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ARTICLE V.

THE DIVINE MORAL GOVERNMENT MEDIATORIAL.

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In the tenth book of Paradise Lost, Milton describes the change in the material world, that man's physical environment might be readjusted to his moral condition and relations as a rebellious and guilty creature.

> ——The sun
> Had his first precept so to move, so to shine,
> As might affect the earth with cold and heat
> Scarce tolerable.

Jehovah bade—

> ——His angels turn askance
> The poles of earth twice ten degrees, and more,
> From the sun's axle; they with labor pushed
> Oblique the centric globe.

And much more to the same purpose, and in which the poetic conception is sublimely grand. But Milton did not design it to be merely a poetic fiction. As Green in his "History of the English People" has said of Paradise Lost, "The meagre outline of the Hebrew legend is lost in the splendor and music of Milton's verse. The stern idealism of Geneva is clothed in the gorgeous robes of the Renaissance." He reflects in his immortal epic the theological views of his time, and not less in his portrayal of the readjustment of man's physical environment after the fall than in other things. Something not essentially different survives in the popular apprehension of the physical consequences of the sin of our first parents.

But Moses and Milton do not agree. We do not understand the Bible to teach that there was a readjustment of

man's physical surroundings because he sinned, and as part of the penalty of his sin. The purpose of this paper does not require us to enter upon the exegesis of Genesis iii. 17-19; as our argument in evidence of the Mediatorial Character of the Divine Moral Government will be deduced from the scope of what the Bible teaches on the subject. That the Bible contemplates the existing condition of things in the physical world as having been predetermined by the anticipation of moral evil in the human race, there can be no doubt. Equally evident is it that the Bible assumes there are physical laws to which we are subjected, and conditions in our physical surroundings which exist because man's character is what it is, and because his attitude toward the moral government of God is what it is. And, furthermore, there are in the Bible distinct prophetic predictions of a "new heavens and a new earth wherein dwelleth righteousnes." Exactly what such predictions mean we may not be able to determine, but that they foreshadow a physical as well as a moral state in which "the redeemed of the Lord" shall be eternally exempt from those physical as well as moral conditions incorporated into the present order of things, "in which we groan being burdened," there can be no doubt. But nowhere does the Bible affirm that the present order of things in the physical world is either final or perfect. Everything God made is very good because adapted to the end it was designed to subserve; but the present is not the highest perfection of the physical universe, if we interpret the Bible correctly. There is in the future manifestations of Christ's mediatorial power, if we apprehend the meaning of Scripture, a higher perfection for the physical universe, as there is a higher perfection for man as a redeemed sinner. But the world as it is, was evidently adapted to man as he is. We therefore believe, with Murphy, that "the ground without any change in its inherent nature is cursed to man."[1] We cannot believe there was any change in physical law. So far as we are able to gather from the allusions of Scripture, the laws and phenomena of the physical universe

[1] Commentary on Gen. *in loco.* Comp. Lange on Gen. iii. 18.

world was, anticipated the sin and fall of man ;[3] and creation's harmony moved on without a jar toward the final and glorious unfolding of God's mediatorial plan in Christ Jesus.

Nevertheless, when man sinned there was a change. It was radical, and far-reaching beyond the restricted confines of Eden. It was not physical ; though—as Müller remarks—"we cannot doubt that the fall involved a corruption of the physical and psychical life of our first parents—a derangement of its original harmony, which they transmitted by generation to their descendants, and these again to their posterity."[4] It was a moral change. It was not a development; it was a transition out of one moral state—innocence—into another moral state—guilt. Its cause was an act of disobedience to the Divine command, the deliberate casting off of the restraints of Divine authority. The change was in man : not in the atmosphere he breathed, nor in the water he drank, nor in the food he ate. It was neither in the heavens above him, nor in the earth beneath him. It was within man, and, therefore, when in his self-consciousness he realized that through transgression he had become guilty, doubtless all things about him seemed different, because in his own soul there had been a moral revolution. The voice of God, which before he gladly heard, now accused him of sin, and seemed the sentence of condemnation. The consciousness of sin convinced him he was in harmony neither with nature

