exercise.

> Vain are thy thoughts, O child of mortal birth,
> And impotent thy tongue. Is thy short span
> Capacious of this universal frame?
> Thy wisdom all-sufficient? Thou, alas?
> Dost thou aspire to judge between the Lord
> Of nature and his works? To lift thy voice
> Against the sov'reign order he decreed
> All good and lovely?—To blaspheme the bands
> Of tenderness innate, and social love,
> Holiest of things;—by which the general orb
> Of being, as by adamantine links,
> Was drawn to perfect union, and sustain'd
> From everlasting! Hast thou felt the pangs
> Of softening sorrow, of indignant zeal
> So grievous to the soul, as thence to wish
> The ties of nature broken from thy frame,—
> That so thy selfish, unrelenting heart
> Might cease to mourn its lot,—no longer then
> The wretched heir of evils not its own?
> O fair benevolence of generous minds!
> O man, by nature form'd for all mankind.*

Such is the influence of suffering, in producing, or at least cherishing into far greater vividness of affection, the virtues of benevolence, and consequently its influence in increasing the delight which the benevolent affections, so richly, or rather so inexhaustibly, afford. But if its influence be decidedly favourable to this class of virtues, it is far more essential to the virtues of self-command. It is adversity in some one of its modifications which alone teaches us what we are. We must be in situations in which it is perilous to act, before we can know that we have the courage which is necessary for acting; we must engage with fortune before we know that we have the power of being its victor. It is for this reason that Seneca accounts him the most unhappy of mankind, whom the gods have not honoured with adversity, as worthy of subduing it. "Nihil infelicius mihi videtur eo, cui nihil unquam evenit adversi. Non licuit enim illi se experiri: ut ex voto illi fluxerint omnia, ut ante votum; male tamen de illo dii judicaverunt. Indignus visus est, a quo vinceretur fortuna."†

There are griefs which we pity, and which it is virtue to pity. But who is there that has ever dared to pity Mutius Scaevola, when he placed his hand in the flame; Regulus, when he returned to torture; Arria, when she fixed the poniard in her breast, and said so truly, *Non dolet?* Should we not feel, in presuming to pity what common minds might shrink to behold, or shrink even to conceive, that we were guilty of a sort of insult to the magnanimity which we admired? There is a voice within us which would say, how enviable is that glorious spirit! and cowardly as our souls are, there is only the feeblest of mankind that could think of classing virtue victorious over every sorrow which assails it, as on a level even with the empire of the world, if that empire were to be possessed by one, who could inflict torture, indeed, on thousands, but who would tremble at the thought of suffering one of the evils which he inflicts, though that evil were the slightest which could be inflicted, and the moral object for which he was called to suffer it, the noblest for which man could suffer.

In vain, therefore, do we strive to say that God, if he be good, should produce happiness only. He should indeed produce happiness; but if he should produce happiness, that is to say, what the world counts happiness, he should still more produce that which even the world itself regards with an admiration still greater than prosperity itself in its most flattering form. The very throbbing of our heart, at the tale of fortitude, confutes our querulous impiety. It tells us, that even we esteem it nobler to be placed in situations in which we may exercise virtue with the consciousness that we are acting as beseems man, and with the approbation of all who are themselves worthy of approbation, than to be placed in situations in which we have envy, indeed, but the envy only of those who think of our fortune, and not of ourselves. Our hearts then tell us, that the world in which man is best placed, is a world like that in which he is placed—a world in which, though he may occasionally have to struggle with affliction, he may in that very struggle have the delight of knowing, that he is more virtuous to-day than he was yesterday; that

* Pleasures of Imagination, book ii.

† De Providentia, cap. iii.

he is rising in excellence; that there are multitudes whom his example will animate to similar victory over that evil within the heart, which is the only evil that deserves our detestation or our fear; and that he has become less unworthy of admission into the presence of that God, whose presence, when virtue is admitted to it, is at once immortality and joy.

If, in contrast with such a character, we were to strive to form to ourselves a picture of life without one suffering, but without one benevolent feeling, or one joy of conscience, why is it that we should blush to ourselves, in preferring such a life, and that we join internally with such conscious approbation in that great prayer, which Juvenal offers to us as all that is worthy of man?

> Fortem posce animum, mortis terrore carentem;
> Qui spatium vitae extremum inter munera ponat
> Naturae, qui ferre queat quoscunque labores,
> Nesciat irasci, cupiat nihil, et potiores
> Herculis aerumnas credat saevosque labores,
> Et venere, et coenis, et plumâ Sardanapali.*

"Ask thy own heart," says Akenside, after describing, in one of the most splendid passages of his poem, the admiration with which we still enter into the fortunes of the heroic states of antiquity, and the sorrow and indignation which we feel in thinking of the tyranny before which they sunk:

> Thus defac'd,
> Thus widely mournful, when the prospect thrills
> Thy beating bosom, when the patriot's tear
> Starts from thine eye, and thy extended arm
> In fancy hurls the thunderbolt of Jove
> To fire the impious wreath on Philip's brow,
> Or dash Octavius from his trophied car;
> Say, does thy secret soul repine to taste
> The big distress? Or would'st thou then exchange
> Those heart-ennobling sorrows for the lot
> Of him who sits amid the gaudy herd
> Of mute barbarians bending to his nod,
> And bears aloft his gold-invested front,
> And says within himself, "I am a king,
> And wherefore should the clamorous voice of woe
> Intrude upon mine ear?" The baleful dregs
> Of these late ages, this inglorious draught
> Of servitude and folly, have not yet,
> Blest be the Eternal Ruler of the world!
> Defil'd to such a depth of sordid shame
> The native honours of the human soul;
> Nor so effac'd the image of its sire.†

We feel, in such a case, that man is formed for something more than pleasure; that the afflictions of this world are sources of all that is noble in us; and that, what it is for the dignity of man to feel, it could not be unworthy of God to bestow.

LECTURE XCV.

OF THE GOODNESS OF THE DEITY—OBJECTIONS OBVIATED; DUTIES TO THE DEITY.

My last Lecture, Gentlemen, was employed in considering the objection commonly urged against the goodness of God, from the existence of suffering in the universe.

If to suffer were indeed all, and no advantage flowed from it to the individual himself, or to those around him, then might its existence be a proof that he who willed it as a part of the great system of things, without relation to other parts of the system, was, at least to the extent of the suffering which it was possible for him not to produce, defective in benevolence. It is a conclusion which we might be unwilling to admit, indeed, because our hearts are too strongly impressed with that divine goodness which we feel in the constitution of our own internal frame, as much as in that magnificent display of it which is everywhere around us, not to shrink from such a belief, if expressed in words, as impiety and ingratitude. But, if to suffer be all, the belief, from the expression of which we should still perhaps shrink with a feeling of reluctant assent, must not the less be, in our heart, irresistible.

The question which is of so much importance for us then is, whether to suffer be the whole of suffering? or, whether there do not flow from it consequences which so far overbalance the temporary evil, as to alter its very nature? since, in that case, the existence of what is essential to so much good, far from being inconsistent with divine benevolence, would be a proof of that very benevolence. If, in such circumstances of greater resulting advantage, man had not been formed capable of suffering, God would then have been less good.

This question it was the object of my last Lecture to consider; and if the observations which I then made were satisfactory, they must have shown that, if virtue be excellent, the capacity of suffering by which virtue is formed or perfected, must, when this great relation of it is considered, be allowed to have itself an excellence that is relative to the excellence produced by it. Without it, we might, indeed, have been what the world, in its common language, terms happy; the passive subjects of a series of agreeable sensations: but we could not have had the delights of conscience; we could not have felt what it is to be magnanimous, to have the toil and the combat and the victory, to exult that we have something within us which is superior not to danger only, but which can vanquish even pleasure itself; to feel that we are not merely happier than we were, but nobler than we were, worthy of being admitted to other exercises of virtue, in which we are conscious of a power that may hope to prevail in them, and worthy almost of the approving glance of that God who sees every secret conflict, and who is its judge and rewarder, as well as its witness.

When I say, that without virtue we might be, perhaps, what the world terms happy, I

* Sat. x. v. 357—362.
† Pleasures of Imagination, book ii.

do injustice even to the sordid sentiments of those, whom, in opposition to the better part of mankind, we commonly designate by the name of the world. The very lowest of the mob may wish, indeed, for the grandeur which he sees in the palace and the equipage of the indolent voluptuary. But his highest admiration is not for him. It is, if his country was ever oppressed, for some hero, whose adventures in struggling to resist that oppression, have become traditionary in the very tales and ballads of the cottage,—who, in the whole course of his struggle, had difficulty after difficulty to encounter, and whose life of peril at last, perhaps, was terminated with the triumph of conscience, indeed, but in all the bodily torture which a tyrant could inflict. If a religious persecution have ever raged in his land, his admiration is in like manner kept for those whom he feels a sort of pride in considering as martyrs of his faith, who are known to him, not as rich or powerful, but as sufferers, poor, perhaps, like himself, and distinguished only by that heroic suffering which endears them to his reverence. There is not a peasant of the rudest order, who would think for a moment, of comparing to such men the indolent and careless possessor of half the land which he has ever seen. If the choice were given to him of either situation, and if he were to prefer, as, under the influence of sensual desire, he might prefer, the passive ease and luxury of the one to the active virtue of the other, his own heart would say to him that he had made an unworthy choice; it would tell him that he had preferred the less to the more noble; he would have remorse even in entering on the possession of what he before regarded as happiness, and the martyr or the hero would haunt his memory like the remembrance of a crime.

Even the world, then, in their estimation of excellence, look to something more than a succession of passive sensations; and it is surely a singular misconception of benevolence, which would require of God that he should make man no nobler than that species of being, which even common minds feel to be less noble than the being which man is capable of becoming, in the present system of things;—that it should be an imperfection in the divine goodness to have rendered us susceptible of heroic virtue,—that is to say, to have placed us in circumstances without which there can be no heroic virtue,—and that it was incumbent on him, from the very excellence of his own nature, to have made us such, as the best and noblest of us would blush to be.

> Count all the advantage prosperous Vice attains,
> 'Tis but what Virtue flies from and disdains.*

* Essay on Man, Ep. iv. v. 89, 90.

There is an ambiguity in the term happiness, like that which, on a former occasion, it seemed to me of so much importance to point out to you, in the analogous word desire, as giving rise to much of the sophistry on this and on other kindred questions, in which it furnished the declaimer against pure disinterested virtue with the appearance of a deceitful triumph, when a clearer analysis of a single word, explanatory of its double meaning, might have shown the fallacy on which the triumph was founded. Happiness is sometimes used as synonymous with all that is desirable; in which case, to a good mind, that can perceive all the relations of suffering, and feel the important moral advantages which result from it, it may be said to include, in certain circumstances, in which pleasure could not be enjoyed without a sacrifice of virtue, even suffering itself. At other times it is used to signify only what is immediately pleasurable, and therefore in this sense excludes suffering. What is pleasurable, and what is desirable, are not to be accounted words of exactly the same import, if we attend to all the variety of our desires. I have shown, in some of my former Lectures, that in many cases, indeed in the greater number of cases, if we analyze with sufficient minuteness the whole mental process, so as to discover what it is which is directly present to the mind at the very moment of the desire, it is not pleasure which we thus directly desire, but some other immediate object, which pleasure may indeed accompany, but to which pleasure is only an accompaniment. That the immediate object of our desire, for example, in rushing to the relief of one who is in danger, is not the pleasure of giving relief, but the relief itself, the subsequent contemplation of which is, indeed, by a bountiful provision of heaven, associated with delight; as the failure in the attempt to afford it is accompanied with pain; but which we desire instantly, without regard to our own personal delight that would follow it, or the pain that would be felt by us if the relief were not given. The same constitution of our nature which has made pleasure directly desirable, has made many other objects of our thought directly desirable, and among the rest virtue; not for the single reason that virtue is pleasant, any more than we desire pleasure as pleasure, merely because it may be consistent with virtue, but because it is the very nature of virtue, and the very nature of pleasure, as contemplated by us, to be desirable, whether separate or combined. These different objects, which in many cases coincide as desirable, in many cases may be balanced against each other, and we may, when both are incompatible, according as one or the other is to certain minds, or in certain circumstances, an object of great or less desire,

sacrifice a mere pleasure for a virtue,—a virtue for a mere pleasure. We may not always, then, in the competition of two objects, desire what is immediately the more pleasing, in the strict sense of that term; for pleasure, as mere pleasure, we have seen, is far from being the sole direct object of desire; but it is very evident that whatever be the direct object of desire, we must always desire that which has seemed to us the more desirable, since this is only another mode of expressing the very fact of the superior desire itself; and the double sense of the term desirable, in expressing this prevailing influence, and consequently of happiness, which is regarded as synonymous with the gratification of our desires, has led to the supposition that pleasure, which is thus often used as synonymous with that which is desirable, is truly the uniform object of our desire. It seems, therefore, in this sense, when desirableness is falsely limited to mere pleasuse, that to exclude suffering is necessary to our happiness, and therefore to the goodness of that Being who wills our happiness. But if happiness be understood more generally as the attainment of that which, in all the circumstances in which we may be placed, is regarded by us as most desirable; then suffering itself is in many situations essential to it, when to suffer is to be more virtuous; and not to have produced the capacity of that virtuous suffering, which in many cases we prefer to pleasure, would in those cases have contributed less to our happiness, in this best sense, and consequently been less benevolent, than not to have produced the pleasure, which even we regard as inferior to the suffering.

> Ipsa quidem virtus pretium sibi; solaque late
> Fortunae secura nitet, nec fascibus ullis
> Erigitur plausuque petit clarescere vulgi,
> Nil opis externae cupiens, nil indiga laudis,
> Divitiis animosa suis.

It is for its own sake, indeed, as indicative of the moral excellence of our nature, that virtue truly is to us of richest value. Even though all preference of it, however, were a mere balancing of pleasures, without any regard to its own intrinsic excellence as an object of noblest desire, the capacity of suffering, as essential to the highest pleasures of conscience, might be truly a gift of divine bounty. At present, with all the distraction of earthly things, and earthly passions, there is perhaps no pleasure so delightful as the remembrance of our own heroic conduct, in any occasion that admitted of heroism; and in a state of purer being, the remembrance of that heroism may be still more elevating and delightful. If, with all the notions which it involves, of our virtue and the approving regard of God, it constitute the highest pleasure of which a created being is capable, it is no impeachment of any divine perfection, to suppose that the Deity, though with the power of making his creatures happy in various ways, could not give to a finite and dependent being any happiness greater than that which is by its very nature the greatest which the constitution of a finite and dependent being admits, any more than even he could make a circle triangular, or form a line larger than an infinite one. The joys of conscience, as they extend through our immortal existence, might thus, even in a barter of pleasures and pains, be very cheaply purchased by the short sufferings of earth; and God, therefore, be benevolent, in placing us in circumstances which enable us to make the purchase.

This might be the case, even though the most heroic generosity were to be valued only as an instrument of pleasure, and though we were to omit in our estimate of virtue all for which it is most precious in the eyes of the virtuous. "Prospera in plebem ac vilia ingenia deveniunt; at calamitates terroresque mortalium sub jugum mittere, proprium magni viri est. Magnus es vir; sed unde scio, si tibi fortuna non dat facultatem exhibendae virtutis. Descendisti ad Olympia; si nemo praeter te, coronam habes, victoriam non habes." Think not, I beseech you, says the same eloquent writer, that the calamities with which the gods may have favoured us, as occasions of virtue, are to be dreaded as terrible. They rather are to be esteemed wretched, who lie torpid in luxurious ease, whom a sluggish calm detains on the great voyage, like vessels that lie weltering on a sea without a gale. The bravest of the army are they whom the commander selects for the most perilous service. They do not repine against their general when they quit the camp. They say only, with a consciousness of their own strength of heart, He has known well how to choose. Such, too, be our feelings when we are required to suffer what is terrible only to the coward that shrinks from it. Let us exult in the thought that Heaven has counted us worthy of showing what the noble nature of man can overcome. "Nolite, obsecro vos, expavescere ista, quae dii immortales, velut stimulos, admovent animis. Calamitas virtutis occasio est. Illos merito quis dixerit miseros, quos, velut in mari lento, tranquillitas iners detinet. Deus quos probat, quos amat, indurat, recognoscit, exercet. Quare, in castris quoque, periculosa fortissimis imperantur. Dux lectissimos mittit, qui nocturnis hostes aggrediantur insidiis, aut explorent iter, aut praesidium loco dejiciant. Nemo eorum qui exeunt dicit, Male de me Imperator meruit; sed, Bene judicavit. Idem dicant, quicunque jubentur pati timidis ignavisque flebilia: Digni visi

sumus Deo, in quibus experiretur, quantum humana natura possit pati."*

When we see then what the world calls the sufferings of the virtuous, let us not think of the sufferings only,—for this would be as absurd as to count all the fatigues of the husbandman without thinking of the harvest. Let us think of the suffering only, as it is regarded by the sufferer himself; as that which proves to him what he is,—which gives him the opportunity of knowing that he is so constitued as to be capable, not of pleasure merely, but of that which is far dearer to him than pleasure itself, and of which he would not resign the noble consciousness for all the sluggish delights of all the luxurious. Let us think of him as the inhabitant of another world, to which his virtues, those virtues which he is now maturing, are all that can attend him from this earth,—when the luxuries of earth must have long perished, or be remembered only from their relation to those moral feelings which are the only feelings that are immortal.

"The opulence of a wicked man," says an ingenious French writer, "the high posts to which he is elevated, the homage which is paid to him, excite your chagrin. What! say you, is it for such men that wealth and dignities are reserved? Cease your unjust murmurs! If what you regret as good were substantially good, the wicked would not enjoy it; you would be the possessor. What would you say of a great man, a Turenne, or a Condé, who, after having saved his country, should complain that his services had been ill requited, because, in his presence, some sugar-plumbs had been distributed to children of which he had not got his share? Your complaint is not better founded. Has God, then, nothing with which to recompense you but a few pieces of coin, and honours that are as perishable as they are frivolous!"

> Weak, foolish man! will Heaven reward us there
> With the same trash mad mortals wish for here?
> Go, like the Indian, in another life
> Expect thy dog, thy bottle, and thy wife;
> As well as dream such trifles are assign'd
> As toys and empires for a godlike mind!†

"O God!" exclaims the Persian poet Sadi, have pity on the wicked! for thou hast done every thing for the good, in having made them good."

In giving to the good that nature by which they are capable of virtuous progress, God has indeed done every thing for the good,—far more, unquestionably, than if he had placed them in a world such as those who at present object to his benevolence, would have counted perhaps worthy of his creation,—a world of such indolence and passive pleasure as the most worthless, perhaps, are capable of enjoying here,—a world from which, if the option were given, a noble spirit would gladly hasten into that better world of difficulty, and virtue, and conscience, which is the scene of our present exertion. It is good to have given us pleasure, but it is better to have given us that which even ourselves feel to be nobler than pleasure.

I have dwelt the longer on this point, because it seemed to me the most important on which I could have dwelt. Our relation to God, to our Creator, Preserver, Rewarder, is surely the relation which deserves most to be considered by us; and I am anxious that your minds should not, with respect to that great Being, acquire habits of unworthy suspicion, which, as I endeavoured to illustrate yesterday, by an allusion to the slighter relationships of earthly intimacy, we should blush to feel in the case of man. If, when any kindness was conferred on us by a friend, we were to sit down and deliberately consider whether he was kind in conferring it on us, whether it was not possible for him to have done for us a little more, and whether we ought not, therefore, to complain of him as selfishly penurious, rather than to feel gratitude to him as beneficent; if we were to do this in the case of an earthly friend, should we look upon ourselves with the same approbation? And is God, indeed, less worthy of our confidence than the creature whom he has made?

It is when we rely fully on his goodness that we truly enjoy that goodness, it is then that adversity disappears, as adversity, that there is no evil which we may not convert into a source of advantage; because what is most afflicting is only the lesson, or the trial, or the consummation of our virtue; that all nature is embellished to us by the divine presence, as the scene of actions which it is noble to perform, or of sufferings which, when borne with the feelings with which the virtuous bear them, it would scarcely be too strong an expression to term delightful.

God, then, who has poured on us so much enjoyment, of which it is virtuous to partake, in the whole system of nature, and in the frame of our mind, is manifestly benevolent in calling to us to enjoy; and though less manifestly, he is not less truly benevolent in the evils which he has given to our virtue to bear,—the common wants, by the influence of which the whole multitudes of our race are formed into a society active in the reciprocation of mutual services, and the greater occasional sufferings, or voluntary perils, which excite the compassion or the veneration of others, and cherish, in the heroic sufferer himself, a spirit of gentle or sublime virtue, without the consciousness of which, the moral scene would scarcely be an

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* Seneca de Providentia, cap. iv.
† Essay on Man, Ep. iv. lines 173—180.

object of delightful interest, even to human regard.

If the system of things has thus been framed by a God of benevolence, it is under the moral government of a benevolent God that the world subsists, under the government of a God, who has shown too clearly, by the universal feelings which he has given to all his moral creatures, his love of virtue, and his disapprobation of vice, to leave any doubt as to the nature of his own high estimate of human actions. If it be impossible for ourselves not to feel the approvableness of certain actions, and the delinquency that is implied in certain other actions, it is impossible for us not to extend these feelings to other minds, which we suppose to consider with the same freedom from passion, and the same accurate knowledge of every circumstance, the same actions that are approved or condemned by ourselves. To believe, that pure generosity and pure malice which every human being loves in the one case and hates in the other case, as soon as he contemplates them, as if pointed out to his love and hatred, by the author and enlightener of the heart, are, to that very author and enlightener of the heart, the same in every respect, except as he has chosen to distinguish them in our judgment, would be as difficult for us, or almost as difficult, as to believe that a circle and a triangle have different properties, only as conceived by us, and appear to involve exactly the same proportions and relations to that perfect intelligence, whom some of the Greek philosophers have distinguished by the title of the Supreme Geometer.

What we regard with moral approbation or disapprobation, we are led then by our very nature to regard as objects of approbation or disapprobation, not to all mankind only, but to every being whom we imagine to contemplate the actions, and especially to him, who, as quickest to perceive and to know, must, as we think, by this very superiority of discernment, be quickest also to approve and condemn.

It is of this moral approbation or disapprobation in the divine nature, that we speak, when we speak of what is commonly termed the justice of God. The merit or demerit, which it is impossible for us not to feel, we consider as felt by him who has thus distinguished them to our heart, and who has the power of making happy what he approves, and of verifying to the wicked the anticipations of their own remorse. The divine justice, as it is an object of conception to human beings, is nothing more than the ampler development of these human feelings, feelings that are human indeed, in our transient love or hatred, but the reference of which to the Deity depends on a principle of our nature, as universal as that which leads us to the very conception of the Deity as a Power existing now and existing before the world was made. It is by the analogy of human design, that we infer in the universe the operation of a mightier designer; by the analogy of human sentiment, we infer, in like manner, in the Creator and Ruler of the universe, those moral feelings by which he is not the creator and ruler only of mankind, but their judge,—a judge whose approbation is already felt in the conscience of the good, as his disapprobation is already not less felt in the gloomy and trembling conscience of the guilty.

Such are the views of the nature of the Divine Being, to which we are led, from those traces of his character which the universe, as formed by him, and especially our own spiritual frame, which is to us the most important part of the universe, exhibit. The most interesting of all inquiries terminates in the most pleasing of all results. Whatever power it might have been that created us, benevolent or cruel, to that power we must have been subject, without any means of shelter, because there was no superior sovereign of nature, who might protect and avenge us. We might have been, in misery, what our imagination, after bringing together all the forms of torture which the oppressions of this earth can afford, would be too poor of images to represent. Instead of a tyrant, however, in the heavens, we discover a power from which we have no need to fly for succour; since, whatever might be the kindness to which we might wish to fly, it would be a kindness less than that from which we fled,—a kindness far less than that which created for us this glorious abode, and which gave us the means of rising, with the consciousness of virtue, from all that is excellent on earth, to sublimer and happier excellence, in progressive stages of immortality.

In this view of the wisdom, and power, and benevolence of the Supreme Being is involved, what is commonly termed our duty to God. In one sense of the word, indeed, all our duties are duties which we owe to him, who has endowed us with every gift which we possess, and who has commanded these duties, by that voice of conscience which speaks in every breast. But the duties to which I now allude, are those which have their divine object more immediately in view, and which consider him in those gracious characters in which his works reveal him to us. It is our duty to love the benevolence to which we owe so much, to feel pleasure in tracing every display of that benevolence in the happiness of every thing that lives, and, in all that we value most in ourselves, to rejoice in feeling its relation to the goodness from which it was derived, and

in expressing our dependence, not as if the expression of it were a task enjoined, but with the readiness of love, that overflows in acknowledgments of kindness received, only because it overflows with gratitude for the kindness. If a mere earthly friend, whose affection we have delighted to share, is separated from us, for any length of time, by the ocean or a few kingdoms that lie between, how delightful to us is every memorial of his former presence. Our favourite walks and favourite seats continue still to be favourite walks and favourite seats, or rather they acquire new beauty, in the thought that they were beautiful to other eyes that now are absent. There is no conversation so pleasing to us, as that of which his virtues are the subject; and even the rudest sketch of his drawing, or the verses which he may have left unfinished, are regarded by us with far more delightful admiration, than paintings and poems, which surpass them in every charm, but that which friendship alone could give. We not merely feel all this affection for our friend, but we feel too, that it would be a sort of crime against friendship, to regard with indifference any thing which related to him; and if this be a crime with respect to earthly friendship, it is surely not less a crime, when its object is the friendship that has been the source of all the happiness which we have felt. To be surrounded with the divine goodness, and yet to feel no joy in contemplating the magnificent exhibition of it; to admire any works rather than those of God, and, far from delighting to speak or think of his moral perfections, to give our thoughts and our conversation in preference to the virtues, or still more gladly, to the vices of those of whom the name is perhaps almost all that is known to us; this is to fail, with respect to the noblest of beings, in a duty which, if that noblest of beings could divest himself of his perfections, and become, with far less kindness to us, a creature like ourselves, we then should blush to violate to our mortal benefactor.

Our first duty, then, to the Deity, is to dwell with delight on the contemplation of his perfections, to cultivate our devout feelings as the happiest and noblest feelings of which our nature is capable, and to offer that worship of the heart, which is the only offering that can be made by man to his Creator. "Primus est deorum cultus deos credere; deinde reddere illis majestatem suam, reddere bonitatem, sine qua nulla majestas est: scire, illos esse qui praesident mundo, qui universa vi sua temperant, qui humani generis tutelam gerunt, interdum curiosi singulorum. Hi nec dant malum nec habent; ceterum castigant quosdam, et coercent; et irrogant poenas, et aliquando specie boni puniunt. Vis deos propitiare? bonus esto. Satis illos coluit quisquis imitatus est."* Would you propitiate the Gods? Be good. Whoever has imitated them, has already offered to them the most acceptable worship.

Next, in order, to the duties of veneration and devout acknowledgment of the divine goodness, is the duty of that unrepining submission to his will, without which there can be no real belief of the providential goodness, which the lips, indeed, may have professed to believe, but the lips only. If it would be our duty to give ready obedience to the arrangements which an earthly sovereign makes, for the security and general happiness of his little state, in some season of peril, though it involve the sacrifice of many of our personal comforts; to quit, perhaps, our peaceful homes, and expose ourselves, in the band of our fellow-citizens, to the inconveniences and dangers of a protracted warfare, that is foreign to all our tranquil habits; or to send to the same perilous warfare, those whose life of rising virtues is the only earthly thing to which we have been accustomed to look for the happiness of our own declining years; if we should feel it guilt and disgrace to withhold the offering, when the happiness of a single state is the object, and when he who requires the sacrifice is but a fallible being like ourselves, how much greater guilt and moral disgrace must it be to hesitate in making those sacrifices, or to repine when they are made, which are demanded by wisdom that is owned by us to be incapable of error, for purposes which, as our own hearts have declared, must be purposes beneficial to mankind. Shall the warrior rejoice in dying in battle for his country, or even for his prince! and shall we feel no joy in finishing a life that has been accordant with the divine will, in whatever manner the same divine will may require it of us; or, if the easy offering of life be not that which is required, in bearing a little longer for the whole community of mankind, any of those evils which we should never shrink from bearing, for that small portion of the community which our country comprehends? "Shall others say, O beloved city of Cecrops," exclaims Marcus Aurelius, "and shall I not rather say, O beloved city of our God!"

These views of the Divinity, the habitual love of his perfections, and ready acquiescence in the dispensations of his universal providence, are not more suitable to the divine nature than productive of delight and consolation to him who entertains them. They distinguish, indeed, the virtuous from the rest of mankind, in serenity of happiness, as much as in the purity of heart from which that delightful serenity is derived.

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* Seneca, Epist. xcv.

He sees with other eyes than theirs. Where they
Behold a sun, he views a Deity:
What makes them only smile, makes him adore.
Titles and honours, if they prove his fate,
He lays aside, to find his dignity:
Himself too much he prizes to be proud:
And nothing thinks so great in man, as man.
Too dear he holds his interest, to neglect
Another's welfare, or his right invade:
Their interest, like a lion, lives on prey.
They kindle at the shadow of a wrong:
Wrong he sustains with temper, looks on heaven,
Nor stoops to think his injurer his foe.
Nought but what wounds his virtue wounds his peace.
His joys create, theirs murder future bliss.
To triumph in existence his alone;
And his alone triumphantly to think,
His true existence is not yet begun.*

The true existence of man is, indeed, scarcely begun on earth. There is an immortality awaiting him, and all which is most worthy of being prized in a short period of his mortal life, is the relation which it may have to those endless ages that are to follow it. In my next Lecture, I shall inquire into the grounds of our belief in this future state of continued existence.

LECTURE XCVI.

OF THE IMMORTALITY OF THE SOUL.

In my last Lecture, Gentlemen, I finished the remarks which I had to offer on the relation which man, in his earthly existence, bears to that greatest of beings, from whom every thing which exists has derived its origin. We found, in the phenomena of the universe, abundant proof of a designing Power, that arranged them in their beautiful regularity; and, in the happiness which they tend to produce, a proof not less strong, of the benevolence which has arranged them for purposes so gracious.

When we consider the relation of man to his Creator, however, do we consider only a relation that terminates with the few years of our mortal life? When every thing external fades upon our eye, does the spirit within, that almost gave its own life to every thing external, fade likewise? or is there not something over which the accidents that injure or destroy our mortal frame have no power; that continues still to subsist, in the dissolution of all our bodily elements, and that would continue to subsist, though not the body only, but the earth, and the sun, and the whole system of external things, were to pass into new forms of combination, or to perish, as if they had never been, in the void of the universe?

There is within us an immortal spirit. We die to those around us, indeed, when the bodily frame, which alone is the instrument of communion with them, ceases to be an instrument by the absence of the mind which it obeyed. But, though the body moulders into earth, that spirit which is of purer origin returns to its purer source. What Lucretius says of it is true, in a sense far nobler than that which he intended:

Cedit item retro, de terrâ quod fuit ante,
In terram; sed quod missum est ex ætheris oris,
Id rursus, cœli fulgentia templa receptant.†

That we do not die wholly, is a belief so consolatory to our self-importance,—to which annihilation seems more than a mere privation of enjoyment, and rather itself a positive evil,—that our hope of immortality may be supposed, like every other hope, to render us as credulous of that which we are eager to believe. There is a principle, too, which I pointed out to you when I attempted to explain the peculiar vividness of our love of glory as a mere emotion, that may aid this credulity,—a principle by which the very thought of our name, as our name, at the most distant period, seems to us to involve the reality of the existence of those very feelings which are all that seems to us in our conception to constitute ourselves. To think of any thing as ours at any particular period, is, as I then explained to you, to feel as if we were truly existing at that particular period; because it is to have combined the conception of the particular object, whatever it may be, with the conception of that self which is known to us by some conscious feeling, and which, as conceived by us, therefore, must always carry with it the notion of consciousness; and the frequency of this illusion, by which, in thinking of our name, or of other objects connected with us, we extend into futurity the conception of our consciousness, though it might not be sufficient to produce the belief of immortality, must be allowed at least to strengthen the belief, if once existing. It is necessary, therefore, in entering on an inquiry in which we are so deeply concerned, to divest ourselves as much as possible of the influence of our wishes; and, if we cannot inquire with the impartiality of absolute indifference, to inquire at least with the caution of those who know their own partial wishes, and, knowing these, know in what manner they are likely to be influenced.

The change which death produces is the most striking of all the changes which we can witness, even though we should not believe it to imply the dissolution of the principle that felt in life, and thought. It is at least to our senses the apparent cessation of every thought and feeling. There is no bloom on the cheek, no motion in the limb, no lustre in the eye. Even these are but

* Night Thoughts, Night viii.

† De Rerum Natura, lib. ii. v. 998—1000.

the slightest changes. There is no voice or look of reflection, no apparent consciousness, nothing but a little quicker tendency to decay, to distinguish him, who, but a few moments before, was perhaps wise and cheerful, and active, full of remembrances and hopes, from the insensible statue which has been dug from the quarry, and slowly fashioned into the semblance of his shape. With such a change before our eyes, it is unquestionably allowable to doubt, at least, whether any thing have truly survived this change; or whether thought and feeling have not ceased wholly by the injury of that mechanism, in connexion with which alone they become objects of our knowledge.

It is unquestionably allowable, as I have said, to those who have never made the phenomena of the mind, and the nature of the substance which exhibits these phenomena, objects of their reflection, to doubt whether all the functions of life may not be destroyed in that moment which destroys the more obvious functions, that alone come under the survey of our senses. If the phenomena of thought be phenomena that consist only in the play of certain organs, the destruction of those organs must be the destruction of the thought itself. It would then be as absurd to speak of the continuance of consciousness, when there are no conscious organs, as to speak of the continuance of musical vibrations, without a single elastic body.

If there be nothing, then, distinct from the material frame, which is manifestly subject to decay, our doubt may be converted into certainty, or at least may almost be converted into certainty. We may say then, that death which destroys the organization, destroys the capacity of feeling, because it destroys that in which feeling consists. The elements of that which once thought may subsist in a different form, and may perhaps, even at some remote period, become again elements of a similar organization, and again constitute propositions or passions, as they before constituted some truth or error, or emotion of love or hate; but they must meet again, by some new arrangement, before they can thus become feelings; and, in the mean time, they may have been blown about by the winds, or become a part of these very winds, or formed elements of various bodies, solid, liquid, or gaseous, as little sentient as the other insensible elements with which they mingled, in all the play of chemical compositions and decompositions.

This conclusion, as to the absolute mortality or chemical decomposition of that which feels and thinks, seems irresistible, if our reasonings and passions, and whatever forms our consciousness, be only certain particles variously mingled, and variously adhering or changing their place, according to the new play of chemical affinities, as new elements may be added to disturb the particles of thought, or certain other elements subtracted from the thinking compound. But, on this supposition of particles of thought, the whole force of the conclusion from the change in decomposition of the other bodily particles, depends. If our material frame be not thought itself, but only that which has a certain relation to the spiritual principle of thought, so as to be subservient to its feelings and volitions, and to perform the beautiful functions of life, as long as the relation, which he who established it made to depend on a certain state of the corporeal organs, remains, it is as little reasonable to conclude from the decay or change of place of the particles of the organs essential to the mere state of relative subserviency, that the spirit, united with these organs, has ceased to exist, as it would be to conclude, that the musician to whom we have often listened with rapture, has ceased to exist when the strings of his instrument are broken or torn away. It no longer, indeed, pours on our ear the same delightful melodies; but the skill which poured from it those melodies, has not perished with the delightful sounds themselves, nor with the instrument that was the organ of enchantment. The enchanter himself, without whom the instrument would have been powerless, exists still, to produce sounds as delightful; and in the intervals of melody, the creative spirit, from which the melody originally flowed, can delight itself with remembered or imagined airs, which exist only as remembered or imagined, and are themselves as it were a part of the very spirit which conceives them.

It is on the nature of the principle of thought, then, as mere matter, or as something distinct from matter, that the chief force of the argument seems to me to depend. If matter be all, and that which thinks and feels, decay like every other part of the body, though the cause of immortality may even then not be absolutely hopeless, it must be allowed to have many difficulties not easy to be removed. If matter be not all, or rather, if matter have nothing in common with thought, but be absolutely and wholly distinct from the thinking principle, the decay of matter cannot be considered as indicative of the decay of mind, unless some other reason can be shown for the mental dissolution, than the mere external decay itself; still less can it be considered as indicative of such mental decay, if every notion which we are led to form of the mind, imply qualities inconsistent with the very possibility of such a change of decomposition as the body exhibits.

The great inquiry then is, whether our thoughts and feelings be, in the strictest sense of the term, particles of matter; a certain number of particles affected in a certain

manner in that which we term an organ, forming half a hope, a different number of particles forming half a fear; or the quarters and halves of our hopes and fears, being formed not merely of different numbers of sentient particles, but perhaps too of particles that are themselves in their absolute nature, or in their specific affection at the moment, essentially different.

In the whole course of our inquiries into the phenomena of the mind, I abstained from allusion to the great controversy of the materialists and immaterialists, or at least made only very slight allusion to it, because the analysis and arrangement of the mental phenomena, considered simply as phenomena that succeed each other in a certain order and are felt to bear to each other certain relations, are independent of any views which we may be led to form of the nature of the substance itself, which exhibits these various but regular phenomena of thought; and I was desirous of accustoming you to fix your attention chiefly on those simpler and more productive investigations. But though the materialist and the immaterialist may unite in the results of their analytical inquiries into the complex phenomena of thought, and though they may form similar arrangements of those phenomena, simple or compound, their different opinions as to the nature of the substance which displays these phenomena, cannot be regarded as unimportant, in a question which relates to the mere permanence of the substance itself; a permanence which is to be admitted or rejected, very nearly, according as one or other of those opinions is itself to be admitted or rejected.

Is there any principle of thought and feeling, then, distinct from that extended, divisible mass, which we term the corporeal frame?

If our consciousness were to be trusted, as to the indivisibility of the sentient principle, it would scarcely be necessary to make any inquiry beyond it. The savage, indeed, in the lowest form of savage life, who is too much occupied with bodily necessities, to think of himself in any other light than as that which requires food, and feels pain from the want of a necessary supply of it, or as that which is capable of inflicting or receiving a deadly blow, may never have put the question to his own mind, what he is, and may die, without having ever believed or disbelieved in a state of after-existence. The philosopher, who has reflected enough to discover the folly of half the vulgar creed, which is far from being the most difficult part of philosophy, but who has not reflected and discriminated enough to discover the truth of the other half of a system, which he finds it easier to condemn as a whole, yet which may be true in part, though false too in part, may leave the existence of an immaterial spirit, to be believed by the believers of witchcraft and second sight; and giving his whole attention to the corporeal process, of which he is able to trace series of changes that are wholly unknown to the vulgar, may think that in thus tracing series of motions unobserved by them, he is detecting the principle of life itself. But all mankind, the mob, the sage inquirer, the very sceptic himself, when they speak or think of themselves, feel a sort of unity, in which there are no parts, the unity of a sentient being, which, if they think of organs at all, is that which sees in the eye, hears in the ear, smells in the nostrils, itself one in all, and not merely sentient, in the strict meaning of that term, but the subject of various other feelings of different classes, remembrances, comparisons, hopes, fears, love, indignation. The verbal proposition may never have been formed in the mind—*It is one being which has been the subject of all the feelings of life*—and merely because the proposition never may have been framed in words, or clearly developed, the multitude may be regarded as not having felt the truth itself. Yet if we were to ask of any one, however little accustomed to philosophic inquiries, whether he was the same thinking being at the end of the year as at the beginning of it, he would smile at our question; and would not smile less if we were to speak to him of the difference of three-fourths of a joy and half a joy; or of the many coexisting happinesses in the many coexisting atoms that form the happy organ; the simplicity and sameness of the thinking principle, of that principle of which we speak as essentially one, whenever we use the word I, having been felt by him tacitly, without the application of those technical terms, the employment of which might, perhaps, render obscure to him what had no obscurity till it was darkened with language.

> What am I, whence produc'd, and for what end?
> Whence drew I being, to what period tend?
> Am I the abandon'd orphan of blind chance,
> Dropp'd by wild atoms in disorder'd dance?
> Or from an endless chain of causes wrought,
> And of unthinking substance, born with thought—
> Am I but what I seem, mere flesh and blood,
> A branching channel with a mazy flood?
> The purple stream that through my vessels glides,
> Dull and unconscious flows, like common tides,
> The pipes, through which the circling juices stray,
> Are not that thinking I, no more than they:
> This frame, compacted with transcendent skill,
> Of moving joints, obedient to my will;
> Nurs'd from the fruitful glebe, like yonder tree,
> Waxes and wastes—I call it mine, not me.
> New matter still the mould'ring mass sustains;
> The mansion chang'd, the tenant still remains;
> And from the fleeting stream repair'd by food,
> Distinct, as is the swimmer from the flood.
>
> *Arbuthnot.*

Such would be our belief if we were to attend to our consciousness alone. It would tell us, that what we term I is not many but one; that it is the same being which hears and sees, compares and remembers, and that

the very notion of plurality and division is as inconsistent with the notion of self, as the notions of existence and nonexistence. This our mere consciousness would tell us. But does not reason, in this case, aid rather than lessen the force of this unreflecting belief?

If any lover of paradoxes were to assert, that fragrance is a sound, music a brilliant colour, hope or resentment a sensation of touch, he surely could not expect a very ready assent from those whom he addressed; and yet, void of proof as all these propositions would be, and opposite to our experience, and therefore relatively absurd, they would imply no absolute absurdity. The same great being who has made the sensations of fragrance, and colour, and melody, to result from affections of certain organs, might have made them to arise from causes reciprocally different. The affection of the organ of smell might, under a different arrangement, have been followed by the sensation which we now ascribe to sound; the affection of the ear, by the sensation which we now ascribe to fragrance; and the propositions that are now absurd, relatively to our present arrangement, would then have been relatively true. The asserter of materialism, however, is the asserter of a doctrine not relatively absurd only, but, as it appears to me, absolutely absurd; a doctrine which does not state agreements of qualities, of which there is no proof, but agreements of qualities which are absolutely incompatible. In affirming the principle of thought to be material, he makes an affirmation very nearly the same in kind, or at least as contradictory, as if he were to pronounce of a whole, that it is essentially different from its constituent parts, or of one, that it is seven hundred and fifty.

So much of the fallacy of the arguments of the materialist, in endeavouring to reconcile with his system the simplicity of thought, arises from the false supposition of unity, which he ascribes to the thinking organ, as if it were one substance, because he has given one name to a multitude of substances, that it will be necessary to recall to your attention the inquiries which engaged us in a very early part of the course, when we considered the objects of physical investigation, and especially that department of physical science which relates to objects as coexisting in space.