[3] Referring to Rom. viii. 19-23, Dr. Rudolf Schmid pertinently says, The apostle "does not mean a certain time in which it happened, nor an historical occasion, as the fall of man, which should have given an impulse to this subjection; but he only says, in general, that it was God who 'hath subjected the creature to vanity,' and that he hath 'subjected the same in hope,' . . . . not forever, but from the very beginning of creation." And of Gen. iii. 17, he says, "Even the curse of the ground is no cursing of the universe or of the globe, but only a cursing of *the ground*" (The Theories of Darwin, page 324. Zimmerman's Trans., Chicago, 1883). Referring to Eden, McIlvaine says: "An abode was provided for their [Adam and Eve] innocence, which implies that the surrounding country was not equally suitable. . . . . Nor is there anything improbable in this, when we consider that the sin and fall of man were certainly foreseen by the all-wise Creator. . . . . However this may be, the natural world, in its present condition, is manifestly designed and adapted to be an abode and sphere for a sinful race" (Wisdom of Holy Scripture, page 167).

[4] Christian Doctrine of Sin, Vol. ii. p. 387, Urwick's Trans., Edinburgh, 1887.

about him nor with God above him. This is a law of our moral nature; it is a fact in the moral history of every transgression; it repeats itself in every transgression. When Adam sinned there was a tremendous convulsion; but it was within the realm of man's moral nature, and its effects were felt throughout the domain of God's moral jurisdiction. The fall was a moral cataclysm, the upheaval of which was felt in hell beneath and in heaven above. There was rebellion against God, and therefore against nature. The laws of nature are now, and were then, as severe in their condemnation of sin as the law of God. God's government of the physical world was then, and is now, as inexorable in its sentence against sin as his moral government is. But the Divine moral government remained unchanged, and the laws of the physical universe moved right on without arrest, or shock, or modification. All things remained as they had been; but alas! man, because of transgression, ceased to be what he had been, and then nature herself could not have seemed, to his blurred and eclipsed vision, the same glorious revelation of his Father's goodness and power as when, before his sin, he gazed upon her with a pure heart and in the wrapt adoration of holy thoughts.

There was, then, no change in the order and course of nature; there was neither modification nor fundamental change in the method of the Divine moral government; neither was there a jar, and much less a cessation, in the progress of Divine providence; nor is there a hint of disappointment to, or departure from, the Divine purpose with which the creation of man was inseparably allied. This being so, it follows not only that the existence of moral evil in the present order of things was foreseen, but also that it entered essentially into the determination of the method, means, and purpose of the Divine moral government. Eternally purposing within himself the disclosure of his moral perfection to and through moral beings,—the only conceivable way in which he could do it,—God, in the method of his moral government, must have contemplated the encounter

with moral evil. He purposed to meet it; subdue it; triumph over it. In his "Christian Dogmatics," Martensen says, "Evil is just that possibility which ought to have remained a possibility forever."[5] We cannot accept this. If evil "ought to have remained a possibility forever," the integrity of the Divine moral government would have been kept in jeopardy forever. If moral beings, responsible for choice and action, were to be brought into existence by the creative fiat of Jehovah, the possibility of moral evil involved in their creation must be so provided against by the Divine moral government that in the method of its administration that possibility shall cease to exist; for we cannot conceive of the Divine government making any provision against a contingency that is to be a contingency forever. It was not to be administered under such conditions as exposed it forever to the rebellion of its subjects, and to all the consequent demoralization of such insurrection. What Martensen terms "a possibility," God eternally contemplated as a certainty. What Arminianism represents as a contingency, the Divine moral government anticipated as a fact. God, in his moral government, anticipated the conflict with and triumph over sin neither as abstract nor possible, but as it should engraft itself upon man's nature; infect his reason; pervert his conscience; incorporate itself in the decisions of his will; become supreme in the choice of his motions and the determination of his ends. God fights no sham battles; he makes no preparation for conflicts that never take place. His eternal plan and purpose contemplated sin as a reality. The ideal of the conflict, as it included the exhibition of the Divine perfections and the impartation of the highest good to the moral universe, was in the Divine mind from eternity. But as all ideals seek transmutation into reality, and as the contest is always in the process of such transmutation, so, from the teachings of Holy Scripture, as well as from the demands of unfettered reason, we believe it was God's sovereign pleasure—perhaps in heaven, with clearer