We then found, you will remember, that what we are accustomed to term a body as if it were one, is not one in nature, but one only in relation to our inability of distinguishing the space, or, if there be in any case actual contact, the lines of contact which separate the corpuscles, that are, on account of this inability of perception, which is relative to our weak organs, included by us in a single term, with an imaginary unity which ourselves alone have made; and that what we term the properties of the mass, are the properties not of one substance, but of these coexisting atoms, which are in themselves, and must always be, substances separate and independent.

What the materialist may be pleased to term the organ of thought, whether it be the whole brain and nerves, or only a part of the brain, or any other part of the corporeal frame which he may choose to consider as intelligent, is not one, then, but a multitude of particles, which exist near to each other, indeed, but which are as little one, as if they existed in the different planets of our system, or in the planets or suns of different systems. The unity which we give to the organ, by considering its separate atoms in a single glance, is a unity which it does not possess; and we must not deceive ourselves, therefore, by imagining that we have discovered a unity which may correspond with the simplicity of our feelings, because we have discovered a number of independent corpuscles, to the multitude of which we have chosen to give a single name. An organ is not one substance, but many substances. If joy or sorrow be an affection of this organ, it is an affection of the various substances which, though distinct in their own existence, we comprehend under this single term. If the affection, therefore, be common to the whole system of particles, it is not one joy or sorrow, but a number of joys and sorrows, corresponding with the number of separate particles thus affected; which, if matter be infinitely divisible, may be divided into an infinite number of little joys and sorrows, that have no other relation to each other in their state of infinitesimal division than the relations of proximity, by which they may be grouped together in spheres or cubes, or other solids, regular or irregular, of pleasures or pains; but by which it is impossible for them to become one pleasure or pain, more than any particle of insentient matter can become any other particle of insentient matter, or any mass of such matter become any other mass. We can conceive the particles of the moon to be mingled with the particles of our earth, and to cohere with them in actual contact; but the number of particles that form the moon, cannot become the very particles that now form the earth, however intimately mingled. Each particle has still its own independent affections, and these affections of a myriad of particles are still only the affections of a myriad of particles. It is vain to say, then, in the hope of obviating this irresistible objection, from the felt unity of the being which we term self, that our thoughts and feelings are not qualities of the particles as they exist simply, but of the whole congeries of particles as existing in one beautiful piece of living mechanism; for

this is only to repeat the very difficulty itself, and to assign the insuperable difficulty as a deliverance from the insuperable difficulty. The whole of which materialists speak, whether they term it a congeries, an organ, or a system of organs, is truly nothing in itself. It is, as I have said, a mere word invented by ourselves, a name which we give to a plurality of coexisting objects, not a new object to be distinguished from the heap. A thousand atoms, near to each other or remote, are only a thousand atoms, near or remote; and are precisely the same atoms, with precisely the same qualities, whether we consider them singly, or divide them, in our conception, by tens, fifties, hundreds, or give to the whole one comprehensive name, as if a thousand were but a greater unit. There is no principle of unity in them: it is the mind considering them that gives to them all the unity which they have, or can have.

In considering the result of a combination of parts, we are too apt to confound the multitude of separate effects with that single great result to which we give a particular name. Thus, melody is the result of a few impulses, which a bow gives to the strings of a violin; and we consider this melody as one effect, when in truth it is one only as a feeling of our mind, that is simple and indivisible, not as a state of compound and divisible matter. All that is not mental, is a multitude of effects, a multitude of particles of the sounding body, of the interposed air, of the vibratory organ, alternately approaching and receding. A multitude of those was necessary, indeed, to produce in the mind, by their concurring influence, the musical delight. But each corpuscular effect may be distinguished, in our conception at least, from every other effect that coexists with it. In the instrument, the air, the organ, the particles are all separate and independent. The material phenomenon is truly, therefore, as long as it is wholly material, a multitude of phenomena; the concurrence of a multitude of states of a multitude of particles of the musical instrument; the elastic medium; the organ of sense; the brain, without any unity whatever. The properties of the coexisting atoms, in this great whole, are the properties of the parts; and if the qualities, states, or affections of the parts were laid out of estimation, nothing would remain to be estimated as a quality, state, or affection of the whole.

The distinction which I have now made, is one with which it seems to me peculiarly important, that your minds should be fully impressed; because it is to indistinct analogies of this sort, that the materialist, when he has no other retreat, is accustomed to fly for shelter. The very analogy of melody to which I have now alluded, is a favourite example. It is one effect, though resulting from the state of a number of particles; and if music flow from a material organ, it is said, why may not thought? If, indeed, what alone is properly termed music, the sensations or series of sensations that follow certain affections of the sensorial organ, that which is felt at every moment as one and indivisible, were itself one organic result, a state of the divisible organ and not of a substance that is by nature indivisible, then indeed every thought might likewise be material. But in asserting this, the materialist begs the very point in question, assuming without proof what he yet professes to attempt to prove. It is evident, as we have seen, that what alone is one in all that multitude of effects from which melody results, the musical delight itself, is not the state of the musical instrument, nor of the vibrating air, and as little is it proved to be a state of any number of particles of the brain. It is one result, indeed, but it is one only, because it is an affection of that which is in its own nature simple; and till we arrive at the sentient principle itself, there is no unity whatever but a multitude of states of a multitude of vibrating particles. When the materialist, then, adduces this or any other example of resulting unity, as illustrative of organic thought, all which you will find to be necessary is simply to consider what it is which is truly one, in the result that is adduced as one, and you will find in every instance that the point in dispute has been taken for granted in the example adduced to prove it; that there is no real unity in all the material part of the process, and that the unity asserted is truly a mental unity, the unity of a mental feeling, or the unity of a mere name for expressing briefly the many coexisting states of many separate and independent particles which we have chosen to denominate a single mass.

In the Letter of the Society of Freethinkers to Martinus Scriblerus, of which I before read to you a part, the argument of those who consider thought as a quality of many particles is stated ludicrously indeed, but with as much real force as in the reasoning of which it is a parody.

"To the learned Inquisitor into Nature, Martinus Scriblerus; the Society of Freethinkers greeting.

"*Grecian Coffee-House, May* 7.

"It is with unspeakable joy we have heard of your inquisitive genius, and we think it great pity that it should not be better employed, than in looking after that theological nonentity, commonly called the Soul; since, after all your inquiries, it will appear you have lost your labour in seeking the residence of such a chimera, that never

had being but in the brains of some dreaming philosophers. Is it not Demonstration to a person of your sense, that, since you cannot find it, there is no such thing? In order to set so hopeful a genius right in this matter, we have sent you an answer to the ill-grounded sophisms of those crack-brained fellows, and likewise an easy mechanical explication of Perception or Thinking.

"One of their chief arguments is, that Self-consciousness cannot inhere in any system of matter, because all matter is made up of several distinct beings, which never can make up one individual thinking being.

"This is easily answered by a familiar instance. In every jack there is a meat-roasting quality, which neither resides in the fly, nor in the weight, nor in any particular wheel of the jack, but is the result of the whole composition; so, in an animal, the self-consciousness is not a real quality inherent in one being, (any more than meat-roasting in a jack,) but the result of several modes or qualities in the same subject. As the fly, the wheels, the chain, the weight, the cords, &c. make one jack, so the several parts of the body make one animal. As perception or consciousness is said to be inherent in this animal, so is meat-roasting said to be inherent in the jack. As sensation, reasoning, volition, memory, &c. are the several modes of thinking, so roasting of beef, roasting of mutton, roasting of pullets, geese, turkeys, &c. are the several modes of meat-roasting. And as the general quality of meat-roasting, with its several modifications as to beef, mutton, pullets, &c. does not inhere in any one part of the jack, so neither does consciousness, with its several modes of sensation, intellection, volition, &c. inhere in any one, but is the result from the mechanical composition of the whole animal.

"Just so, the quality or disposition of a fiddle to play tunes, with the several modifications of this tune-playing quality in playing of preludes, sarabands, jigs, and gavotts, are as much real qualities in the instrument, as the thought or the imagination is in the mind of the person that composes them."

"It is well known to anatomists, that the brain is a congeries of glands that separate the finer parts of the blood called animal spirits; that a gland is nothing but a canal of a great length, variously intorted and wound up together. From the arietation and motion of the spirits in those canals, proceed all the different sorts of thoughts."

"We are so much persuaded of the truth of this our hypothesis, that we have employed one of our members, a great virtuoso at Nuremberg, to make a sort of an hydraulic engine, in which a chemical liquor resembling blood is driven through elastic channels resembling arteries and veins, by the force of an embolus like the heart, and wrought by a pneumatic machine of the nature of the lungs, with ropes, and pullies, like the nerves, tendons, and muscles; and we are persuaded that this our artificial man will not only walk, and speak, and perform most of the outward actions of the animal life, but (being wound up once a week) will perhaps reason as well as most of your country parsons."*

If, instead of asserting thought to be the result of the affection of many particles, in which case it must evidently partake the divisibility of the organ itself, and be not one but innumerable separate feelings, the materialist assert it to be the affection of a single particle, a monade, he must remember that if what he chooses to term a single particle, be a particle of matter, it too must still admit of division; it must have a top and a bottom, a right side and a left; it must, as is demonstrable in geometry, admit of being cut in different points, by an infinite number of straight lines; and all the difficulty of the composition of thought, therefore, remains precisely as before. If it be supposed so completely divested of all the qualities of matter, as not to be extended, nor consequently divisible, it is then mind which is asserted under another name, and every thing which is at all important in the controversy is conceded; since all which can philosophically be meant by the immaterialist, when the existence of mind is asserted by him, is the existence of an invisible subject of all those affections which constitute the variety of our thoughts and feelings. If the materialist be unwilling to admit the word mind, in allowing the reality of a simple, unextended, and consequently indivisible subject of our various feelings, he may be allowed any other word which may appear to him preferable; even the word atom or particle, if he choose still to retain it. But he must admit, at least, that in this case, in the dissolution of the body, there is no evidence, from the analogy of this very bodily dissolution itself, of the destruction of any such simple particle as that which he finds to be necessary for the explanation of the phenomena of thought.

In whatever manner, therefore, the materialist may profess to consider thought as material, it is equally evident that this system is irreconcilable with our very notion of thought. In saying that it is material, he says nothing, unless he mean that it has those properties which we regard as essential to matter; for without this belief he might as well predicate of it any barbarous term that is absolutely unintelligible, or rather might predicate of it such a barbarous

* Pope's Works, vol. v. p. 57—61. London, 1812, 18vo.

term with more philosophic accuracy; since, in the one case, we should merely not know what was asserted; in the other case we should conceive erroneously that properties were affirmed of the principle of thought which were not intended to be affirmed of it. Matter is that which resists compression, and is divisible. Mind is that which feels, remembers, compares, desires. In saying of mind that it is matter, then, we must mean, if we mean any thing, that the principle which thinks is hard and divisible; and that it will be not more absurd to talk of the twentieth part of an affirmation, or the quarter of a hope, of the top of a remembrance, and the north and east corners of a comparison, than of the twentieth part of a pound, or of the different points of the compass, in reference to any part of the globe of which we may be speaking. The true answer to the statement of the materialist, the answer which we feel in our hearts, on the very expression of the plurality and divisibility of feeling, is, that it assumes what, far from admitting, we cannot even understand; and that, with every effort of attention which we can give to our mental analysis, we are as incapable of forming any conception of what is meant by the quarter of a doubt or the half of a belief, as of forming to ourselves an image of a circle without a central point, or of a square without a single angle.

With respect to this possible geometry of sensations, as divisible into parts, I cannot but think that the too great caution of Mr. Locke, by giving the sanction of his eminent name to the possibility, at least, of the superaddition of thought as a mere quality, to a system of particles, which, as a number of particles, have no thought, and yet have, as a whole, what they have not as parts of that whole, has tended in a great degree to shelter the manifest inconsistency of the doctrine of the materialist. He was unwilling to limit the divine power; and from the obscurity of our notion of the connexion of the feelings of the mind, in any manner, with the changes induced in the bodily frame, he conceived that the annexation of thought to the system of particles itself, would be but a slight addition to difficulties that must at any rate be admitted. He forgot, however, that a system of particles is but a name for the separate particles which alone have any real existence in nature; that the affirmation of what is contradictory, like plurality and unity, simplicity and complexity, is very different from the mere admission of ignorance; and that, though we may not know any reason for which the Deity has been pleased, at least during our mortal state, to render sensations of our mind dependent on affections of our nervous system, there is no more absurdity in the affirmation of such a dependence, than in the assertion of any other physical connexion of events,—of material phenomena with material phenomena, or of mental phenomena with other phenomena of mind. If the presence of the moon, at the immense distance of its orbit, can affect the tendencies of the particles of water in our ocean, it may be supposed with equal readiness to produce a change in the state of any other existing substance, whether divisible into parts, that is to say, material,—or indivisible, that is to say, mind. But when thought is affirmed to be a quality of a system of particles, or to be one result of many coexisting states of particles, which separately are not thought, something more is affirmed than that of which we are merely ignorant of the reason. A whole is said to be different from all the separate and independent parts of a whole: this is one absurdity; and that which is felt by us as in its very nature simple and indivisible, is affirmed to be only a form of that which is, by its very nature, infinitely divisible. It is no daring limitation of the divine power to suppose, that even the Omnipotent himself cannot confound the mathematical properties of squares and hexagons; and it would be no act of irreverence to his power, though it were capable of doing every thing which is not contradictory, to suppose that he cannot give to a system of organs a quality wholly distinct from the qualities of all the separate parts; since the organ itself is only a name which we give to those parts, that are all which truly exist as the organ, and have all an existence and qualities that are at every moment independent of the existence and qualities of every other atom, near or remote.

Our sensations we know directly,—matter we know only indirectly, if we can be said to know its nature at all, as the cause of our sensations. It is that which, in certain circumstances, affects us in a certain manner. When we have said this, we have said all that can be considered as truly known by us with respect to it; and in saying this, it is to our own feelings that the reference is made. Of the two systems, therefore,—the system which rejects all matter, and the system which rejects all mind,—there can be no question which is the more philosophic. The materialist must take for granted every feeling for which the follower of Berkeley contends; he must admit, that it is impossible for us to know the absolute nature of matter, and that all which we know of it is relative to ourselves, as sentient beings capable of being affected by external objects; that our sensations are known to us directly, the causes of our sensations only indirectly; and his system, therefore, even though we omit every other objection, may be reduced to this single proposition—that our feelings which we know, are the same in nature with that, of which the absolute nature, as it exists independently of our feel-

ings, is, and must always be, completely unknown to us.

From all the remarks which have now been made, I cannot but think that it is a very logical deduction, that our feelings are states of something which is one and simple, and not of a plurality of substances, near or remote; that the principle of thought, therefore, whatever it may be, is not divisible into parts; and that hence, though it may be annihilated, as every thing which exists may be annihilated by the will of him who can destroy as he could create, it does not admit of that decay of which the body admits, —a decay that is relative to the frame only, not to the elements that compose it.

When the body seems to us to perish, we know that it does not truly perish; that every thing which existed in the decaying frame, continues to exist entire as it existed before; and that the only change which takes place, is a change of apposition or proximity. From the first moment at which the earth arose, there is not the slightest reason to think that a single atom has perished. All that was is. And if nothing has perished in the material universe; if even in that bodily dissolution, which alone gave occasion to the belief of our mortality as sentient beings, there is not the loss of the most inconsiderable particle of the dissolving frame, the argument of analogy, far from leading us to suppose the destruction of that spiritual being which animated the frame, would lead us to conclude that it too exists as it before existed; and that it has only changed its relation to the particles of our material organs, as these particles still subsisting have changed the relations which they mutually bore. As the dust has only returned to the earth from which it came, it is surely a reasonable inference from analogy, to suppose that the spirit may have returned to the God who gave it.

> Non secus ac quondam, tenebris et carcere rupto
> Immitis caveae, volucrum regina repente
> Dat plausum coelo ingentem, nubesque repente
> Linquit, et adverso defigit lumina Phoebo,
> Seque auras intra liquidas et nubila condit.*

The belief of the immateriality of the sentient and thinking principle, thus destroys the only analogy on which the supposition of the limitation of its existence to the period of our mortal life could be founded. It renders it necessary for those who would contend that we are spiritually mortal, to produce some positive evidence of a departure, in the single case of the mind, from the whole analogies of the economy of nature; and it renders doubly strong all the moral arguments which can be urged for its own independent immortality.

* Heinsius de Contemptu Mortis, lib. i.

LECTURE XCVII.

OF THE IMMORTALITY OF THE SOUL.

Gentlemen, the inquiry to which I directed your attention in my last Lecture, was that which relates to our prospect of immortality.

The appearances which death exhibits, seem, when we first consider them, to mark so strongly the termination of every feeling which connected us with the once living object, that the continuance of these feelings, when every external trace of them is lost, may well be supposed to be viewed with disbelief by some, and with doubt by many. During their life, our direct communication with those who lived around us, was carried on by the intervention of bodily organs; in thinking of their very feelings, we have been accustomed to think of this bodily intervention, in what they looked, or said, or did; and from the mere influence of the laws of association, therefore, it is not wonderful, that, when they can no longer look, or speak, or act, the kindness, which before could not exist without these corporeal expressions of it, should be regarded as no longer existing, at least should be so regarded by those who are not in the habit of any very nice analyses of complicated processes or complex phenomena.

Whatever other effects death may have, it is at least evident, that when it has taken place the bodily organs moulder away, by the influence of a decomposition more or less rapid. What was once to our eyes a human being, is a human being no more; and when the organization is as if it had never been, every feeling and thought, if states of mere organs, must be also as if they had never been. The most interesting of all questions, therefore, with respect to our hopes of immortality, is whether thought be a state of the mere organs, which decay thus evidently before our very eyes, or a state of something which our senses, that are confined to the mere organs, cannot reach; of something which, as it is beyond the reach of our senses, may therefore subsist as well, when every thing which comes under our senses, exists in any one state, as in any other state.

With the examination of this point, my last Lecture was almost wholly occupied; and the arguments, which I then offered, seemed to me to show decisively, that our sensations, thoughts, desires, are not particles of matter, existing in any number, or any form of mere juxtaposition; that the sentient and thinking principle, in short, is essentially one, not extended and divisible, but incapable by its very nature of any subdivision into integral parts, and known to us only as the subject of our consciousness, in all the variety of suc-

cessive feelings, which we comprehend under that single name.

When we have learned clearly to distinguish the organization from the principle of thought, the mere change of place of the particles of the organic frame, which is all that constitutes death relatively to the body, no longer seems to imply the dissolution of the principle of thought itself, which is essentially distinct from the organic frame, and, by its very nature, incapable of that species of change which the body exhibits; since it is very evident, that what is not composed of parts, cannot, by any accident, be separated into parts.

To the mind which considers it in this view, then, death presents an aspect altogether different. Instead of the presumption, which the decaying body seemed to afford, of the cessation of every function of life, the very decay of the body affords analogies that seem to indicate the continued existence of the thinking principle; since that which we term decay, is itself only another name of continued existence, of existence as truly continued in every thing which existed before, as if the change of mere position, which alone we term decay, had not taken place. The body, though it may seem to denote a single substance, is but a single word invented by us to express many coexisting substances: every atom of it exists after death as it existed before death; and it would surely be a very strange error in logic to infer, from the continuance of every thing that existed in the body, the destruction of that which, by its own nature, seemed as little mortal as any of the atoms which have not ceased to exist, and to infer this annihilation of mind, not merely without any direct proof of the annihilation, but without a single proof of destruction of any thing else, since the universe was formed. Death is a process in which every thing corporeal continues to exist; therefore, all that is mental ceases to exist. It would not be easy to discover a link of any sort that might be supposed to connect the two propositions of so very strange an enthymeme.

The possibility of such annihilation of the mind, no one who admits the corresponding power of creation will deny, if the Deity have given any intimation, tacit or expressed, that may lead us to believe his intention of destroying the spirit, while he saves every element of the body. But the question is not, whether it be possible for him who created the mind, to annihilate it; it is, whether we have reason to believe such annihilation truly to take place; and of this some better proof must be offered, than the continuance, even amid apparent dissolution, of all that truly constituted the body, every atom of which it was, without all question, equally possible for divine power to destroy. We surely have not proved that the whole frame of suns and planets will perish to-morrow, nor even given the slightest reason to suspect the probability of this event, because we may have shown beyond all dispute, that the Deity may, if such be his will, reduce to-morrow, or at this very moment, the whole universe to nothing.

The very decay of the body then, as I have said, bears testimony, not to the destruction, but to the continuance of the undying spirit, if the principle of thought be truly different from the material frame. The mind is a substance, distinct from the bodily organ, simple, and incapable of addition or subtraction; nothing which we are capable of observing in the universe has ceased to exist, since the universe began; these two propositions, as far as analogy can have weight, and, since the mind of any one is incapable of being directly known to us as an object, it is the analogy of the bodily appearances alone that can have any weight, these two propositions, instead of leading by inference to the proposition, The mind, which existed as a substance before death, ceases wholly to exist after death, lead rather, as far as the mere analogy can have influence, to the opposite proposition, The mind does not perish in the dissolution of the body. In judging according to the mere light of nature, it is on the immaterialism of the thinking principle that I consider the belief of its immortality to be most reasonably founded; since the distinct existence of a spiritual substance, if that be admitted, renders it incumbent on the asserter of the mortality of the spirit to assign some reason, which may have led the only being who has the power of annihilation, to exert his power in annihilating the mind which he is said in that case to have created only for a few years of life.

If, therefore, but for some direct divine volition, the spiritual substance, we have every reason to suppose, would continue to subsist as every thing else continues to subsist, the only remaining question in such a case is, whether, from our knowledge of the character of the Deity, as displayed in his works, especially in the mind itself, we have reason to infer, with respect to the mind, this peculiar will to annihilate it,—without which, we have no reason to suppose it to be the only existing thing that is every moment perishing in some individual of our kind. The likelihood of such a purpose in the Divinity may be inferred, if it can be at all inferred, in two ways—from the nature of the created mind itself, as exhibiting qualities which seem to mark it as peculiarly formed for limited existence, and from our knowledge of the Creator, as displaying to us in his works indications of such a character, as of itself might lead us to infer such a peculiar intention.

That, in the nature of the simple indivisible mind itself, there is nothing which marks it as essentially more perishable than the corpuscles to which we give the name of masses, when many of them are in close juxtaposition, but which are themselves the same, whether near or remote, than the unperishing atoms of the leaf, that continues still entire in every element, while it seems to wither before us, or of the vapour, in which all that truly existed exists as before, while it is only to our eyes that it seems to vanish into nothing, I need not use any arguments to show. Mind, indeed, like matter, is capable of existing in various states, but a change of state is not destruction, in one more than in the other. It is as entire in all its seeming changes as matter in all its seeming changes. There is no positive argument then, that can be drawn from the nature of the thinking principle, to justify the assertion, that while matter does not perish even in a single atom, it, and it only, ceases to exist; and it would be enough that no positive argument could be drawn from it in support of an opinion that is inconsistent with the general analogy of nature, and unsupported by any other proof of any kind, though no negative arguments could be drawn from the same source. Every argument, however, which can be derived from it is of this negative sort, indicating in mind a nature, which of itself, if there be any difference of degree, might seem not more but less perishable than those material atoms which are acknowledged to continue as they were, entire in all the seeming vicissitudes of the universe.

I am aware, indeed, that in judging from the mind itself, a considerable stress has often been laid on the existence of feelings which admit of a very easy solution, without the necessity of ascribing them to any instinctive foreknowledge of a state of immortal being. Of this sort, particularly, seems to me an argument, which, both in ancient and modern times, has been brought forward as one of the most powerful arguments for our continued existence, after life has seemed to close upon us for ever. I allude to the universal desire of this immortal existence. But, surely, if life itself be pleasing, and, even though there were no existence beyond the grave, life might still, by the benevolence of him who conferred it, have been rendered a source of pleasure, it is not wonderful that we should desire futurity, since futurity is only protracted life. It would indeed have been worthy of our astonishment, if man, loving his present life, and knowing that it was to terminate in the space of a very few years, should not have regretted the termination of what he loved, that is to say, should not have wished the continuance of it beyond the period of its melancholy close. The universal desire then, even if the desire were truly universal, would prove nothing but the goodness of him who has made the realities of life, or if not the realities, the hopes of life so pleasing, that the mere loss of what is possessed or hoped, appears like a positive evil of the most afflicting kind.

Equally powerless I consider the argument for the reality of a state of higher gratification, which is often drawn from the constant renewal and constant disappointment of every earthly hope; from that eager and unremitting wish of something better, which even the possession of delights, that are counted inestimable by all but their possessor, is insufficient to suppress.

> Old Rome consulted birds.—Lorenzo, thou
> With more success the flight of hope survey,
> Of restless hope, for ever on the wing.
> High-perch'd o'er every thought that falcon sits,
> To fly at all that rises in her sight;
> And never stooping but to mount again,
> Next moment she betrays her aim's mistake,
> And owns her quarry lodged beyond the grave.*

The mere activity of hope, however, as we thus pass ceaselessly from wishes that have been gratified to other wishes, proves only, as I before showed in treating of this principle, that the Deity has, with a gracious view to the advantage of society, formed us for action, and, forming us for action, has given us a principle which may urge us to new pursuits, when otherwise we might, in the idleness of enjoyment, have desisted from exertions which required to be sustained in their vigour by new desires. Though nothing were to exist beyond the grave, hope, in all its variety of objects, would still be useful for animating to continued, though varied exertion, and, as thus beneficial to the successive races of mortal beings, would have been even then a gift not unworthy of divine benevolence.

The sublime attainments which man has been capable of making in science, and the wonders of his own creative art in that magnificent scene to which he has known how to give new magnificence, have been considered by many as themselves proofs of the immortality of a being so richly endowed. When we view him, indeed, comprehending in his single conception the events of ages that have preceded him, and, not content with the past, anticipating events that are to begin, only in ages as remote in futurity as the origin of the universe is in the past, measuring the distance of the remotest planets, and naming in what year of other centuries the nations that are now gazing with astonishment on some comet are to gaze on it in its return, it is scarcely possible for us to believe that a mind, which seems equally capacious of what is infinite in space

* Night Thoughts, Night vii.

and time, should be only a creature, whose brief existence is measurable by a few points of space and a few moments of eternity.

Nonne hanc credideres mentem, quae nunc quoque coelum
Astraque pervolitat, delapsam coelitus, illuc
Unde abiit remeare, suasque revisere sedes?

Look down on earth. What seest thou? Wond'rous things,
Terrestrial wonders that eclipse the skies.
What lengths of labour'd lands! What lorded seas;
Lorded by man, for pleasure, wealth or war.
Seas, winds, and planets, into service brought,
His art acknowledge, and promote his ends.
Nor can the eternal rocks his will withstand.
What levell'd mountains, and what lifted vales!
O'er vales and mountains, sumptuous cities swell,
And gild our landscape with their glittering spires.
How the tall temples, as to meet their Gods,
Ascend the skies! The proud triumphal arch
Shows us half heaven, beneath its ample bend.
High through mid air, here streams are taught to flow;
Whole rivers there, laid by in basons, sleep:
Here plains turn oceans; there vast oceans join,
Through kingdoms, channell'd deep from shore to shore.
How yon enormous mole, projecting, breaks
The mid-sea's furious waves! Their roar amidst,
Out-speaks the Deity, and says, "O main,
Thus far, nor farther!" Measured are the skies,—
Stars are detected in their deep recess,—
Creation widens, vanquished Nature yields;
Her secrets are extorted. Art prevails!
What monument of genius, spirit, power!
And now, if justly raptur'd at this scene,
Whose glories render heaven superfluous, say,
Whose footsteps these? Immortals have been here;
Could less than souls immortal this have done!*

These glorious footsteps are indeed the footsteps of immortals! Yet it is not the mere splendour of the works themselves, on which this argument insists so much, that seems directly to indicate the immortality of their authors. Man might be mortal, and yet perform all these wonders, or wonders still more illustrious. It is not by considering the relation of the mind to the monuments of its art, as too excellent to be the work of a perishable being, but by considering the relations of a mind capable of these to the being who has endowed it with such capacities, and who is able to perpetuate or enlarge the capacities which he has given, that we discover in the excellence which we admire, not a proof indeed, but a presumption of immortality; a presumption at least, which is far from leading us to infer any peculiar attention in the preserver of the body to annihilate the mind. That God has formed mankind for progressive improvement, is manifest from those susceptibilities of progress which are visible in the attainments of every individual mind; and still more in the wider contrast, which the splendid results of science in whole nations, that may be considered almost as nations of philosophers, now exhibit, when we think, at the same time, of the rude arts of the savage, in his hut or in the earlier cave, in which he seemed almost of the same race with the wild animal with which he had struggled for his home. But, if God love the progress of mankind, he loves the progress of the different individuals of mankind; for mankind is but another name for these multitudes of individuals; and if he love the progress of the observers and reasoners, whom he has formed with so beautiful an arrangement of faculties, capable of adding attainment to attainment in continual progress, is it possible for us to conceive that, when the mind has made an advance which would render all future acquisitions even on earth proportionately far more easy, the very excellence of past attainments should seem a reason for suspending the progress altogether; and that he, who could have no other wish than the happiness and general excellence of man in forming him what he is, should destroy his own gracious work, merely because man, if permitted to continue longer in being, would be more happy and excellent? If the progressive faculties of man afford no proof that the Deity wills his continued progress, they surely afford no evidence of a divine unwillingness to permit it; and we must not forget that the mind has been shown to be not more truly mortal of itself than the undecaying elements of the body; that if there be truly a substance mind, the annihilation of this substance is in itself as difficult to be conceived as the annihilation of any other substance; and that, before we believe in the miraculous exclusive annihilation of it, some reason is to be found, which might seem to influence the Deity, who spares every thing corporeal, to destroy every thing mental. We have, therefore, to conceive the mind at death matured by experience, and nobler than it was when the Deity permitted it to exist, and the Deity himself, with all those gracious feelings of love to man which the adaptation of human nature to its human scene displays; and in these very circumstances, if we affirm without any other proof the annihilation of the mind, we are to find a reason for this annihilation. If even we, in such a moment, abstracting from all selfish considerations, would feel it a sort of crime to destroy with no other view than that of the mere destruction, what was more worthy of love than in years of earlier being, are we to believe that he, who loves what is noble in man more than our frail heart can love it, will regard the improvement only as a signal of destruction? Is it not more consonant to the goodness of him who has rendered improvement progressive here, that, in separating the mind from its bodily frame, he separates it to admit it into scenes in which the progress begun on earth may be continued with increasing facility?

* Night Thoughts, Night vi.

Quare sume animum; neque enim sapientia dia
Frustra operam impendit; neque mens arctabitur istis
Limitibus, quibus hoc periturum corpus; at exsors
Terrenae labis viget, aeternumque vigebit;

Atque ubi corporeis emissa, ut carcere, vinclis,
Libera cognatum repetet, vetus incola, coelum,
Nectareos latices Veri de fonte perenni
Hauriet, aetheriumque perennis carpet amomum.*

In this light, in which the Deity is considered as willing the happiness of man, and the intellectual and moral progress of man, which is surely the character that is most conspicuous in the arrangements even of this earthly life, we find in this very character, in its relation to the separated spirit, not motives to destroy, which we must presume at least that we have found, before we take for granted that what now has existence is to cease to exist; but, on the contrary, motives to prolong an existence which as yet has fulfilled only a part of the benevolent design of creation. It may be only a slight presumption which we are hence entitled to form, but at least whatever presumption we are entitled to form, is not unfavourable to our hopes of immortality. There is another moral character in which the Deity may be considered at such a moment—the character of justice, or at least of a moral relation analogous to that which in man we term justice. In this too may be found equal, or still stronger presumptive evidence, that the years of our earthly joy or sorrow are not the whole of our existence.

The force of the argument consists in the unequal distribution of happiness on earth, as not proportioned to the virtues or the vices of those to whom it is given.

Virtue, indeed, cannot be very miserable, and Vice cannot permanently be very happy. But the virtuous may have sorrows, from which the vicious are free, and the vicious have enjoyments not directly accompanied with vice,—enjoyments which the virtuous, who seem to us to merit them better, do not possess. Increase of guilt, even by stupifying the conscience, may occasion less rather than more remorse; and the atrocious profligate be less miserable than the timid and almost penitent victim of passions, which overpower a reluctance that is sincere, even when it is too feeble to make adequate resistance to the overwhelming force. It is to futurity, therefore, that we must look for the equalizing, if any equalizing there be, of the present disproportions.

I am aware of an argument which may be adduced to obviate the force of the reasoning that is founded on the prospect of such moral retribution. If, in the present state of things, the virtuous are rewarded, and the vicious punished, we do not need a future state for doing what has been done already; and if the virtuous are not rewarded, nor the vicious punished, in that only scene of which we have any experience, what title have we to infer, from this very disorder, qualities in the Supreme Ruler of the world, which the present scene of his government does not itself display?

The argument would indeed be, I will readily admit, most forcible, if we had no mode of discovering the moral sentiments of the Sovereign of nature, unless in the pain or pleasure which he bestows; and if no advantages were to flow from the unequal distribution of happiness on earth, that could reconcile these with a high moral character of the Governor of the universe. But, if such advantages do truly arise from the temporary disproportion as compensated afterwards by the distributions of another life, and if the moral character of God be discoverable by us in other ways, the argument which supposes us to have no other mode of inferring the divine character than by the mere distribution of pleasure and pain, must lose its weight. If the temporary disproportion be of advantage upon the whole, he who is benevolent cannot fail to will that very disproportion, which is thus by supposition advantageous; and he who has all the sources of happiness in his power, through every future age, can have no difficulty in accommodating a little temporary and necessary disproportion to justice the most exact. These important points will deserve a little fuller elucidation.

In the first place, then, the moral sentiments of the Ruler and Judge of the world are discoverable in other ways, as well as by the temporary allotments which he has made of pain or pleasure. He who has placed conscience in every bosom, to approve or condemn, speaks to every one in that voice of conscience. What every human being is forced to detest, cannot be regarded by us as indifferent to him who has rendered hatred of it inevitable in us. What every bosom is taught, as if by some internal awarder of love, to regard with veneration, must be regarded too as acceptable in the eyes of him who has made us feel it as a species of crime to withhold our love. God, then, approves of virtue; he loves the virtuous; he has the power of giving happiness to those whom he wills to render happy; and if, having this power, he do not make happy for the few moments of life those whom we cannot but consider him as loving, it must be for a reason which is itself a reason of benevolence.

Such a reason, I may remark in the second place, is easily discoverable, and indeed has been already treated by me at such great length, as to render it unnecessary for me now to dwell on it. If the virtuous were necessarily happy here, and happy in proportion to their virtue, there could not be those noble lessons by which occasional suffering strengthens the virtue which it exercises. There could not, for the same rea-

* J. Hawkins Browne.

son, be those gentle services of compassion which cherish virtues of another class. If the guilty were the only sufferers, pity would be feeble, and might even perhaps be morally unsuitable in some measure, rather than praiseworthy. In the case of vice itself, we see a reason, and a most benevolent reason, why the pain of remorse should often be more severe, in the slighter delinquencies of those who are only novices in guilt, than in the fearless cruelties and frauds of the hardened and impenitent sinner. It is in the early stages of vice, before the influence of habit is formed, that the heart may be most easily led back to better feelings; and it is then, accordingly, when it may be most efficacious, that the voice which calls to desist, speaks with its loudest expostulations and warnings.

The present system of temporary disproportion then is not, when the general character of the divine estimator of human actions is sufficiently marked in another manner, inconsistent in the slightest degree with supreme moral excellence; but, on the contrary, when all its relations, especially those most important relations to the virtue that is awakened by it and fostered, are taken into account, may be said to flow from that very excellence. But still, important as the temporary advantages may be, for producing that consciousness of virtue which could not be known without opportunities of trial, and the very virtues themselves that imply sufferings which are not the necessary result of guilt, it is only by its relation to the moral advantage, that the disproportion is even at present reconcilable with the justice and goodness which we delight to contemplate in our maker, and preserver, and judge. That conscience which he has placed within us, as if to bear his own authority, and to prompt us as his own benevolence would prompt us, to the actions which it may be as delightful to remember as to perform; that very distinguisher of good and evil, by which, and by which only, we learn to love even the benevolence which formed us; the benevolence, to whose just and bounteous regard we look with confidence through all the ages of eternity; this principle of all equity, by which alone we know to be just ourselves, and to reproach ourselves for any failure in justice, seems, in the very language with which it calls on us to make compensation for our own disproportionate awards, to reveal to us the compensations of another world, as flowing necessarily from the very goodness and power of him, to whose comprehensive and equal view of all the ages of the universe, and of all that, in those ages, is to be felt or done, futurity itself may almost be said to be constantly present. The distinction of life and death at least, which to our eye is so important, is to him but the distinction of a moment; and if that brief moment of mortal life, though it be a moment of suffering, can give to the immortal spirit everlasting remembrances of virtue, he who makes it, for important purposes, a moment of suffering, can assign to the sufferer that immortality, to which the remembrance of the heroic disregard of peril, or of the equally heroic patience that disdained to repine even in torture itself, may be a source of happiness, which, in such circumstances, it would not have been benevolence to have withheld.

These considerations of the Deity, as manifestly willing the intellectual and moral progress of his creatures, which death suspends, and as a just estimator of the actions of mankind, whose awards may be considered as proportioned to the excellence which he loves,—these two views of the relation of man and his Creator, might lead us to some presumptive expectation of future existence, even though we had no positive proof of any spiritual substance within us, that might remain entire, in the mere change of place of the bodily elements; a change which is the only bodily change in that death which we are accustomed to regard as if it were a cessation of existence, but in which every thing that existed before, continues to exist with as perfect physical integrity as it before existed.

Even in this view of man, his future existence as a living being, though not so obvious and easy of conception, might still seem a reasonable inference from the character of the Divinity, in its relation to the earthly progress and earthly sufferings of a creature whom it would be impossible for us to regard as an object of indifference to the Power that marked him out for our own admiration. But, in this view the argument for immortality would be comparatively feeble. We are not to forget, as I have already repeated, that mind is itself a substance distinct from the bodily elements; that when death itself is only a change of the mutual relations of atoms, all of which exist as before, with all their qualities, there is no reason of analogy that can lead us to suppose the mind, as a substance, to be the only thing which perishes; that in such a case, therefore, positive evidence is necessary, not to make us believe the continued existence of the mind, when nothing else is perishing, but to make us believe that the Deity, who destroys nothing else, in death destroys those very minds, without relation to which the whole material frame of the universe, though it were to subsist for ever, would be absolutely void of value. It would not be a little, then, to find merely that there is no positive evidence which can lead us to suppose such exclusive annihilation of spiritual existence. But how much more is it to find, in

stead of such positive evidence of destruction, presumptions of the strongest kind, which the character of the Deity, as made known to us in his works, and especially in our hearts, can afford, that the life which depended on his goodness on earth, will be a subject of the moral dispensations of his goodness and justice, after all that is truly mortal about us has not perished indeed, but entered into new forms of elementary combination. "Cum venerit dies ille qui mixtum hoc divini humanique secernat corpus, hoc, ubi inveni relinquam: ipse me diis reddam. Nec nunc sine illis sum; sed gravi terrenoque detineor. Per has mortalis aevi moras, illi meliori vitae longiorique proluditur. Quemadmodum novem mensibus nos tenet maternus uterus, et praeparat non sibi sed illi loco in quem videmur emitti, jam idonei spiritum trahere, et in aperto durare; sic per hoc spatium, quod ab infantia patet in senectutem, in alium maturescimus partum. Alia origo nos expectat, alius rerum status. Nondum coelum nisi ex intervallo pati possumus. Quicquid circa te jacet rerum, tanquam hospitalis loci sarcinas specta: transeundum est. Excutit redeuntem natura, sicut intrantem. Dies iste, quem tanquam extremum reformidas, aeterni natalis est."*

The day which we falsely dread as our last, is indeed the day of our better nativity. We are maturing on earth for heaven; and even on earth, in those noble studies which seem so little proportioned to the wants of this petty scene, and suited rather to that state of freedom in which we may conceive our spirit to exist when delivered from those bodily fetters which confine it to so small a part of this narrow globe, there are presages of the diviner delights that await us,—marks of that noble origin from which the spirit was derived. These indications of its celestial origin are beautifully compared by Heinsius, in his very pleasing poem De Contemptu Mortis, to the gleams of the spirit of other years with which a gallant courser, condemned to the drudgery of the plough, seems still to show that it was formed for a nobler office.

Ut cum fortis equus Pisaeae victor olivae,
Aut quem sanguineus saeva ad certamina Mavors
Deposcit, fremitusque virum, lituosque tubasque,
Nunc misero datus agricolae, pede creber inertem
Pulsat humum, patriamque domum testatur et ignem
Naribus, et curvum collo aversatur aratrum.†

The continuance of our existence, in the ages that follow the few years of our earthly life, is not to be regarded only in relation to those ages. Even in these few years which we spend on earth, comparatively insignificant as they may seem when we think at the same time of immortality, it is, to him who truly looks forward to the immortality, as that for which human life is only a preparation, the chief source of delight, or of comfort, in occasional afflictions. If this life were indeed all, the sight of a single victim of oppression would be to us the most painful of all objects, except the sight of the oppressor himself; and though we might see sufficient proofs of goodness, to love him by whom we were made, the goodness would, at the same time, appear to us too capricious in many instances, to allow us to rest on it with the confidence which it is now so delightful to us to feel, when we think of him in whom we confide. In the sure prospect of futurity, we see that unalterable relation, with which God and virtue are for ever connected,—the victim of oppression, who is the sufferer, and scarcely the sufferer of a few moments here, is the rejoicer of endless ages; and all those little evils which otherwise would be so great to us, seem scarcely worthy even of our regret. We feel that it would be almost as absurd, or even more absurd, to lament over them and repine, as it would be to lament, if we were admitted to the most magnificent spectacle which human eyes had ever beheld, that some few of the crowd through which we passed had slightly pressed against us, on our entrance.