[5] Page 159, Urwick's Trans., Edinburgh Ed., 1871.

vision, we shall see it was a moral necessity—to reveal his glory by meeting and conquering forever the most determined possible antagonism to his moral government. Hence (and here, too, the Scriptures are clear) that government is planned and administered with reference to the Divine glory, as it shall be manifested in overcoming moral evil as in concrete form it exists in depraved and guilty creatures. And the issues involved in that contest, whether the irreversible condemnation of the finally impenitent, or the ransom of the "innumerable multitude" from sin, will be to the Divine glory through the mediation of Jesus Christ. For God has "highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name; that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things on earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father" (Phil. ii. 9-11).

This being so, the Edenic promise is made as if it were the disclosure of a predetermined plan which included and anticipated that conflict and triumph which it announced. There is no hint either of disappointment in the Divine purpose or of change in the Divine plan. "And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel" (Gen. iii. 15). As Kurtz has said, "In virtue of the eternal council of God, and according to his mercy, the salvation long planned began immediately to manifest itself, and, as a new lever and regulator in the development of man, to operate upon his history."[6] It is true the language of the Edenic promise of redemption is mystical, and that it must have been, for the most part, an enigma to our first parents. And it may be said further, that we are able to interpret it now only by the help of the light thrown backward upon it by subsequent events in the history of redemption. But granting this, there is in it, as Murphy observes, "the retributive character of the Divine administration," and it "is the first

[6] History of Old Cov., Vol. i. p. 50, Second Ed., 1870.

dawn of hope for the human family after the fall."[7] There is enmity and conflict, for it speaks in unambiguous terms of both and affirms their perpetuity. The Edenic promise makes it clear that, by man and on this earth, there was to be antagonism to the Divine government. The authority and sway of Jehovah were to be contested, but their integrity was to be maintained, and finally they were to be forever triumphant. To use the words of Professor Cowles, this enmity "underlies the conflict of the ages; this first promise of God to our fallen race sweeps the eye over the whole vast field of moral conflict."[8] The Edenic promise was both prospective and retrospective: it threw its rays of hope forward on the future of the race; but it also lifted the veil through which we may look into the secret purpose of Jehovah, which was then for the first time made known. In it there is no intimation of readjustment of the Divine plan, nor change in the method of the Divine government, to meet an unexpected emergency. When the Southern Confederacy collapsed, the National government was without legislative provision for the work of reconstruction. Neither in the Constitution nor in subsequent legislation based upon it was there any provision anticipatory of such problems as "the great rebellion" and its overthrow presented. Had there been, the work of reconstruction would have been easy; it would have been soon consummated. But when man sinned there is no hint of any sort of special legislation in the Divine councils. There is no necessity for special legislation to meet a new and unforeseen emergency. The Edenic promise does not read like an expedient, but like the announcement of a preordained plan. Everything is ready for what God foresaw and predetermined. It announced that which from eternity entered controllingly into the purpose of God to reveal himself "in the ages to come." That revelation he purposed to make through the mediation of Jesus Christ. It was to be the grandest possible exhibition of the Divine moral perfections as they incorpor-

[7] On Gen., *in loco.*

[8] On the Pentateuch, p. 90.

ated themselves into the administration of the Divine moral government. The purpose to create the heavens and the earth was subordinate to this, and a means of which it was to be the end. So was the creation of man. So is the course of Divine Providence in the events of human history and in the shaping of human progress.[9] The full meaning of the Edenic promise of redemption is defined by Paul in his letter to the Ephesians, when he says, of the preaching of the unsearchable riches of Christ, that the object is "to make all men see what is the dispensation of the mystery which from all ages hath been hid in God, who created all things; to the intent that now unto the principalities and the powers in the heavenly places might be made known through the church the manifold wisdom of God, according to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord" (iii. 9–11). The consummation of the Edenic promise will be when "the kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ" and when "He shall reign for ever and ever" (Rev. xi. 15).