All now is vanish'd. Virtue sole survives
Immortal, never-failing friend to man,
His guide to happiness on high. And see,
'Tis come, the glorious morn, the second birth
Of heaven and earth. Awakening Nature hears
The new-creating word, and starts to life
In every heighten'd form, from pain and death
For ever free. The great eternal scheme,
Involving all, and in a perfect whole
Uniting, as the prospect wider spreads,
To Reason's eye refined clears up apace.
Ye vainly wise, ye blind presumptuous, now
Confounded in the dust, adore that power
And wisdom oft arraign'd: see now the cause,
Why unassuming worth in secret lived
And died neglected; why the good man's share
In life was gall and bitterness of soul;
Why the lone widow and her orphans pined
In starving solitude, while luxury
In palaces lay straining her low thought
To form unreal wants: why heaven-born truth
And moderation fair wore the red marks
Of superstition's scourge. Ye good distress'd,
Ye noble few, who here unbending stand
Beneath life's pressure, yet bear up a while,
And what your bounded view, which only saw
A little part, deem'd evil, is no more.
The storms of wintry time will quickly pass,
And one unbounded Spring encircle all ‡

LECTURE XCVIII.

RETROSPECT OF THE ARGUMENT FOR THE IMMORTALITY OF THE SOUL; OF OUR DUTY TO OURSELVES.

My last two Lectures, Gentlemen, have been dovoted to the very interesting inquiry

* Seneca, Epist. cii. † Liber ii.

‡ Thomson's Seasons, conclusion of Winter.

into the grounds which reason, without the aid of revelation, affords, for our belief of the immortality of the sentient and thinking principle,—of that principle which is the life of our mortal frame, but which survives the dissolution of the frame which it animated. The importance of the subject will justify, or rather demand, a short retrospect of the general argument.

It is from the dissolution of the body, that the presumption as to the complete mortality of our nature is derived; and it was therefore necessary, in the first place, to consider the force of this presumption as founded on the organic decay. If thought be only a state of those seemingly contiguous particles which we term organs, the separation of these particles may be the destruction of the thought; but if our sensations, thoughts, emotions, be states of a substance which itself exists independently of the particles, that by their juxtaposition obtain the name of organs, the separation of these particles to a greater distance from each other, (which is all the bodily change that truly takes place in death,) or even the destruction of these particles, if what we term decay, instead of being a mere form of continued existence, were absolute destruction, would not involve, though it might or might not be accompanied by the annihilation of the separate principle of thought.

The result of this primary and most important examination was, that far from being a state of any number of particles, arranged together in any form, thought cannot even be conceived by us to be a quality of number or extension; that it is of its very essence not to be divisible; and that the top or bottom of a sentiment, or the half or quarter of a truth or falsehood, or of a joy or sorrow, are at least as absurd to our conception as the loudness of the smell of a rose, or the scarlet colour of the sound of a trumpet.

An organ is not one substance, because we term it one. It is truly a multitude of bodies, the existence and qualities of each of which are independent of the existence and qualities of all the others; as truly independent as if instead of being near to each other they were removed to distances relatively as great as those of the planets, or to any other conceivable distances in the whole immensity of space. If any one were to say, the Sun has no thought, Mercury, Venus, the Earth, Mars, Jupiter, Saturn, and all their secondaries, have no thought; but the solar system has thought,—we should then scarcely hesitate a single moment in rejecting such a doctrine; because we should feel instantly that there could be no charm in the two words solar system, which are of our own invention, to confer on the separate masses of the heavenly bodies what, under a different form of mere verbal expression, they had been declared previously not to possess. What the sun and planets have not, the solar system, which is nothing more than that sun and planets, has not; or, if so much power be ascribed to the mere invention of a term, as to suppose that we can confer by it new qualities on things, there is a realism in philosophy far more monstrous than any which prevailed in the logic of the schools.

If, then, the solar system cannot have properties which the sun and planets have not, and if this be equally true, at whatever distance near or remote they may exist in space, it is surely equally evident that an organ, which is only a name for a number of separate corpuscles, as the solar system is only a name for a number of larger masses of corpuscles,—cannot have any properties which are not possessed by the corpuscles themselves, at the very moment at which the organ as a whole is said to possess them; nor any affections as a whole, additional to the affections of the separate parts. An organ is nothing, the corpuscles to which we give that single name are all; and if a sensation be an organic state, it is a state of many corpuscles, which have no more unity than the greater number of particles in the multitudes of brains which form the sensations of all mankind. Any one of the particles in any brain has an existence as complete in itself, and as independent of the existence of the other particles of the same brain, which are a little nearer it, as of the particles of other brains, which are at a greater distance. Even though it were admitted, however, in opposition to one of the clearest truths in science, that an organ is something more than a mere name for the separate and independent bodies which it denotes, and that our various feelings are states of the sensorial organ, it must still be allowed, that, if two hundred particles existing in a certain state form a doubt, the division of these into two equal aggregates of the particles, as they exist in this state at the moment of that particular feeling, would form halves of a doubt; that all the truths of arithmetic would be predicable of each separate thought, if it were a state of a number of particles; and the truths of geometry be in like manner predicable of it, if it depended on extension and form. In short, if joy or sorrow, simple and indivisible as they are felt by us to be, be not one, but a number of corpuscles separate and divisible into an infinite number of little joys and sorrows, that may be variously arranged in spheres and parallelopipeds, any thing may, with equal probability, be said to be any thing, however apparently opposite and contradictory.

When sensation is said to be the result of organization, the vagueness of the term re-

sult throws a sort of illusive obscurity over the supposed process, and we more readily admit the assertion with the meaning which the materialist would give to it; because, however false it may be in his sense, it is true in another sense. Sensation is the result of organization,—a result, however, not in the organs themselves, but in a substance of which the Deity has so arranged the susceptibilities, as to render the variety of that class of feelings which we term sensations, the effects of certain states of the particles which compose the organ. The result, therefore, is one and simple, because the mind, that alone is susceptible of the state which we term sensation, is one and simple, though the bodily particles of the state of which the one sensation is the result are many. A sound, for example, is one, because it is an affection of the mind which has no parts, and must always be one in all its states, though the mental affection may have required, before it could take place, innumerable motions of innumerable vibratory particles, which have no unity but in their joint relation to the mind, that considers them as one, and is affected by their concurring vibrations. In like manner, in the phenomena of chemical agency to which the phenomena of thought and feeling, as simple results, are by the materialists most strangely asserted to be analogous, it surely requires no very subtile discernment to perceive, that, though we may speak of the result of certain mixtures, as if the result were one of simple combustion, deflagration, solution, precipitation, and the various other terms which are used to denote chemical changes, it is in the single word alone, that all the unity of the complex phenomenon is to be found, —that the solution of salt in water, or the combustion of charcoal in atmospheric air, expresses not one fact, but as many separate facts as there are separate particles dissolved or burnt;—that the unity, in short, is not in the chemical phenomena as facts, but in the mind, and only in the mind, which considers all these facts together; and that the mere words combustion and solution either signify nothing, or signify states of innumerable particles, which are not the less innumerable because they are comprehended in a single word.

Sensation, then, which is not more truly felt by us in any case, as a pleasure or a pain, than it is felt to be one and incapable of division, is not a state of many particles, which would be as many separate selves, without any connecting principle that could give them unity, but a state of a single substance, which we term mind, when we speak of it generally, or self, when we speak of it with reference to its own peculiar series of feelings.

There is mind, then, as well as matter, or rather, if there be a difference of the degrees of evidence, there is mind, more surely than there is matter; and if at death not a single atom of the body perishes, but that which we term dissolution, decay, putrefaction, is only a change of the relative positions of those atoms, which in themselves continue to exist with all the qualities which they before possessed, there is surely no reason, from this mere change of place of the atoms that formed the body, to infer, with respect to the independent mind, any other change than that of its mere relation to those separated atoms. The continued subsistence of every thing corporeal cannot, at least, be regarded as indicative of the annihilation of the other substance, but must, on the contrary, as far as the mere analogy of the body is of any weight, be regarded as a presumption in favour of the continued subsistence of the mind, when there is nothing around it which has perished, and nothing even which has perished, in the whole material universe, since the universe itself was called into being.

The Deity, however, though he have not chosen to annihilate a single atom of matter, since he created the world, may, it will be admitted, have chosen to annihilate every spiritual substance. But with the strong analogy of matter, which is the only substance that is capable of being perceived by us, in favour of the continued existence of the mind, it would be necessary, for the proof of the supposed spiritual mortality, to show some reason which may be believed to have influenced the Supreme Being to this exclusive annihilation. The asserter of the soul's immortality,—if the existence of the soul as a separate substance be previously demonstrated,—has not so much to assign reasons for the belief of its immortality, as to obviate objections which may be urged against that belief. At the moment of death, there exists the spirit; there exist also the corporeal atoms. At that moment, the Deity allows every atom to subsist as before. The spirit, too, if he do not annihilate it, will subsist as before. If we suppose him to annihilate it, we must suppose him to have some reason for annihilating it. Is any such reason imaginable, either in the nature of the spirit itself, or in the character of the Deity?

Instead of any such reason for annihilation, that might be supposed to justify the assertion of it, we found, on the contrary, reasons which might of themselves lead us to expect the continued existence, far more probably than the destruction of the soul. If the Deity will, as it is evident from the whole frame of our minds that he most truly wills, the progress of mankind, he must will the progress of the individuals of mankind; since mankind is but a name for the individuals who compose it; and if he will the

progress of individuals, there can be no reason that he should love that progress less, when the individual is capable of making greater advances, and that, merely on account of that greater capacity, he should destroy what he sustained with so much care for that partial progress which he now delights to suspend. In the state of the spirit, then, at the moment of death, there is nothing which seems to mark it out for exclusive annihilation.

Are we to find a reason for this, then, in the character of the Deity himself? On the contrary, would not his annihilation of the soul, when every motive for continuing its existence, as far as we may presume to think of the motives of the Deity, in accordance with the general design exhibited by him, in the more obvious appearances of the universe, seems rather stronger than weaker, imply a sort of capricious inconsistency in the divine character which the beautiful regularity of his government of the world leaves us no room to infer? Nay more, may we not almost venture to say, that a future state of retribution is revealed to us in those divine perfections which the universe so manifestly exhibits, and in those moral feelings which are ever present to our heart? Every seeming irregularity in the sufferings of the good, and in the unequal distributions of happiness, admits, in this way, of being reconciled with those high moral perfections which the voice of conscience within us, by its uniform approbation of virtue and disapprobation of vice, proclaims to belong to him who has made it a part of our very nature, thus to condemn and approve. The temporary inequalities are, in the mean time, evidently of moral advantage. But still, these supposed irregularities of suffering and enjoyment, though in the highest degree useful, as we found, for the production and fostering of virtue, and of all the delights of conscience which may attend the virtuous through immortality, and therefore justly a part of the benevolent dispensations of God on earth, are reconcilable with his moral perfections, only by the immortality of the spirit, which, after suffering what virtue can suffer for a few years of life, may rejoice for ever in the presence of that God, in devout submission to whose will, what the world counted suffering was scarcely what required an act of fortitude to endure it.

In whatever light then, at the moment of death, we consider either the soul itself or its Creator, we discover reasons rather of continuing its existence than of annihilating it. The evidence of this sort may be strong, or it may be weak; but, weak or strong, it is at least favourable to the affirmative side of the question. We have not merely then the powerful presumption, for the continued existence of the spirit, which arises from the continuance, even in what we term decay, of every thing corporeal; but we have, to strengthen this presumption still more, every argument which can be drawn from our knowledge of the divine character, to which alone we are to look for the evidence of his intention to annihilate or preserve, as we have seen, from the inadequacy of mere matter to account for the phenomena of thought. If there be a spiritual substance existing at the moment of death, which would continue to subsist but for the divine will, which alone can annihilate, as it alone can create, we find not merely that it is impossible to assign any positive reason, which may be supposed to influence the Deity to annihilate what he had formed, but that there are positive reasons which might lead us to expect his continued preservation of it. We have, in short, for the immortality of the soul, from the mere light of nature, I will not say evidence that is demonstrative and irresistible, for that was left to be revealed to us by a more cloudless light, but at least as strong a combination of presumptive evidence, negative and positive, as we can imagine such a subject, in the obscurity of human reason, to possess.

The objections sometimes urged against the immortality of the thinking principle, from the influence of disease, or of age, which is indeed itself a species of disease, but an incurable one, on the mental faculties, are of no force when urged against the system of those who admit the existence both of matter and mind, and the connexion which the Deity has in so many relations established, of our bodily and mental part. Our sensations are as much states of the mind, as any other of our mental affections. That the slightest puncture of our cuticle by the point of a pin, or the application of a few acrid particles to our nostrils, should alter completely, for the time, the state of the thinking principle, might as well be urged in disproof of the immortality of the soul, as the same sort of connexion of mind and body which the imbecility of disease exhibits. If the nervous system were to continue long, in precisely the same state as that which is produced by the puncture of a pin, it is evident that the mind would be as little capable of reflection as in dotage or madness; and in dotage or madness, the nervous system is not disordered for a few moments, but continues to exist in a certain state for a length of time, with which, of course, during that length of time, the state of the mind continues to correspond. If the momentary nervous affection arising from the puncture, then, be no proof of the soul's mortality, and prove only its susceptibility of being affected by the body to which its Creator has united it, I do not see how the more lasting influence of the more lasting

nervous affection can be a proof of any thing more. "Suppose a person," says Cicero, "to have been educated from infancy in a chamber, in which he could see objects only through a small chink in the window-shutter, would he not be apt to consider this chink as essential to his vision, and would it not be difficult to persuade him, that his prospect would be enlarged by the demolition of the walls of his temporary prison?" In such a case as that which Cicero has supposed, if the analogy may be extended to the present objection, it is evident, at least, that, if the aperture were closed for years, or if the light transmitted through it, for the same length of time, were merely altered in tint, by the interposition of some coloured transparent body, these changes would as little imply any blindness or defect of vision, as if the darkening or tinging of the light in its passage through the aperture had occurred only for a few moments. The longest continued disorder of the nervous system then, I repeat, whatever corresponding mental affections it may induce, proves nothing more with respect either to the mortality or the immortality of the sentient and thinking principle, than the shorter affection of the nerves and brain, which is followed in any of our momentary sensations by its corresponding mental change. If the mind were, during our earthly existence, absolutely independent of the body during its union with it, it would indeed be wonderful that any bodily disease should be found to affect it; but if it have susceptibilities of affection that are, in many respects, accommodated to certain states of the bodily organs, the real wonder would be, if a disordered state of the bodily organs were not followed by any corresponding change in the state or affections of the mind.

The result of this long disquisition will, I hope, be a deeper conviction in your minds of the force of the evidence, which even human reason affords, of the great truth for which I have contended. "Quicquid est illud, quod sentit, quod sapit, quod vult, quod viget, coeleste et divinum est," says Cicero, "ob eamque rem aeternum sit necesse est." It is of celestial origin, he says, because in its remembrance of the past, and foresight of the future, and wide comprehension of the present, there are characters of the divinity, which nothing that is of the gross mixture of earth can partake.

"Hinc sese" says the author of one of the noblest modern Latin poems on this noble subject, De Immortalitate Animi,

Hinc sese in vita supra sortemque situmque
Evehit humanum; nunc coelo devocat astra,
Intima nunc terrae reserat penetralia victrix;
Quaeque oculos fugiunt tenuissima corpora promit
In lucem, panditque novi miracula mundi.
Ecquid enim per se pollet magis, aut magis haustus
Indicat aethereos, genus et divinitus ortum?
Atque adeo dum corporis stant foedera nexus,
Exit saepe foras tamen, effugioque parat se:
Ac veluti terrarum hospes, non incola, sursum
Fertur, et ad patrios gestit remeare penates.*

After these observations on the doctrines of natural theology, with respect to the being and perfections of God, the services of duty which it is not so much the obligation as it is the privilege and highest glory of our nature to pay, in the devotion of our heart, to a Being so transcendent, and the prospect of that immortal existence in which, after the scene of earthly things is closed upon our view, we are still to continue under the guardianship of the same provident goodness which sustained us during the years that are termed by us our life, as if exclusively constituting it, though they are only the infancy as it were, or the first few moments of a life that is everlasting; I return now to the only subdivision of our moral conduct which remained to be considered by us, that which relates immediately to our own welfare, the duty, as it has been termed, which we owe to ourselves. The phrase is not a very happy one; but it is sufficiently expressive of that direct relation to self, which is all that is meant to be understood in the conduct to which the phrase is applied. The consideration of this, you will remember, I postponed, till we had considered those doctrines of religion to which, in their relation to our happiness, and in a great measure to our virtue also, this part of our moral conduct particularly refers.

Our duty to ourselves, to retain then the common form of expression, may be considered in two lights, as it relates to the cultivation of our moral excellence, and to the cultivation of our happiness, in the sense in which that term is commonly understood, as significant of continued enjoyment, whatever the source of the enjoyment may be. It may be thought, indeed, that these two views exactly coincide; but though it is certain that even on earth they usually coincide, and must coincide still more exactly when our immortal existence is considered, they are yet, in reference to our will or moral choice, distinct objects. We will to be virtuous, not because virtue is productive of most happiness, and is recognised by us as its purest and most permanent source, but without any view at the moment to that happiness, and simply with a view to the moral excellence, without which we should feel ourselves unworthy, not of happiness merely, which we value much, but of our own self-esteem and of the approbation of God, which we value more. The attachment of happiness to the fulfilment of duty, arises only from the gratuitous goodness of Heaven. The same benevolent Being who has made it delightful to us to give and to

* I. Hawkins Browne.

have given relief, has placed in our bosom a principle of compassion that is of earlier operation; by which we hasten to relieve, and have already perhaps given the relief, before we have paused to think of the delight which the generous feel. It is the same in our contemplation of every duty. We have already desired to be what we can esteem, before we have thought of any thing more in the particular case, than of the duty and of the esteem itself. The happiness may, indeed, follow the desire of moral excellence, but the happiness was not the object of thought at the very moment when the moral excellence was desired. He who counts only the pleasure which the offices of virtue are to yield, and who acts as virtue orders therefore, only because vice does not offer to her followers so rich a salary, is unworthy, I will not say merely of being a follower of virtue, but even of that pleasure which virtue truly gives only to those who think less of the pleasure than of the duty which the pleasure attends. "What calculation," says Seneca, "is so basely sordid as that which computes the price at which it may be advantageous to be a good man?—Inveniuntur qui honesta in mercedem colant, quibusque non placet virtus gratuita; quae nihil habet in se magnificum, si quidquam venale. Quid enim est turpius, quam aliquem computare, quanti vir bonus sit?"*

The duty which consists in the desire of rendering ourselves morally more excellent, and the cultivation, accordingly, of all those affections which render us more benevolent to others, and more firm in that heroic self-command which resists alike the influence of pleasure and of pain, is then, in its direct object, different from that other branch of the duty to ourselves which regards our happiness as its immediate end. It is unnecessary, however, to enlarge on the former of these, since the desire of our moral excellence is the desire of excellence in all those virtues which have been already under our review. It would be needless, therefore, to repeat, in any minute detail, with respect to the mere desire of cultivating these virtues, remarks which have been anticipated in treating of the virtues themselves. The only observations which it is still of importance to make, relate to the effect which every separate breach of duty may have in lessening the tendency to virtue, and, consequently, in derogating from the general excellence of the moral character. It thus acquires a sort of double delinquency; first, as a breach of some particular duty; and, secondly, as an additional breach of that duty, which should lead us to confirm our moral excellence as much as possible, by every act of virtue which the circumstances of our situation will allow us to perform; and, at least, by abstinence from vice, in situations in which no opportunity of positive virtue is allowed to us.

It is this relation of present actions to the future character, indeed, which forms, to the reflecting mind, the chief element in its moral consideration of far the greater part of human conduct,—of all that part of it which comprehends the little actions of ordinary life. It is but rarely that we are assailed with temptations to great evil; and when we are so assailed, the evil itself, and the seductive circumstances that would tempt us to it, are too prominent and powerful not to absorb the whole attention of the mind, distracting it in a sort of conflict, or hurrying it along, according to the force of the moral hatred of guilt that overcomes or is overcome. In such cases, then, we think of the present, and scarcely of more than of the present. But how few are the cases of this kind, and how much more frequently are we called to the performance of actions in which, if the circumstances of the particular moment alone be considered, the virtue has little merit, or the vice little delinquency. It is of many such little delinquencies, however, that the guilt is ultimately formed, which is afterwards to excite the indignant wrath of every breast, except of that one in which the horrors of remorse, stilled, perhaps, in the dreadful moments of active iniquity, are all that is to be felt in the still more dreadful intervals from crime to crime. It is not of base perfidy then, nor of atrocious cruelty, that it is necessary to bid the ingenuous mind beware, but of offences, in which that ingenuous mind, untaught as yet to discern the future in the present, sees only the little frailties that, as proofs of a common nature, are pitied by those who contemplate them, rather than condemned; and attract, perhaps, in this very pity, an interest which is more akin to love than to hate. It is in these circumstances only, or at least chiefly in these circumstances, that the moral character is in peril. There is not a guilty passion from which the heart would not shrink, if that passion were to present itself instantly, with its own dreadful aspect. But while the pleasures and the less hideous forms of vice mingle together, in what may almost be termed the sport or pastime of human life, we pass readily and heedlessly from one to the other, till we learn at last to look on the passion, when it introduces itself among the playful band, only as we gaze on some fierce masquer in a pageant that assumes features of darker ferocity only to delight us the more, or which we approach at least with as little apprehension as if it were the gentle form of virtue herself that was smiling on us. It is from the beginnings of vice that we are to be say-

* De Beneficiis, lib. iv. cap. i.

ed then, if we are to be saved from vice itself. Were it given to us to picture the future, as we can paint what is before our eyes; and could we show to the boy, as he returns blooming and scarcely fatigued, from the race or other active game in which he has been contending with his playmates, some form of feeble age, the few gray hairs, the wrinkled front, the dim eye, the withered cheek, the wasted limbs, that cannot bear, without additional support, even that thin frame which bends over them to the earth that is soon to receive all that is not yet wholly dead and consumed in the half-living skeleton; could we say to him, as he gazes almost with terror on this mixed semblance of death and life, the form on which you are now looking is your own, how incredulous would be his little heart to our prophetic intimation! It would seem to him scarcely possible that any number of years should convert what he then felt and saw in his own vigorous frame, into that scarcely breathing thing of feebleness and misery, which, when a few of those years had passed over him, he was truly to become. It would be the same with the moral futurity as with that of the mere animal being. Could we foresee and exhibit, in like manner, the future heart; could we show to him who has dormant passions, that have not yet been awakened by any temptation, and who is, therefore, full of the confidence of virtue, —to him who loves, perhaps, the happiness of others, which has never interfered with his own, and is eager, therefore, to confer on them all those enjoyments which cost no sacrifice of enjoyment on his part; to such a mind, and, in some cases, even to a mind far nobler, could we present the moral picture of some deceiver, and plunderer, and oppressor, some reveller in the luxury of riches fraudulently usurped, and even of the scanty rapine of poverty itself, that had still something which could be torn from it by exactions, which it was too friendless to know how to resist, and, in presenting this picture, could we say, the guilt at which you shudder, is the guilt of the very bosom that is shrinking from it with indignation, how difficult would it be, or rather how impossible, to convince the criminal of other years, of his own horrible identity with all the villanies which he loathed. Yet there can be no question that there are cases in which the moral progression is as regular, from innocence to mature and hoary iniquity, as the mere corporeal progress, from the beauty and muscular alacrity of youth, to the weakness and pale and withered emaciation of age.

It is the knowledge of this fatal progression then, from less to greater vice, which far more than doubles the obligation of abstaining from those slight immoralities, which might seem trifling if it were not for this progressive tendency. No evil is slight which prepares the heart for greater evil. The highest duty which we owe to ourselves, is to strengthen, as much as it is in our power to strengthen, every disposition which constitutes or forms a part of moral excellence; and we err against this high duty, and prepare ourselves for erring against every other duty, as often as we yield to a single seduction, whether it be to do what is positively unworthy, or to abstain from the humblest act of virtue which our duty calls to us to perform. In yielding once to any vicious desire, we lose much more than the virtue of a single moment; for while the desire, whatever it may be, is increased by indulgence, the mere remembrance that we have once yielded, is to us almost like a licence to yield again. The second error seems to save us from the pain of thinking, that the temptation which we before suffered to vanquish our feeble virtue, was one which even that feeble virtue was capable of overcoming; and our present weakness is to us as it were a sort of indistinct and secret justification of the past.

The virtuous man then, who loves as he should love the noble consciousness of virtue, and who feels, therefore, that no gain of mere sensual pleasure or worldly honour would be cheaply purchased by a sacrifice of moral excellence, will think often, when such a purchase might be made by a sacrifice so slight, that to others it might seem scarcely a diminution of virtue, rather of the whole moral excellence which he endangers, than of the little portion of it with which he is called to part. He will not say within himself, how inconsiderable and how venial would be this error; but, to what crimes may this single error lead! He will thus be saved from the common temptations, by which minds less accustomed to a sage foresight are at first gently led where they gladly consent to go, and afterwards hurried along where it is misery to follow, by a force which they cannot resist,—by a force which seemed to them at first the light touch of the gentle hand of a grace or a pleasure, but which has expanded progressively at every step, till it has become the grasp of a giant's arm.

The duty that is exercised in resisting the solicitations of evils that can scarcely be said to be yet vices, though they are soon to become vices, and are as yet, to our unreflecting thought, only forms of gaiety and social kindness, is truly one of the most important duties of self-command. It is not the endurance of pain, that is the hardest trial to which fortitude can be exposed; it is the calm endurance, if I may so term it, of the very smiles of pleasure herself,—an endurance that is easy only to the noble love of future as well as present virtue, that can resist what it is delightful to crowds to do, as it resists the less terrible forms of evil, from

which every individual of the crowd would shrink; and the courage of those who have strength only to resist what is commonly termed fear, is a courage that is scarcely worthy of the name,—as little worthy of it as the partial courage of the soldier on his own element, if on a different element he were to tremble when exposed to a shipwreck; or of the seaman, if he were in like manner to tremble at any of the common perils to which life can be exposed on land. The most strenuous combatants in the tumult of warfares, may be cowards, or worse than cowards, in the calm moral fight.

> They yield to pleasure, though they danger brave,
> And show no fortitude but in the field.

His is the only genuine strength of heart, who resists not the force of a few fears only, to which even in the eyes of the world it is ignominious for man to yield; but the force of every temptation, to which it would be unworthy of man to yield, even though the world, in its capricious allotments of honour and shame, might not have chosen to regard with ignominy that peculiar species of cowardice.

> By pleasure unsubdued, unbroke by pain,
> He shares in that Omnipotence he trusts;
> All-bearing, all-attempting, till he falls;
> And, when he falls, writes *Vici* on his shield.*

The duty which we owe to ourselves, as it leads us to value our own moral purity, leads us then to resist the solicitation of pleasures that would debase us, as it leads us to endure pain itself. To endure pain is however in like manner a part of this duty, not merely from those high motives that have been already considered by us, the motives of grateful submission, which are drawn from the contemplation of the moral government of the world, by that wisdom and goodness under whose gracious dispensation the capacity of suffering itself has been arranged, so as to minister to the highest purposes which supreme benevolence could have in view, but also from the subordinate motives that regard only ourselves. To be querulously impatient, is but to add another evil, that might be avoided, to evil that already exists, and at the same time to throw from us one of the most powerful consolations which even that amount of existing evil admitted,—the consolation of knowing that we are able to bear what it is virtue to bear, and of trusting that we shall be able in like manner to endure, without repining, whatever other ills it may be our mortal allotment to encounter, and our duty to overcome, in the only way in which such ills can be overcome, by the patience that sustains them. By yielding to habits of cowardly discontent, we continually lessen more and more that internal vigour which might save us from the miserable cowardice that makes almost every act of virtue a painful effort, till we become at last the moral slaves of every physical evil, and therefore of every human being who is capable of inflicting on us any one of those ills. He never can be the master of his own resolutions, who does not know how to endure what it may be impossible to avoid without the sacrifice of virtue. When we hear of the usurper and oppressor of Roman liberty, who, when a whole world was prostrate before him, had subdued every thing but the inflexible spirit of a single heroic scorner of slavery, and of the inflicter of slavery,

> Et cuncta terrarum subacta,
> Praeter atrocem animum Catonis—†

we do not need to be told, that he who could thus dare to offer to liberty its last homage, was not one whom mere suffering could appal.

> Justum et tenacem propositi virum
> Non civium ardor prava jubentium,
> Non vultus instantis tyranni
> Mente quatit solida;—neque Auster,
> Dux inquieti turbidus Adriae,
> Nec fulminantis magna Jovis manus.
> Si fractus illabatur orbis,
> Impavidum ferient ruinae.‡

LECTURE XCIX.

OF OUR DUTY TO OURSELVES.

In my last Lecture, Gentlemen, I began the consideration of that minor species of moral obligation which constitutes the propriety of certain actions, considered merely as terminating in the individual who performs them,—the duty, as it has been termed, which we owe to ourselves.

This duty I represented as having two great objects; in the first place, the moral excellence of the individuals, and in the second place, his happiness when any enjoyment, or the acquisition of the means of future enjoyment, is not inconsistent with that moral excellence, the cultivation of which is, in every case, even with respect to the mere personal duty, of primary obligation.

In my last Lecture, accordingly, I considered the former of these divisions of our duty to ourselves—illustrating especially the relation which a single action may bear to the whole moral character in after-life, by the increased tendency which it induces to a repetition of it, and a corresponding diminution of the abhorrence with which the action, if vicious, was previously viewed; and, en-

* Night Thoughts, Night viii.

† Horat. Carm. lib. ii. ode i.
‡ Id. lib. iii. ode iii.

deavouring, therefore, to impress you strongly with the importance of habits of self-command, by which alone, as enabling us to resist alike the gayer seductions of luxury, and the terror of personal suffering, we may be masters of our own moral resolutions, in circumstances in which vice might seem attended only with present pleasure, and virtue only with present pain.

After considering that division, then, which regards the cultivation of our moral excellence, I proceed now to consider the other branch of our duty to ourselves, of which our happiness is the immediate object.

When happiness is to be attained without the breach of any duty, it becomes a positive duty to pursue it; as, in like manner, though no other duty were to be violated than that which we owe to ourselves, it would still be a violation of this duty to act in such a manner as to lessen our own happiness, or to occasion to ourselves actual distress. It is a virtue, in short, to be prudent, a vice to be imprudent; or if prudence and imprudence should be considered as implying rather the knowledge or the ignorance of actions that may be advantageous to us or hurtful, than the performance of actions which we know to be advantageous to us or hurtful,—it is a virtue to act in such a manner as seems to us most prudent, a vice to act in such a manner as seems to us imprudent.

That there is not merely a satisfaction or regret, as at some piece of good or bad fortune, but a moral duty observed or violated, in these cases, is evident from the conscience of the agent himself, and from the feelings of those who contemplate his action. He who suffers from acting in a mannner which he had reason to consider as imprudent, feels that he is justly punished; and all who consider his action and its consequences, agree in this reference of demerit to the agent, and in the feeling of propriety in the punishment which he has received, or rather, which he may be said to have inflicted on himself. Nor can we wonder that the Deity, who willed the happiness of his creatures, and who made virtue, upon the whole, the most efficacious mode of contributing even to happiness in this life, should have made the wilful neglect of that which was in so many important respects the great object of moral feeling, an object itself of a species of moral disapprobation. If every individual of mankind were in every respect perfectly careless of his own happiness, every individual of mankind would be unhappy; and mere imprudence, if universal, would thus have the same injurious consequences as the universal oppression of all by all. From the harmony which the Deity has pre-established of virtue and utility, that conduct alone can be most virtuous, which, if universally adopted, would contribute most to the good of the universe; and the imprudent, therefore, are, to the extent of their wilful violation of the happiness of one individual, violators of the universal system of good.

Our own happiness, then, is a moral object, as the happiness of others is a moral object. There is much more reason, however, upon the whole, to fear that individuals will be neglectful of the happiness of others rather than of their own, when opportunities of furthering either may have occurred to them; since, with respect to each personally, his own desire of pleasure, and consequently of all the means of pleasure, may be considered as so powerful as scarcely to require the aid of any mere feeling of moral duty, to call on him to be prudent. It is accordant, therefore, with the gracious benevolence of the Power who has arranged our susceptibilities of feeling, in relation to the circumstances in which we are placed, that the sentiment of moral obligation should there be strongest, where the additional influence is most needed; and that, while it is of our own happiness we are, at least in ordinary circumstances, most desirous, it should yet seem to us, in the very privacy of our own conscience, a greater moral delinquency to invade any enjoyment possessed by another, than to sacrifice, by any rash folly, the means of similar enjoyment possessed by ourselves.

It is still, however, more than mere regret which we feel on considering any such imprudent sacrifice. There is truly a feeling of moral disapprobation—a feeling that in thus injuring the happiness of one individual of mankind, we have violated a part of the general system of duty, which in the actions that relate to himself only, as well as in the actions which relate directly to others, a wise and virtuous man should have constantly before him for the direction of his conduct.

It is morally fit, then, that every individual should endeavour to acquire and preserve the means of happiness, when the happiness is to be acquired or preserved without the breach of any of the duties of still stronger obligation which he may owe to communities or to other individuals.

But if the acquisition of happiness be his duty, in what manner is he to seek it? that is to say, in what objects is he to hope to find it?

O Happiness! our being's end and aim!
Good, pleasure, ease, content, whate'er thy name!
That something still which prompts th' eternal sigh,
For which we bear to live, or dare to die!
Which still so near us, yet beyond us lies,
O'erlook'd, seen double, by the fool and wise.
Plant of celestial seed! if dropt below,
Say, in what mortal soil thou deign'st to grow?
Fair op'ning to some court's propitious shine,
Or deep with diamonds in the flaming mine;

Twin'd with the wreaths Parnassian laurels yield,
Or reap'd in iron harvests of the field?
Where grows? where grows it not? If vain our toil,
We ought to blame the culture, not the soil;
Fix'd to no spot is happiness sincere,
'Tis nowhere to be found, or everywhere.*

Happiness, considered as mere happiness, may be defined to be, a state of continued agreeable feeling, differing from what is commonly termed pleasure only as a whole differs from a part. Pleasure may be momentary; but to the pleasure of a moment we do not, at least in common language, give the name of happiness, which implies some degree of permanence in the pleasure.

As happiness, however, is only a more lasting state of pleasure or agreeable feeling, it is evident that every object, the remembrance, or possession, or hope of which is agreeable, is a source of happiness; one of many sources, because there are innumerable objects which, as remembered, possessed, or hoped, are agreeable. Some of these may indeed exclude others, and the objects excluded may be sources of purer or more lasting pleasure, which it would be imprudent therefore to abandon for a less good. But all are still sources of happiness, if happiness be agreeable feeling; and the only moral question relates to the choice.

It is evident too, that this choice of happiness, as far as it depends on the intensity and duration of enjoyment, must be various in its objects in different individuals, according to their original constitution, education, habits, rank in life, or whatever else may be conceived to modify the desires of mankind. The saving of a few guineas, which, to the greater number, of the rich at least, would afford no gratification, may be a source of very great delight to those whose circumstances of humbler fortune condemn them to be necessarily frugal; or even to the possessor of many thousand acres, if he have the misfortune to be a miser. With every variety of taste, in whatever manner induced, there is a corresponding happiness of possession; a gem, a painting, a medal, which many would rank with the mere baubles of a toyshop, are treasures to a few. The loss of a single book of difficult acquisition, which may be a serious evil to a man of letters, is scarce felt as a loss by one who sees books before him, as mere pieces of gay and gilded furniture, without the slightest desire of opening them, and whose library is perhaps the only room of his house which he never thinks of entering, or which he uses at least only for such purposes as any other room, with any other furniture, might serve as well. What is true of these sources of enjoyment, is true of every object of desire which some value much, while others perhaps regard it as insignificant, or at least regard it as comparatively of far less value. In thinking of what is to give delight, we must think at least as much of the mind that is to be delighted, as of the object we may choose to term delightful. There are, probably, not two individuals to whom the acquisition of exactly the same objects would afford exactly the same quantity of happiness; and in a question of mere happiness, therefore, without regard to duty, it is as absurd to inquire into one universal standard, as to think of discovering one universal stature, or universal form of the infinitely varied features of mankind.

This inquiry, however, into one sole and exclusive standard of happiness, which seems so absurd when we consider the ever-varying tastes and fancies of mankind, was the great inquiry of the ancient philosophers. Happiness was to them not so much a generic name of many agreeable feelings, as a sort of universal *a parte rei*,—something which was one and simple, or which at least excluded any great diversity of the objects that corresponded with it. Instead, therefore, of sage calculations on the comparative amount of pleasure, which different classes of objects might be expected to afford to the greater number of mankind, they have left to us a bold assertion of one species of happiness, as if it were the sole,—and many vain refinements, by which they would endeavour to reduce to it every other form of delight, and where they could not so reduce them, to disprove the existence of enjoyments so obstinately unaccommodating; of enjoyments, however, as real and as independent in themselves, as that for the sole existence of which they contended.

The two principal sects opposed to each other in this inquiry into happiness, were the followers of Epicurus and Zeno; the former of whom regarded sensual pleasure as primarily the only real good, and every thing that was not directly sensual, as valuable only in relation to it; while the other sect contended, that there was no good whatever but in rectitude of conduct; that, but for this rectitude of choice, pleasure was not a good, pain not an evil.

The slightest consideration of the nature of the mind, as susceptible of various species of enjoyment, might seem sufficient to disprove the doctrine of both these rival sects. That our chief happiness, the happiness of far the greatest portion of our life, has no direct reference to the senses, is abundantly evident, and is admitted even by Epicurus himself; though he would still labour vainly to refer them remotely to that source; and, though the virtues and intellectual acquirements which adorn our nature infinitely more than any superior quickness of sensation, may be so traced through all their conse-

* Essay on Man, Ep. iv. v. 1—16.

quences, as to be found ultimately to contribute to the amount even of the pleasures of the senses, this influence on the senses is certainly the least part of their influence on happiness. The love of the parent for the child, of the child for the parent, all the delightful charities which render home a scene of perpetual joy, and which extend themselves beyond the domestic roof, with so wide a growth of affection; the sublime or tender remembrances of virtue; or in mere science, the luxury of truth itself, as an object of desires that may almost be said to be intellectual passions; the pleasure of the astronomer, in contemplating those seeming sparks of light, which to his senses are truly mere sparks of light, and which are magnificent orbs only to the intellect that comprehends and measures their amplitude; the pleasure of the mathematician, in tracing relations of forms which his senses are absolutely incapable of presenting to him; of the poet, in describing scenes of beauty which his eyes never are to see;—all these pleasures, intellectual and moral, are pleasures, whether they tend or do not tend to heighten mere sensual enjoyment; and if nothing were to be left of them but this influence on the senses, human life would scarcely be worthy even of the brutal appetites that might still strive to find on earth the objects of their grovelling and languid and weary desire.

So false, then, even as a mere physical exposition of happiness, is the system of Epicurus. But if his philosophy err more grossly, the philosophy of the Stoical school, though it err more sublimely, is still but a sublimer error. The moral excellence of man is unquestionably what Zeno and his followers maintained it to be, a devout submission to the will of the Supreme Being, by the exercise of those virtues for which every state in which we can be placed, allows an opportunity of exercise. It never can be according to the real excellence of his nature to act viciously, nor a violation of his real excellence to act virtuously; but though all pleasure which is inconsistent with virtue is to be avoided, the pleasure which is consistent with virtue is to be valued, not merely as being that which attends virtue, but as being happiness, or at least an element of happiness. Between mere pleasure and mere virtue, there is a competition, in short, of the less with the greater; but though virtue be the greater, and the greater in every case in which it can be opposed to mere pleasure, pleasure is still good in itself, and would be covetable by the virtuous in every case in which the greater good of virtue is not inconsistent with it. Pain is, in like manner, an evil in itself; though to bear pain without a murmur, or without even any inward murmurs, be a good,—a good dependent on ourselves, which it is in our power to add at any moment to the mere physical ill that does not depend on us, and a good more valuable than the pain in itself is evil.

It is, indeed, because pleasure and pain are not in themselves absolutely indifferent, that man is virtuous in resisting the solicitations of the one, and the threats of the other; and there is thus a self-confutation in the principles of Stoicism, which it is truly astonishing that the founder of the system, or some one of the ancient and modern commentators on it, should not have discovered. We may praise, indeed, the magnanimity of him who dares to suffer every external evil which man can suffer, rather than give his conscience one guilty remembrance; but it is because there is evil to be endured, that we praise him for his magnanimity in bearing the evil; and if there be no ill to be endured, there is no magnanimity that can be called forth to endure it. The bed of roses differs from the burning bull, not merely as a square differs from a circle, or as flint differs from clay, but as that which is physically evil; and if they did not so differ, as good and evil, there could be as little merit in consenting, when virtue required the sacrifice, to suffer all the bodily pain which the instrument of torture could inflict, rather than to rest in guilty indolence on that luxurious couch of flowers, as there could be in the mere preference, for any physical purpose, of a circular to an angular form, or of the softness of clay to the hardness of flint. Moral excellence is, indeed, in every case preferable to mere physical enjoyment; and there is no enjoyment worthy of the choice of man, when virtue forbids the desire. But virtue is the superior only, not the sole power. She has imperial sway; but her sway is imperial, only because there are forms of inferior good, over which it is her glory to preside.

It was this confusion as to the distinction of moral excellence, which is one object, and of mere happiness, which is another object, that led to all the extravagant declamations of the Porch, as to the equal happiness of every situation in which man can exist. Nor is it only in their sublime defiances of pain, that the inconsistency which I have pointed out is involved; it is involved equally in the scale of preferences which they present to us in our very virtues. We are to love, for example, health rather than sickness; but we are thus to love it, not because health is in itself a greater good than sickness, but only because it is the will of Heaven that we should love it more than the pain and imbecility of disease. And why do we infer it to be the will of Heaven that we should prefer health to sickness? It

is not easy to discover any reason for this inference, but the absolute good of that which is declared in itself to be neither good nor evil. If health and sickness be in themselves, without regard to the will of Heaven, absolutely indifferent, they must still continue absolutely indifferent, or we must require some divine revelation to make known to us the will which we are to obey.

It is this tacit assumption of the very circumstances denied, which forms indeed the radical fallacy of the system of Zeno; a sort of fallacy which, in the course of our inquiries, we have had frequent opportunities of tracing, in the systems of philosophers of every age. The will of the gods, as directing the choice, when there was a competition of many objects, seemed to furnish a reasonable ground of preference; a ground of preference which was felt to be the more reasonable, because every one had previously, in his own mind, felt and silently admitted those distinctions of physical good and evil which the Stoics ostensibly denied, but which corresponded exactly with the divine intimations of preferableness, that were only these very distinctions, under a more magnificent name. To obey the will of the gods, in preferring wealth to poverty, was in truth to have made the previous discovery, that wealth, as an object of desire, was preferable to poverty; and to have inferred, from this previous belief of the physical distinction, that supposed will of Heaven, which it would have been impossible to ascertain if the objects had been indifferent in themselves. If all external things were in themselves absolutely equal, then was it impossible to infer from them that divine preference on which our own was to depend; and if that divine preference could, in any way, be inferred from the physical differences of things, as essentially good and evil, then was it not to the divine intimation, as subsequently inferred, that we were to look for the source of that distinction, from which alone, as previously felt, we inferred the intimation itself.