From this the inference is, that the physical world in which man dwells; the physical conditions by which he is surrounded and to which he is subject, because created amenable to physical law; and the moral state of the race,—all exist with reference to mediation and redemption through Jesus Christ. The Scriptures teach that the reason for all things is the glory of God, and that the form in which the Divine glory is manifested is by the revelation of Jesus Christ. This was the Divine purpose and method from eternity. He never did anything in time but what was subordinated to this purpose and in conformity to this method. For God never had two purposes and two plans either for the physical universe or for the human race. God has not two methods of moral government. He has but one. That one is absolute, unchanging, eternal. To us it is an impenetrable mystery; to our finite reason its complexities appear contradictions. Our

[9] Comp. Observations of Pressensé, Trois Poemiers Siécles, Tome i. pp. 282–283, Ed. Paris, 1868.

environment seems disorder and confusion. Physical law seems to be blind force; the endeavor toward the highest ends for the advancement of the individual and the elevation of society, seems, when contemplated from these points of view, a hopeless struggle. But in God's purpose and method there is harmony in all the parts, and perfect adaptation to the end in the moral government under which he has placed us. The reason for it is "the mystery of his will;" the end is "according to the good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself" (Eph. i. 9). The Bible resolves the reason for all things in the Divine moral and physical government, into the self-determination of the Divine will and to the choice of the Divine good-pleasure in Christ. All is subordinate to this. There are in reality neither conflicts nor expedients in the Divine government. In its deepest meaning and ultimate results, physical law is coöperatively subordinate to the incomparably higher purposes of God's moral government. God is not trying to govern; he is governing. In the administration of his government he is not trying to save men; he is not taxing to the utmost the resources of his power and wisdom in a doubtful struggle with moral evil. He *is* saving men "according to his purpose and grace." He is making preparation for the irrevocable and hopeless overthrow of moral evil. This is the biblical conception of his government. It is there without any other explanation than that it is the sovereign pleasure of God that his glory shall be the end both of what he conceals and of what he is pleased to reveal. Unless we accept this we are adrift in all our conceptions of God in his relations to the universe, physical and moral, as the Creator and Ruler. If we do not reverently accept this, our conception of God in the administration of his government must vacillate between conceiving him to be a capricious tyrant, or as helpless in the presence of difficulties confronting his jurisdiction. A doubtful struggle with anarchy and rebellion is not government; much less can it be the Divine moral government. "If we believe in God and are consistent thinkers, we cannot avoid believing in a sure

and Divine system of things; thus alone can we keep alive the idea of the Divine agency and government, without which all theology would be unsupported."[10]

The Holy Scriptures make known to us "a sure and Divine system of things." From the voice of God to Adam in the Garden to the visions beheld by John on Patmos, the one object of revelation is to unfold to us that system. It is perfect. It is sublime in its purpose, glorious in its unity. Theologians have led us into the mazes of metaphysical speculation, rather than into the clearer comprehension of the truth, by their scholastic distinctions, in which they have separated the decrees of God into general and special, antecedent and consequent. It may be there are minds these distinctions have helped to the more accurate shaping of their conceptions; but as a fact the Bible knows nothing of any such analysis of the Divine thought; it certainly defines no such order in the procedure of the Divine moral government. We accept the statement of Oosterzee, "If dogmatic scholasticism has not seldom spoken of different Divine decrees (*decreta*), and divided these in various ways, the gospel speaks only of *one* design, *one* will, *one* merciful thought of God, of which everything which is done for the salvation of a sinful world is the gradual realization. The centre of the plan of salvation is Christ. In him God has elected the believing, and in him the plan of the world must attain its completion."[11] Christ was not primarily but declaratively invested with all power in heaven and on earth after he had finished his work and risen from the dead. His actual mediatorial investiture antedated creation. It was when God said, "Thou art my son; this day have I begotten thee." He came "in the fulness of time," but his appointment to all the functions of mediator—those of creation as well as those of redemption, those of providential administration as well as those of grace—was before time began. It was from eternity. His coming was the unveiling to us of the nature-councils and perfections of

[10] Prof. H. B. Smith, Faith and Philosophy, p. 32.