The same erroneous notion, as to the absolute indifference with respect to mere happiness of all things external, which were not in themselves either good or evil, but as pointed out by the gods for our choice, led naturally, and, as I cannot but think, necessarily, to the strange stoical paradox of the absolute equality in merit of all virtuous actions, and the absolute equality in demerit of all vicious actions. This, indeed, with many of the other paradoxes maintained by the sect, Dr. Smith is inclined to consider as not forming a part of the system of Zeno and Cleanthes, but rather as introduced with other mere dialectic and technical subtleties, by their disciple and follower Chrysippus. Yet I confess that, absurd as the paradox is, and discordant with all our moral feelings, it yet seems to me so completely involved in the fundamental doctrine of the school, that it must have occurred, or at least may naturally be supposed to have occurred, to the very founders of the school, as an obvious and inevitable consequence of their doctrine; and if it did so occur to them, we certainly have no reason to imagine that the assertors of so bold a paradox as that which stated the absolute physical indifference as to the happiness of rapture and agony, would be very slow of maintaining a paradox additional, if the assertion of it were necessary to the maintenance of their system. It is an error, I may remark by the way, which is not, in principle at least, confined to Stoicism, but is radically involved in all those theological systems of Ethics, which make the very essence of virtue to consist in mere obedience to the will of God. If all actions be equal, except as they are ordered or not ordered by Heaven, which makes them objects of moral choice, simply by pointing them out to us as fit or unfit to be performed; then is there only one virtue, and only one vice, —the virtue of doing as Heaven commands, the vice of not doing as Heaven commands. Whatever the action may be, there may be this moral difference, but, in the stoical or theological view of virtue and vice, there can be this difference only. To suppose that certain actions, merely by being more widely beneficial, are more obligatory than others; that certain other actions, merely by being more widely injurious, are of greater delinquency than others,—would be to suppose, in opposition to the fundamental tenet of the whole system, that what we term a benefit is a good in itself, what we term an injury an evil in itself, independently of that will which intimates to us what is fit or unfit to be done. The most beneficial action, an action that confers the greatest amount of happiness on our nearest relative, or on our most generous benefactor, is good only because it is divinely commanded; and this character of virtue it must share in common with every action, however comparatively unimportant in itself, that is so commanded; the most injurious action, of which the injury, too, may have been directed against those whom we were especially called to love, is evil only because it is divinely indicated to us as unworthy of our choice; and this character of vice it must share in common with all the actions that are marked to be evil by this prohibition, and by this prohibition only. We are astonished, indeed, that offences which we regard as trifling should be classed by the Stoics with crimes that appear to us of the most aggravated iniquity; but we are astonished only because we assume another estimate of virtue and

vice, and have not adopted their general doctrine, that virtue is mere obedience to the will of the gods, and vice disobedience to it. The paradox is repugnant, indeed, to every feeling of our heart, but still it must be allowed to be in perfect harmony with the system; as it must be allowed also to be necessarily involved in every system that reduces virtue and vice to mere obedience or disobedience to the will of Heaven.

The whole errors of the stoical system, or at least its more important errors, may be traced then, I conceive, to that radical mistake as to the nature of happiness, which we have been considering; a mistake that, if truly allowed to influence the heart, could not fail to lessen the happiness of the individual, and in some measure too his virtue, in all the relations which personal happiness and virtue bear to private affection. If, indeed, it had been possible for human nature to feel what the Stoics maintained,—an absolute indifference as to every thing external, unless from some relation which it bore, or was imagined to bear, to the will of the Divinity, how much of all that tenderness which renders the domestic and friendly relations so delightful would have been destroyed by the mere cessation of the little pleasures and little exercises of kindness and compassion which foster the benevolent regard. It is in relation to these private affections only, however, that I conceive the stoical system to have been practically injurious to virtue, however false it may have been in mere theory, either as a physical system of the nature of man, or as a system of ethics adapted to the circumstances of his physical constitution. In every thing which terminated in the individual himself, the virtue which it recommended was what man perhaps may never be able to attain, but what it would be well for man if he could even approach; and the nearer his approach to it, the more excellent must he become. Pain is, indeed, an ill, and we must err physically whenever we pronounce that to endure this ill is not an affliction to our sensitive nature; but it would be well for us in our moral resolutions, at least in those which regard only sufferings which ourselves may have to overcome, if we could be truly what a perfect Stoic would require of us to be.

The error of the philosophy of the Porch, then, in relation to the physical ills of life, was at least an error of minds of the noblest character of moral enthusiasm. "If," says Montesquieu, "I could for a moment cease to think that I am a Christian, I could not fail to rank the destruction of the sect of Zeno in the list of the misfortunes of human kind. It was extravagant only in feelings which have in themselves a moral grandeur,—in the contempt of pleasures and afflictions. It alone knew how to make great citizens; it alone made great men; it alone made Emperors worthy of being called great. While the Stoics regarded as nothing, riches, grandeur, pleasures, and vexations, they occupied themselves only with labouring for the happiness of others in the discharge of the various social duties. It seemed as if they regarded that holy spirit—the portion of the divinity—which they believed to be in man, as a sort of bountiful providence that was watching over the human race. Born for society, they considered it as their office thus to labour for it; and they laboured at little cost to the society which they benefited, because their reward was all within themselves: their philosophy sufficed for their happiness; or rather, the happiness of others was the only accession which could increase their own."*

Hi mores, haec duri immota Catonis
Secta fuit, servare modum, finemque tenere,
Naturamque sequi, patriaeque impendere vitam;
Nec sibi, sed toti genitum se credere mundo.
Huic epulae, vicisse famem: magnique penates,
Submovisse hyemem tecto: pretiosaque vestis,
Hirtam membra super Romani more Quiritis
Induxisse togam: Venerisque huic maximus usus,
Progenies: Urbi pater est, Urbique maritus:
Justitiae cultor, rigidi servator honesti:
In commune bonus: nullosque Catonis in actus
Subrepsit, partemque tulit sibi nata voluptas.†

In the peculiar circumstances of the ages in which the stoical doctrines chiefly flourished,—the servile and wretched ages in which, with that intellectual light, in a few individuals, which leads when there is virtue, to grandeur of soul, and almost leads to virtue itself,—there was everywhere around a cold and gloomy despotism, that left man only to gaze on misery, or to feel misery, if he did not strive to rise wholly above it; it is not wonderful that a philosophy which gave aid to this necessary elevation above the scene of human suffering and human ignominy, should have been the favourite philosophy of every better spirit; of all those names which, at the distance of so many centuries, we still venerate as the names of some more than mortal deliverers of mankind.

"Among the different schools," says Apollonius, in the sublime eulogy of the Emperor M. Aurelius, "among the different schools he soon discovered one which taught man to rise above himself. It discovered to him, as it were, a new world,—a world in which pleasure and pain were annihilated, where the senses had lost all their power over the soul, where poverty, riches, life, death, were nothing, and virtue existed alone. Romans! it was this philosophy which gave you Cato and Brutus. It was it which supported them in the midst of the ruins of liberty. It extended itself afterwards, and multiplied under your tyrants. It seemed as if it had be-

* De l'Esprit des Lois, liv. xxiv. chap. x.
† Lucani Pharsalia, lib. ii. v. 380—391.

come a want to your oppressed ancestors, whose uncertain life was incessantly under the axe of the despot. In those times of disgrace alone, it preserved the dignity of human nature. It taught to live; it taught to die; and, while tyranny was degrading the soul, it lifted it up again with more force and grandeur. This heroic philosophy was made for heroic souls. Aurelius marked as one of the most fortunate days of his life, that day of his boyhood in which he first heard of Cato. He preserved with gratitude the names of those who had made him, in like manner, acquainted with Brutus and Thraseas. He thanked the gods that he had had an opportunity of reading the maxims of Epictetus."

That great emperor, who thus looked with veneration to others, was himself one of the noble boasts of Stoicism, and it must always be the glory of the philosophy of the Porch, that, whatever its truths and errors might be, they were truths and errors which animated the virtues and comforted the sufferings of some of the noblest of mankind.

With all the admiration, however, which it is impossible for us not to feel, of the sublimer parts of this system, it is still, as I said, founded on a false view of our nature. Man is to be considered not in one light only, but in many lights, in all of which he may be a subject of agreeable feelings, and consequently of happiness, as a series of agreeable feelings. He is a sensitive being, an intellectual being, a moral being, a religious being, and there are species of happiness that correspond with these varieties.

Though it would be unnecessary then to enter on any very minute details of all the varieties of agreeable feeling, of which happiness, as a whole, may be composed, a few slight remarks may still be added, on these chief specific relations of our happiness, sensitive, intellectual, moral and religious.

That the pleasure, which may be felt by us as sensitive beings, is not to be rejected by us as unworthy of man, I need not prove to you, after the definition of happiness which I have given you. Happiness, however, though only a series of agreeable feelings, is to be estimated not only by the intensity and duration of those agreeable feelings which compose it, but by the relations of these, as likely to produce or not to produce, to prevent or not to prevent, other series of agreeable feelings, and to cherish or repress that moral excellence which, as an object of desire, is superior even to pleasure itself. It is according to these relations chiefly that the pleasures of the senses are to be estimated. In themselves, as mere pleasures, they are good, and if they left the same ardour of generous enterprise, or of patient self-command, if they did not occupy time, which should have been employed in higher offices, and if, in their influence on the future capacity of mere enjoyment, they did not tend to lessen or prevent happiness which would otherwise have been enjoyed, or to occasion pain which otherwise would not have arisen, and which is equivalent, or more than equivalent, to the temporary happiness afforded, it would, in these circumstances, I will admit, be impossible for man to be too much a sensualist; since pleasure, which in itself is good, is evil, only when its consequences are evil.

He who has lavished on us so many means of delight, as to make it impossible for us, in the ordinary circumstances of life, not to be sensitively happy in some greater or less degree, has not made nature so full of beauty that we should not admire it. He has not poured fragrance and music around us, and strewed with flowers the very turf on which we tread, that our heart may not rejoice as we move along, but that we may walk through this world of loveliness with the same dull eye and indifferent soul, with which we should have traversed unvaried scenes, without a colour, or an odour, or a song.

The pleasures of the senses, then, are not merely allowable, under the restrictions which I stated, but to abstain from them with no other view than because they are pleasures, would be a sort of contempt of the goodness of God, or a blasphemy against his gracious bounty, if we were to assert that such abstinence from pleasure, merely as pleasure, can be gratifying to infinite benevolence.

It is very different, however, when the solicitations of pleasure are resisted on account of those circumstances which I have mentioned as the only reasonable restrictions on enjoyment, circumstances which give to temperance its rank as one of the virtues, and as one which is far from being the humblest of the glorious band.

Even though excessive indulgence in sensual pleasures had no other evil than the pains and lessening of enjoyment to which they give occasion, this reduction of the general amount of happiness would afford an irresistible reason for curbing the sensual appetite. The headach, the languor, the long and miserable diseases of intemperance, are themselves sufficient punishments of the luxurious indulgences which produced them. But, without taking these into account, how great is the loss of simpler pleasure, of pleasure more frequently and more universally acquirable, but which the habit of seeking only violent enjoyments for an inflamed and vitiated appetite, has rendered too feeble to be felt. They do not lose little who lose only what the intemperate lose. To enjoy, perhaps, a single luxury, which, even though they were truly to enjoy it, would not be worth so costly a purchase,

they give up the capacity of innumerable delights. Though it were pleasing rather than painful to gaze for a few moments on the sun, the pleasure would surely be too dearly bought, if it were to leave the eyes for hours dazzled and incapable of enjoying the beautiful colours of that wide expanse of nature with which the same radiance, when more moderately shed, refreshes the very vision which it delights.

The influence of intemperance, in lessening the amount of general enjoyment, injurious as it is, even in this way, to a being who loves happiness, is slight, however, when compared with its more fatal injury to every virtuous habit. He who has trained his whole soul to sensual indulgences, has prepared for himself innumerable seductions from moral good, while he has, at the same time, prepared in his own heart a greater weakness of resisting those seductions. He requires too costly and cumbrous an apparatus of happiness to feel delight at the call of virtue, which may order him where he cannot be accompanied by so many superfluities, but to him necessary things; and he will learn, therefore, to consider that which would deprive him of his accustomed enjoyments, as a foe, not as a guardian or moral adviser. It is mentioned of a friend of Charles I. in the civil war of the parliament, that he had made up his mind to take horse and join the royal party, but for one circumstance, that he could not reconcile himself to the thought of being an hour or two less in bed than he had been accustomed in his quiet home; and he therefore, after duly reflecting on the impossibility of being both a good subject and a good sleeper, contented himself with remaining to enjoy his repose. Absurd as such an anecdote may seem, it states only what passes innumerable times through the silent heart of every voluptuary, in similar comparisons of the most important duties with the most petty, but habitual pleasures. How many more virtuous actions would have been performed on earth, if the performance of them had not been inconsistent with enjoyments, as insignificant in themselves as an hour of unnecessary, and perhaps hurtful slumber!

In one of the most eloquent of the ancient writers there is a striking picture of this contrast, which the virtuous and the dissolute present almost to our very senses. "Altum quiddam est virtus, excelsum, regale, invictum, infatigabile; voluptas, humile, servile, imbecillum, caducum, cujus statio ac domicilium fornices et popinae sunt. Virtutem in templo invenies, in foro, in curia, pro muris stantem, pulverulentam, coloratam, callosas habentem manus; voluptatem latitantem saepius, ac tenebras captantem, circa balnea ac sudatoria, ac loca aedilem metuentia, mollem, enervem, mero atque unguento madentem, pallidam, aut fucatam et medicamentis pollutam."*

From this tendency of excessive indulgence in mere sensual pleasure to weaken and debase the mind, and thus to expose it an easy prey to every species of evil, Epicurus, the great assertor of sensual pleasures, as the sole direct good in life, was led to maintain the importance of temperance, almost with the same appearance of rigid severity as the teachers of a very different school. In mere precepts of virtue, indeed, that is to say, in every thing practical, the schools, the most opposite to each other in their views of the nature of good, were nearly similar. Both set out from principles that might have seemed to lead them far from each other; yet both arrived at the same conclusions, on the points on which it was most important to form a judgment. It is gratifying to find the loose freedom of the most licentious system of immorality, thus forced, for its own happiness, to submit itself to the moral restraints which it seemed to boast of throwing off, and pleasure herself compelled, as it were, to pay homage to that virtue from which she vainly endeavoured to withdraw the worship of mankind.

LECTURE C.

OF OUR DUTY TO OURSELVES—CULTIVATION OF INTELLECTUAL, MORAL, AND RELIGIOUS HAPPINESS.

Gentlemen, the greater part of my last Lecture was occupied with an examination of the erroneous opinions as to happiness, entertained by some sects of ancient philosophers, and particularly of the doctrines of one memorable sect, whose general system, false as it was in many respects, had yet so much in it of the sublimity of virtue, and was so eminently fitted to produce or to attract to it whatever was morally great, that, when we read of any noble act of patriotism, in the ages and countries in which the system flourished, we almost take for granted that he who dared heroically, or suffered heroically, was of the distinguished number of this school of heroes.

The error of the ancient inquirers into happiness consisted, as we found, in excessive simplification—in the belief that happiness was one and simple, definite, and almost self-subsisting, like an universal essence of the schools,—in the assertion, therefore, of one peculiar form of good, as if it were all that deserved that name, and the consequent exclusion of other forms of good that could

* Seneca de Vita Beata, cap. vii.

not be reduced to the favourite species. He who had confined all happiness to the pleasure of the senses, was of course under the necessity of denying that there was any moral pleasure whatever, which had not a direct relation to some mere sensual delight; while the assertor of a different system, who had affirmed virtue only to be good, was of course under an equal necessity of denying that any pleasure of the senses, however intense or pure, could be even the slightest element of happiness. Both were right in what they admitted, wrong in what they excluded; and the paradoxes into which they were led, were necessary consequences of the excessive simplification.

A wider and more judicious view of our nature would have shown, that human happiness is as various as the functions of man; that the Deity, who has united us by so many relations to the whole living and inanimate world, has, in these relations, surrounded us with means of varied enjoyment, which it is as truly impossible for us not to partake with satisfaction, as not to behold the very scene itself, which is for ever in all its beauty before our eyes; that happiness is the name of a series of agreeable feelings, and of such a series only, and that whatever is capable of exciting agreeable feelings, is, therefore, or may be, to that extent, a source of happiness.

Man is a sensitive being, an intellectual being, a moral being, a religious being. There are agreeable feelings which belong to him in each of these capacities; a happiness, in short, sensitive, intellectual, moral, and religious; and though we may affect, in verbal accordance with some system, to deny any of these various forms of good, it is only in words that we can so deny them. As mere feelings, or phenomena of the mind, admitting of analysis and arrangement, these forms of pleasing emotion were considered by us, in former parts of the course, when their general relations to our happiness were pointed out; but as objects of moral choice they may, perhaps, still admit of a few additional practical remarks.

The remarks in my last lecture were limited to the happiness which we are capable of enjoying in the first of these capacities, as sensitive beings. I proceed then now to the happiness of which we are intellectually susceptible.

That pleasure does attend the sublime operations of intellect in the discovery of truth, or the splendid creations of fancy, or the various arts to which science and imagination are subservient, every one, I presume, will readily admit, to whom these operations are familiar. But the great masters in science and art are few, and the pleasure which they feel in their noblest inventions, therefore, would be but a slight element in the sum of human happiness. The joy, however, is not confined to the productive functions, which have the pride of contemplating these great results as their own. It exists to all who have the humbler capacity of contemplating them merely as results of human genius. It is delightful to learn, though another may have been the discoverer; and perhaps the pleasure which a mind truly ardent for knowledge feels in those early years in which the new world of science is opened, as it were, to its view, and every step, and almost every glance, affords some new accession of admiration and power, may not be surpassed, even by the pleasure which it is afterwards to feel, when it is not to be the receiver of the wisdom of others, but itself the enlightener of the wise.

The peculiar and most prominent advantage of the intellectual pleasures, however, in relation to general happiness, regards as much what they prevent as what they afford. It is what I had before occasion to point out to you, when treating of the common causes of fretfulness of temper to which mere want of occupation leads perhaps as frequently as any positive cause. This advantage is the ready resource which these pleasures afford, in cases in which the hours would be slow and heavy without them. One of the most valuable arts of happiness, to those who are not privileged, if I may so express it, with the necessity of labour, is to know how to prepare resources that may be readily at hand, in the dreary hours that are without employment of any other kind. It is not always in the power of the idler to command the company of other idlers, with whom he may busy himself in labouring to forget that he is not busy; and, delightful as it may be for a while, it is but a weary occupation after all, to walk along the pavement or the field, and to count faces or trees, for the pleasure of being a little more, and but a very little more active, than if the same time had been spent on the same quiet seat, with folded arms, and drowsy eyelids, that have the dulness of beginning slumber, without its repose. In bad weather, and slight indisposition, when even these feeble resources are lost, the heavy burden of a day is still more insupportable to him who has nothing on which to lean, that may aid him in supporting it; and who, when an hour is at last shaken off, still sees other hours hanging over him, that are to weigh him down as drearily and heavily. In such circumstances, how much does he add to happiness, who can give the mind a resource that is ready at its very call, in almost all the circumstances in which it can be placed; and such a resource does the power of deriving pleasure from a book afford. The consolation which this yields, is indeed next in value to the consolation of virtue itself.

It would not be easy to form a conception adequate to the amount of positive pleasure enjoyed, and still more of positive pain prevented, which, in civilized life, is due to works that are perhaps of no value, but as they serve this temporary purpose of filling up the vacuities of empty days, or empty hours even of days that in part are occupied.

I need not quote to you the very beautiful passage of Cicero on this universality of the delights of literature, in youth, in old age, at home, and abroad, which has been so often quoted by every body that it must be familiar to you all. There is a beautiful passage, however, of another Roman philosopher, to the same purport, with which you are probably less acquainted, that expresses in a manner as striking the advantages of study, in the power which it gives us, not merely of occupying our hours of leisure, but of extending our existence through all the ages that have preceded us, and enjoying the communion of the noblest minds with which those ages were adorned. "Soli omnium otiosi sunt, qui sapientiae vacant: soli vivunt. Nec enim suam tantum aetatem bene tuentur: omne aevum suo adjiciunt. Quidquid annorum ante illos actum est, illis acquisitum est. Nisi ingratissimi sumus, illi clarissimi sacrarum opinionum conditores nobis nati sunt, nobis vitam praeparaverunt. Ad res pulcherrimas, ex tenebris ad lucem erutas, alieno labore deducimur: nullo nobis saeculo interdictum est: in omnia admittimur: et si magnitudine animi egredi humanae imbecillitatis angustias libet, multum per quod spatiemur temporis est. Disputare cum Socrate licet, dubitare cum Carneade, cum Epicuro quiescere, naturam cum Stoicis vincere, cum Cynicis excedere, cum rerum natura in consortium omnis aevi pariter incedere."* "What happiness," he continues, "and how beautiful an old age awaits him who has betaken himself to the communion of those great minds; who has constantly with him those with whom he may deliberate on every thing which concerns him; whom he may consult daily as to his own moral progress, and hear truth from them without contumely, praise without adulation; to whose very similitude, by this intercourse, he may learn at last to form even his own feebler nature. We are often in the habit of complaining that our parents, and all the circumstances of our birth, are not of our choice, but of our fortune. We have it in our power, however, to be born as we please in this second birth of genius. Of the illustrious minds that have preceded us, we have only to determine to whom we wish to be allied; and we are already adopted, not to the inheritance of his mere name, but to the nobler inheritance of every thing which he possessed."

Such, in importance, is intellectual happiness, considered merely as happiness, and such, consequently, the practical duty of cultivating it. Still more important, however, is the happiness of which we are susceptible as moral beings.

This moral happiness may be considered, practically, in two lights,—as relating to things, and as relating to persons; to the objects of our covetous desires of every sort, and to the living objects of our affections of love and hate, in all their varieties.

With respect to the former of these divisions, in the competition of the many objects that may attract us, a most important practical rule for happiness, is to give our chief consideration, so as to produce, indirectly, a corresponding tendency of desire to the advantages of those objects which are attended with least risk of disappointment, and attended, too, with fewest entanglements of necessary obsequiousness to the powerful, and enmities of competitors that, even though our pursuit should be ultimately successful, may disturb our peace, almost as much as if we had wholly failed. It is most important, then, for our general happiness, to have associated the notion of happiness itself with objects that are of easy attainment, and that depend more upon ourselves than on the accidents of fortune. If it is not easy for him who has many wishes to be tranquil, it must be still less easy for him to be happy who has many disappointments; and the ambitious man must be fortunate, indeed, who has not frequently such disappointments to encounter. Did we know nothing more of any two individuals of moderate fortune, than that they had associated the image of supreme felicity, the one with the enjoyments of benevolence and literature and domestic tranquillity, and the other with the acquisition of all the tumultuous grandeur of elevated place, could we hesitate for a moment to predict, to whose lot the greater sum of pleasure would fall, and the less of miserable solicitude? "How, indeed, can he be happy," to borrow the language of one who had many opportunities of witnessing that ambition which he so well described, "how can he be happy, who is ever weary of homage received, and who sets a value on nothing but what is refused to him? He can enjoy nothing, not his glory, for it seems to him obscure; not his station, for he thinks only of mounting to some greater height; not even his very repose, for he is wretched in proportion as he is obliged to be tranquil."

It would be well, indeed, for those who have the misfortune of thinking that happiness is only another name for the possession

* Seneca de Brevitate Vitae, cap. xiv.

of wealth and power, if they could trace the whole series of feelings that have constituted the life of far the greater number of the wealthy and the powerful.

If all, united, thy ambition call,
From ancient story learn to scorn them all.
There, in the rich, the honour'd, fam'd, and great,
See the false scale of happiness complete:
In hearts of kings, or arms of queens who lay,
How happy those to ruin, these betray!
Mark by what wretched steps their glory grows,
From dirt and sea-weed as proud Venice rose!
In each, how guilt and greatness equal ran,
And all that rais'd the hero, sunk the man.
Now Europe's laurels on their brows behold,
But stain'd with blood, or ill exchang'd for gold:
Then see them broke with toils, or sunk in ease,
Or infamous for plunder'd provinces!
O wealth ill-fated! which no act of fame
Ere taught to shine, or sanctified from shame!
What greater bliss attends their close of life?
Some greedy minion, or imperious wife,
The trophied arches, storied halls invade,
And haunt their slumbers in the pompous shade.
Alas! not dazzled with their noontide ray,
Compute the morn and evening to the day,—
The whole amount of that enormous fame,
A tale that blends their glory with their shame.*

Of kindred character with moderation in our wishes, which regards the future only, is the habit of considering the cheerful rather than the gloomy appearances of things, which allows so much delight to be felt in things possessed, as scarcely to afford room for that discontent with the present, in which the greater number of our wishes of the future, and especially of those aimless and capricious wishes which it is most difficult to satisfy, have their origin. How many are there who, surrounded with all the means of enjoyment, make to themselves a sad occupation of extracting misery from happiness itself; and who labour to be wretched, as if for no other purpose than to show the insufficiency of fortune to confer what it seems to promise. Good and evil are so mingled together in this system of things, that there is scarcely any event so productive of evil, as not to have some good mixed with it, direct or indirect; and scarcely any so good as not to be attended with some proportion of evil, or, at least, of what seems to us for the time to be evil. As we dwell more on one or on the other, we do not indeed alter the real nature of things, but we render them in their relation to us very nearly the same, as if their nature were really altered. If we look on them with a gloomy eye, all are gloomy. But there is a source of light within us, an everlasting sunshine, which we can throw on every thing around, till it reflect on us what has beamed from our own serene heart; like that great luminary which, ever moving through a world of darkness, is still on every side surrounded with the radiance which flows from itself; and cannot appear without converting night into the cheerfulness of day.

* Essay on Man, Ep. iv. v. 285—308.

One other practical rule with respect to our wishes, it is of still greater importance to render familiar to us,—that, in estimating the different objects which we obtain, and those which we see obtained by others, we should accustom ourselves to consider, not merely what each has acquired, but what has been given by each in purchase for it,—the time, the labour, the comfort, perhaps the virtue; and that we do not repine, therefore, when objects which we should have wished to acquire, are possessed by those who, in the great barter of happiness, or what seems to be happiness, have paid for them more than we should have consented to pay. All which we wish to attain in life is so truly a matter of purchase, that I know no view so powerful as this for preventing discontent in occasional failure, and I cannot urge it more forcibly to you than has been done by one of the first female writers of the age, in a very eloquent moral Essay against Inconsistency in our Expectations. From this Essay of Mrs. Barbauld, which is confessedly founded, in its great argument, on a very striking paragraph of Epictetus, I quote a few passages:

"We should consider this world as a great mart of commerce, where fortune exposes to our view various commodities, riches, ease, tranquillity, fame, integrity, knowledge. Every thing is marked at a settled price. Our time, our labour, our ingenuity, are so much ready money which we are to lay out to the best advantage. Examine, compare, choose, reject; but stand to your own judgment; and do not, like children, when you have purchased one thing, repine that you do not possess another which you did not purchase. Such is the force of well-regulated industry, that a steady and vigorous exertion of our faculties, directed to one end, will generally insure success. Would you, for instance, be rich? Do you think that single point worth the sacrificing every thing else to? You may then be rich. Thousands have become so from the lowest beginnings, by toil, and patient diligence, and attention to the minutest articles of expense and profit. But you must give up the pleasures of leisure, of a vacant mind, of a free unsuspicious temper. If you preserve your integrity, it must be a coarse-spun and vulgar honesty. Those high and lofty notions of morals which you brought with you from the schools must be considerably lowered, and mixed with the baser alloy of a jealous and worldly-minded prudence. You must learn to do hard, if not unjust things; and for the nice embarrassments of a delicate and ingenuous spirit, it is necessary for you to get rid of them as fast as possible. You must shut your heart against the Muses, and be content to feed your understanding with plain household

truths. In short, you must not attempt to enlarge your ideas, or polish your taste, or refine your sentiments; but must keep on in one beaten track, without turning aside either to the right hand or to the left. 'But I cannot submit to drudgery like this—I feel a spirit above it.' 'Tis well: be above it then; only do not repine that you are not rich.

"Is knowledge the pearl of price? That too may be purchased, by steady application and long solitary hours of study and reflection. Bestow these, and you shall be wise. 'But, (says the man of letters,) what a hardship is it, that many an illiterate fellow, who cannot construe the motto of the arms on his coach, shall raise a fortune and make a figure, while I have little more than the common conveniences of life.' Et tibi magna satis! Was it in order to raise a fortune that you consumed the sprightly hours of youth in study and retirement? Was it to be rich that you grew pale over the midnight lamp, and distilled the sweetness from the Greek and Roman spring? You have then mistaken your path, and ill employed your industry. 'What reward have I then for all my labours?' What reward! A large comprehensive soul, well purged from vulgar fears, and perturbations, and prejudices; able to comprehend and interpret the works of man—of God. A rich, flourishing, cultivated mind, pregnant with inexhaustible stores of entertainment and reflection. A perpetual spring of fresh ideas; and the conscious dignity of superior intelligence. Good heaven! and what reward can you ask besides?

"'But is it not some reproach upon the economy of Providence that such a one, who is a mean dirty fellow, should have amassed wealth enough to buy half a nation?' Not in the least. He made himself a mean dirty fellow for that very end. He has paid his health, his conscience, his liberty for it; and will you envy him his bargain? Will you hang your head and blush in his presence because he outshines you in equipage and show? Lift up your brow with a noble confidence, and say to yourself, I have not these things, it is true; but it is because I have not sought, because I have not desired them; it is because I possess something better. I have chosen my lot, I am content and satisfied.

"You are a modest man, you love quiet and independence, and have a delicacy and reserve in your temper, which renders it impossible for you to elbow your way in the world, and be the herald of your own merits. Be content then with a modest retirement, with the esteem of your intimate friends, with the praises of a blameless heart and a delicate ingenuous spirit; but resign the splendid distinctions of the world to those who can better scramble for them."

"The man whose tender sensibility of conscience, and strict regard to the rules of morality, make him scrupulous and fearful of offending, is often heard to complain of the disadvantages he lies under in every path of honour and profit. 'Could I but get over some nice points, and conform to the practice and opinion of those about me, I might stand as fair a chance as others for dignities and preferment.' And why can you not? What hinders you from discarding this troublesome scrupulosity of yours which stands so grievously in your way? If it be a small thing to enjoy a healthful mind, sound at the very core, that does not shrink from the keenest inspection; inward freedom from remorse and perturbation; unsullied whiteness and simplicity of manners; a genuine integrity

> Pure in the last recesses of the mind;

if you think these advantages an inadequate recompence for what you resign, dismiss your scruples this instant, and be a slave-merchant, a parasite, or what you please."*

> Bring then these blessings to a strict account;
> Make fair deductions; see to what they mount:
> How much of other each is sure to cost;
> How each for other oft is wholly lost;
> How inconsistent greater goods with these;
> How sometimes life is risk'd, and always ease;
> Think; and if still the things thy envy call,
> Say, wouldst thou be the man to whom they fall?†

With respect to the living objects of our affections, whom we voluntarily add to those with whom nature has peculiarly connected us, the most important, though the most obvious of all practical rules, is, to consider well in every instance what it is which we are about to love or hate, that we may not love with any peculiar friendship what it may be dangerous to our virtue to love; or, if not dangerous to our virtue, at least dangerous to our peace, from the vices or follies which all our care may be vain to remedy, and of which much of the misery and disgrace cannot fail to overflow upon us. In the emotions of an opposite kind, before we consent to submit our happiness to that disquietude which we must endure as often as we feel hatred, or anger, or lasting indignation of any sort, it is, in like manner, necessary to pause, and consider whether it may not have been still possible for us to have been deceived, as to those supposed facts which appear to us to justify our malevolent feelings. We must not imagine, as they who err in this respect are very apt to imagine, that too quick a wrath is justified by

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* Miscellaneous Pieces in prose, by John Aikin, M. D. and Anna Lætitia Barbauld. 3d edit. pp. 62—69. Lond. 1792.

† Essay on Man, Ep. iv. v. 269—276.

the avowal that our temper is passionate; for it is the inattention to this very quickness of feeling resentment, which a passionate disposition denotes, that constitutes the chief moral evil of such exacerbations of unmerited anger, that are converted into a passionate habit by the inattention only. Our duties arise often from our dangers, and increase with our dangers. The adulterer does not think of justifying himself by the confession of the violence of his adulterous desires: the liveliness of feelings which he knows to be unworthy of him, as they show him the greater peril to which his virtue is exposed, should render him more eager to strive to repress them; and he who feels himself most readily irritable, instead of regarding his irritability as an excuse, should, in like manner, look upon it only as an additional reason to avoid, most sedulously, every occasion of anger, and to consider the first slight beginning emotion, therefore, as a warning to beware.

I have already spoken of the advantage of looking to the bright sides of things; and it is not of less advantage to have acquired the habit of looking to the bright sides of persons. In our just resentment against a few, we are not to lose our admiration and love of the whole human race. We may have been deceived; but it does not therefore follow that all around us are deceivers. How much happiness does he lose who is ever on the watch for injustice, and to whom the very unsuspecting confidence of friendship itself is only something that will require a more careful and vigilant scrutiny.

> Farewell to virtue's peaceful times:
> Soon will you stoop to act the crimes
> Which thus you stoop to fear.
> Guilt follows guilt; and where the train
> Begins with wrongs of such a stain,
> What horrors form the rear!
>
> Thron'd in the sun's descending car,
> What power unseen diffuseth far
> This tenderness of mind?
> What genius smiles on yonder flood?
> What God, in whispers from the wood,
> Bids every thought be kind?
>
> O thou, whate'er thy awful name,
> Whose wisdom our untoward frame
> With social love restrains;
> Thou, who by fair affection's ties
> Giv'st us to double all our joys,
> And half disarm our pains;
>
> Let universal candour still,
> Clear as yon heaven-reflecting rill,
> Preserve my open mind;
> Nor this nor that man's crooked ways
> One sordid doubt within me raise,
> To injure human kind.*

On the general happiness which virtue, considered as one great plan of conduct, tends to afford, it would be idle to add any remarks, after the full discussions of the whole doctrine of virtue with which we were so long occupied. Where it is, there is no need of effort to appear happy; and, where it is not, the effort will be vain. Nothing, indeed, can be juster than the observation of Rousseau, that "it is far easier to be happy than to appear so." What inexhaustible sources of delight are there in all those ready suggestions which constitute the remembrances of a life well spent, when there is not a familiar place or person that does not recall to us the happiness which attended some deed of virtue, or at least some benevolent wish! "The true secret of happiness," says Fontenelle, "is to be well with our own mind. The vexations which we must expect to happen to us from without, will often throw us back upon ourselves; it is good to have there an agreeable retreat."

The delights of virtue, of course, lead me to those delights of religion with which they are so intimately connected. Even these, too, are to a certain extent, subjects of practical deliberation. We must, if we value our happiness, be careful in determining what it is which we denominate religion, that we may not extend its supposed duties to usages inconsistent with our tranquillity; and still more, that we may not form to ourselves unworthy notions of him on whom we consider our whole happiness to depend. It is not enough to believe in God, as an irresistible power that presides over the universe; for this a malignant demon might be; it is necessary for our devout happiness, that we should believe in him as that pure and gracious being who is the encourager of our virtues and the comforter of our sorrows.

> Quantum religio potuit suadere malorum,

exclaims the Epicurean poet, in thinking of the evils which superstition, characterised by that ambiguous name, had produced: and where a fierce or gloomy superstition has usurped the influence which religion graciously exercises only for purposes of benevolence to man, whom she makes happy with a present enjoyment, by the very expression of devout gratitude for happiness already enjoyed, it would not be easy to estimate the amount of positive misery which must result from the mere contemplation of a tyrant in the heavens, and of a creation subject to his cruelty and caprice. It is a practical duty then, in relation to our own happiness, to trace assiduously the divine manifestations of goodness in the universe, that we may know with more delightful confidence the benevolence which we adore. It is our duty, in like manner, to study the manifestations of his wisdom in the regular arrangement of the laws of the universe, that

* Akenside.

we may not ignorantly tremble at superstitious imaginary influences, which we almost oppose to his divine power. How often have we occasion to observe in individuals, who think that they are believers and worshippers of one omnipotent God, a species of minor superstition, which does not indeed, like the more gigantic species, destroy happiness at once, but which, in those who are unfortunately subject to it, is almost incessantly making some slight attack on happiness, and is thus as destructive of tranquillity as it is dishonourable to the religion that is professed. There is scarcely any thing, however insignificant and contemptible, which superstition has not converted into an oracle. Spectres and dreams, and omens of every kind, have made cowards even of the bravest men; and though we no longer stop an expedition, or suspend an important debate, at the perking of a chicken, or the flight of a crow, the great multitude, even in nations the most civilized, are still under the influence of imaginary terrors that scarcely can be said to be less absurd. Of how much sorrow might the same account be given, as that which Gay ascribes to the farmer's wife:

> Alas! you know the cause too well,
> The salt is spilt:—to me it fell;
> Then, to contribute to my loss,
> My knife and fork were laid across;
> On Friday too! the day I dread!
> Would I were safe at home in bed!
> Last night—I vow to heaven 'tis true—
> Bounce from the fire, a coffin flew.
> Next post some fatal news shall tell;
> God send, my Cornish friends be well!*

The difficulty of distinguishing casual successions of events from the unvarying sequences of causation, gives unfortunately to the ignorant too much room for such disquieting associations, which nothing but juster views of philosophy can be expected to prevent or dissipate. The cultivation of sound opinions in science is thus, in more senses than one, the cultivation of happiness.

When religion is truly free from all superstition, there can be no question that the delights which it affords are the noblest of which our nature is capable. It surrounds us with every thing which it is delightful to contemplate; with all those gracious qualities, that even in the far less degrees of excellence in which they can be faintly shadowed by the humble nature of man, constitute whatever we love and venerate in the noblest of our race. We cannot be surrounded, indeed, at every moment by patriots and sages,—by the human enlighteners and blessers of the world, for our own existence is limited to a small portion of that globe, and a few hours of those ages which they successively enlightened and blessed; but we can be surrounded, and are every moment surrounded, by a wisdom and goodness that transcend far more whatever patriots and sages could exhibit to us, than these transcended the meanest of the multitude, whom their generous efforts were scarcely able to elevate to the rank of men. If we but open our heart to the benevolence that is shining on it, as we open our eyes to the colours with which the earth is embellished, we have nature constantly before us; and the God of nature, whose goodness is everywhere, like the unfading sunshine of the world.

When other joys are present, indeed, the pleasures of religion, it may be thought, are superfluous. We are happy; and happiness may suffice. Yet he knows little of the grateful influence of devotion, who has never felt it as a heightener of pleasure as well as a comforter of grief. "O speak the joy," says Thomson, after describing a scene of parental and conjugal happiness:

> O speak the joy, ye whom the sudden tear
> Surprises often, while you look around,
> And nothing strikes your eye but sights of bliss.†

The tear which thus arises, is a tear of gratitude to him who has given the happiness which the parental heart is at once sharing and producing,—the overflowing tenderness of one who feels in the enjoyment of that very moment, that the Power which blesses him will be the blesser too, in after-life, of those whom he loves.

It is in hours of affliction, however, it will be admitted, that the influence is most beneficial; but how glorious a character is it of religion, that it is thus most powerful when its influence is most needed, and when it, and the virtues which it has fostered, are the only influences that do not desert the miserable, and the only influences that can relieve. Religion is most powerful in affliction. It is powerful, because it shows that even affliction itself can make man nobler than he was; and that there is a gracious eye which marks the conflict, and is ever ready to smile with more than approbation on the victor. To the indignant, to the oppressed, to the diseased, while life has still a single sorrow to be borne, it flings on the short twilight a portion of the splendour of that immortality into which it is almost dawning; and when life is closing, it is itself the first joy of that immortality which begins.

The devout enjoyments of a grateful and confiding heart, then, are truly the noblest enjoyments of which that heart is capable,—not more from the purity, and vividness, and permanence of the direct pleasures themselves, than from the influence which they diffuse on every other pleasure, and on every

* Fables, fab. xxxvii.

† Seasons,—conclusion of Spring.

pain of life. When we have accustomed our minds to the frequent contemplation of his perfections, who, in requiring of virtue the little temporary sacrifices which it may be called to make to duty, has not abandoned the virtue which he is training by such voluntary sacrifices, for excellence, to which every thing that can be sacrificed on earth is comparatively insignificant, it is then that we learn to enjoy with a delight which no others can feel, and to suffer almost as others enjoy, that even the aspect of nature itself appears doubly beautiful in our eyes, and that every thing which it presents becomes, in one sense of the word, our own, as the work of our God, and the dwelling of those whom we love.

" He," says Cowper, speaking of such a mind,

> He looks abroad into the varied field
> Of Nature, and though poor, perhaps, compared
> With those whose mansions glitter in his sight,
> Calls the delightful scenery all his own.
> His are the mountains, and the vallies his,
> And the resplendent rivers. His to enjoy,
> With a propriety that none can feel
> But who, with filial confidence inspir'd,
> Can lift to Heaven an unpresumptuous eye,
> And smiling say, " My Father made them all."
> Are they not his, by a peculiar right,
> Whose eye they fill with tears of holy joy,
> Whose heart with praise, and whose exalted mind,
> With worthy thoughts of that unwearied love
> That plann'd and built, and still upholds, a world,
> So cloth'd with beauty, for rebellious man ?*

Of all that extensive variety of subjects, which in my first Lecture I represented to you as belonging to my academic department, we have now, with the exception of the single division of Political Economy, considered the whole with as attentive examination as the narrow limits of such a course will admit. That one division, which, from the multiplicity of our subjects, that were more intimately related to each other, I have been obliged to omit, has been reserved by me as the subject of a separate course. Its doctrines are far too extensive to be treated in a few lectures; and the time, therefore, which could only have been wasted in a superficial and frivolous sketch of principles, that require to be analyzed before they can be understood, or at least understood with conviction and profit, I preferred to give to a little fuller elucidation of doctrines that were more immediately under our review.

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* Task, book v.

THE END.

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