[11] Dog. Theol., Vol. ii. p. 447, Trans. by Watson and Evans., Am. Ed., 1874.

the Godhead. This he alone could do because he was the eternal Son dwelling in the bosom of the Father, invested with power to carry forward to triumph the Divine purposes, and preordained by means of the incarnation to reveal God to man. Therefore he was made "head over all things to the church" before he saved it by the shedding of his blood, and all things were subject to him that he might save and sanctify the church. For this reason, and in the words of Dr. A. A. Hodge, "As the universe constitutes one physical and moral system, it was necessary that his Headship as Mediator should extend to the whole, in order to cause all things to work together for good to his people, to establish a kingdom for them, to reduce to subjection all his enemies."[12] As the sun is the centre of that system of worlds to which ours belongs, so is Christ the centre about which the Divine moral government, in its relation to physical law as well as in the purpose of redemption, revolves. The worlds were made by, and received their laws from, him. The course of Divine providence was inaugurated, and its results planned, by him. The conflict between sin and holiness, and the blending of justice and mercy,—all have their places in the eternal plan determined by the purpose of God to reveal his glory through Jesus Christ. The final triumph of both the Divine mercy and justice is to be through Christ. What Dorner says of providence we apply to the Divine moral government as administered through and by Christ as Mediator, because Christ, as Mediator, has the control of Divine providence. "Absolute chance there cannot be. . . . Nothing within the compass of the possible can actually take place without God's permission, not to say against his absolutely disposing will; and he permits nothing actually to take place that would interfere with his world-plan."[13] Christ is the Word by whom the worlds were spoken into existence; in whom all the complexities of Providence are harmonized; by whom the Divine purposes are to be fulfilled; and in whom the

[12] Outlines of Theology, pp. 321–322, Ed. 1865.
[13] System of Christian Doc., Vol. ii. p. 55, Edinburgh, 1881.

dark problem of sin is to find a solution, in which there shall be universal acquiescence by all holy beings, and in which the Divine moral government shall be eternally vindicated.

Creation is ascribed to Christ. The passages of Scripture to which we refer are such as these. "All things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made. He was in the world, and the world was made by him" (John i. 3, 10). "For by him were all things created that are in heaven and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers; all things were created by him and for him; and he is before all things, and by him all things consist" (Col. i. 16–17).[14] God . . . hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds; who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on High" (Heb. i. 1–3). Such passages are among the proof-texts in demonstrating the pre-existence and divinity of Christ. For that purpose they are conclusive. But they establish one thing beside his pre-existence and divinity. They are not less conclusive in asserting his mediation in the work of creation. When it is said that "without him was not anything made that was made," it is "to assure us, not of the *dependence of everything on God*, but of *its existence by means of the Logos.*"[15] It means that everything exists through the mediation of the Logos. When it is said that "by him were all things created," the language is too lucid to be misapprehended, unless the misapprehension be in the interests of a preconceived theory. Its obvious meaning is that "*on*

[14] On the words translated "By him all things consist," Meyer says, "There is in Christ not merely the creative cause, but also the cause which brings about organic *stability and continuance* in unity (preserving and governing) for the whole of existing things." Of the word translated "consist," he says it "denotes *the subsistence* of he whole, *the state of lasting independence and order*—an idea which is not equivalent o creation, but pre-supposes it." The italics are Meyer's.

[15] Tholuck on John i, 3, Krauth's Trans., 1859.

Christ depended (causally) the act of creation, so that the latter was not done independently of him—in a causal connection apart from him—but it had in him the ground essentially conditioning it. In him lay, in fact, the potency of life, from which God made the work of creation proceed, inasmuch as he was the personal principle of the Divine self-revelation, and therewith the accomplisher of the Divine idea of the world."[16] And when it is declared that by him (Christ) "he also made the worlds," the meaning is unmistakable. "All this, God did immediately by the Son; not as a subordinate instrument, but as the principal efficient, being his own power and wisdom."[17] The quotation of other passages, and the citation of other expositors of authority equal to those we have cited, in proof of Christ's mediation in creation, is unnecessary. The emphatic declaration of the inspired writers that creation was δι' αὐτοῦ and ἐν αὐτῷ, "through him," and "in him," is conclusive. If the world and the universe were called into existence "in Christ," and "through Christ," then creation must have been, in the Divine purpose, subordinate to the mediatorial nature of the Divine moral government. The creation of all things by Christ, and his supremacy over all things, must have been preordained that he might reveal, by the redemption of sinners, the fulness of the Divine perfections; that he might show that the Divine government in creation as well as in the kingdom of grace is one of perfect harmony.

Christ's authority is supreme over the realm of the invisible. He is not only greater than all beings in the unseen universe, but they are all subject to him. Whether those who kept their "first estate," or those "reserved in everlasting chains, under darkness, unto the judgment of the great day" (Jude 6), both are within his domain. He has "the keys of death and of hell" (Rev. i. 18), and receives the adoring recognition of his authority from the hierarchies dwelling in the heavenly places. The passages proving this

[16] Meyer on Col. i. 16. Edinburgh Ed.

[17] Owen on Hebrews i. 3, Vol. iii. p. 97, Goold's Ed., Edinburgh, 1854.

are many. He is seated "far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come" (Eph. i. 21, 22). He is "the head of all principality and power" (Col. xi. 10). His victory on the cross was a victory over the evil intelligences of the invisible world, and was the overthrow of sin in this. "And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it" (Col. xi. 15). Having triumphed over death and the grave, he "is gone into heaven, and is on the right hand of God; angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto him" (1 Peter iii. 22). His authority was acknowledged by demons when he was on the earth (Matt. viii. 28), and now "the devils believe and tremble" (James ii. 19). The angels of God are commanded to worship him (Heb. i. 6); they announce his birth (Luke xi. 8-14); are the first to proclaim his resurrection from the dead (Matt. xxviii. 57); welcome him back to heaven; join in his adoration there (Rev. v. 11); and under his direction they are "ministering spirits sent forth to minister to them who shall be heirs of salvation" (Heb. i. 14). The sovereignty of Christ is never in Scripture represented as restricted to man and the moral control of man. It is always represented as extending beyond man; and as being over all created intelligences, both holy and depraved, the unfallen and the fallen; over sinful man, whose redemption is possible, and over the devils, whose character is utterly indurated and whose redemption is impossible. In the exercise of the supremacy over the realm of the invisible, Christ is "Head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all" (Eph. i. 22, 23). The mediatorial government extends beyond the church which Christ purchased with his own blood, that the eternal salvation of the redeemed may be made certain. If his mediatorial domain includes fallen and wicked spirits "the very object of his mediatorial character requires this; for as the elect of God are, by nature, subjected to the power of Satan, and ex-

posed to the assaults of his emissaries, it is important and necessary that he who is to act as their Saviour should be invested with power to rescue them from their spiritual adversaries."[18] The Divine moral government of the invisible world is mediatorial. "The exalted Saviour, the incarnate Son of God, seated at the head of the universe, is made head of his church. . . . . *All things* are placed under his feet, and he, head over all things, is head of the church."[19]

The Scriptures affirm Christ's investiture with universal mediatorial dominion and authority. If, as we have shown, the physical universe was created by him, and also the invisible world is subject to his sway, both being subordinate to the Divine purpose of redemption, the argument for the universality of his mediatorial authority, and that the Divine government, physical and moral, is wholly mediatorial, would seem to lack nothing except the positive assertions of Scripture to make it complete. If there were no such assertions the argument would be sufficient. But there are such assertions, both in the Messianic prophecies and in the words of Christ himself. The second Psalm is Messianic. It "begins with a description of the world rebellious against God and his government."[20] It declares "Thou art my son: this day have I begotten thee. Ask of me and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession. Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron: thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel" (Ps. ii. 7-9). It is significant that three times (Rev. ii. 27; xii. 5; xix. 15) in the Apocalypse the last verse of this quotation is applied to the triumphant Christ. It announces his regal investiture with universal authority to govern and subjugate; to extend mercy to all who submit to his sway, and visit the wrath of God to the utmost upon all who do not. His will is the relentless severity of justice. The "rod of iron" is the symbol of his power; the crushed "potter's vessel," the symbol of

[18] Lymington, Dominion of Christ, p. 79, Ed. 1839.
[19] Hodge on Eph. i. 22.
[20] Lange, Introduction to Ps. ii.

his wrath visited on the incorrigible. There is no higher conception of the prerogatives of government than these words define, "This view of the Messiah as a destroyer is in perfect keeping with the New Testament doctrine, that those who reject Christ will incur an aggravated doom,"[21] inflicted by Christ himself. Predicting the advent of Christ, Isaiah says, "Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David and upon his kingdom, to order and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even forever" (Isa. ix. 7); and Micah says, "But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel: whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting" (Micah v. 2). Isaiah predicts a mediatorial sovereign and a kingdom in which universal justice is the foundation of government. His sceptre is unlimited. The stability and glory of his kingdom is that he is sovereign both in administering justice and in granting mercy. This is "only possible by founding a kingdom on judgment and justice, and by carrying out every single act of administration in this spirit."[22] Micah predicts one "whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting." Some interpreters apply this to the Edenic promise, and as it was repeated by patriarch and prophet, but the Hebrew may be translated, "the days of eternity." The meaning, however, in either case is the same. Christ was, is, ever shall be, Mediator, and the Divine government, physical, providential, and moral, is vested in him. Therefore he says of himself, "Before Abraham was, I am" (John viii. 58), and "I and the Father are one" (John x. 30). In harmony with this claim of co-equality with God he said, "As the Father hath life in himself, so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself; and hath given him authority to execute judgment because he is the Son of man" (John v. 26, 27). Christ claimed universal dominion; he exercised its functions: but he neither claimed nor did any-

[21] Alexander on the Psalms, *in loco.*
[22] Lange on Isa. ix. 7.

thing beyond the predictions of the prophets. What he claimed or did was in harmony with all the Scriptures teach respecting the creation of the physical universe by him; his control of the complexities in human affairs, making them tributary to the establishment of his kingdom; and concerning his sway over the invisible world both of holy and fallen beings. It was from eternity the purpose and plan of God, in the administration of his government in its widest sense and everlasting duration, to "gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him" (Eph. i. 10).

This is the explanation of the otherwise inexplicable facts in man's present condition and environment. These are because the Divine moral government is what it is, subordinating physical law and the entire course of providential development to the Divine purpose of self-revelation through Christ. After the act of transgression Adam was not exiled from Eden into a Siberian desert. He was sent forth into a world abounding in blessing, if it was not an absolutely perfect world. Its fruits were for his sustenance; its harvests rewarded his toil. It was a world where justice enforced penalty, but it was not a world without hope. In it goodness and severity, joy and sorrow, happiness and misery, mercy and judgment, are both present. They are mingled in every earthly life; blended in all earthly conditions; inwrought in all earthly relations. This world is not a paradise; neither is it a dungeon or a place of hopeless misery. Its blessings, possibilities, hopes, refute pessimism, if sometimes its reverses, sorrows and bitter disappointments, throw a dark shadow over the too sanguine hopes of optimism. It is the world of neither of these merely philosophical speculations. It is not "exclusively a school for training to virtue, for there are signal judgments inflicted on the wicked—not to train them, but, so far as this world is concerned, to put an end to discipline; but still less does this world seem to be altogether a prison fitted merely for punishment, for there are innumerable means

of improvement and incentives to virtue."[28] This we know to be true. In this world man is not a prisoner incarcerated; deprived of all liberty; denied all sources of enjoyment. Neither is it a world where vice is unrestrained; wickedness never rebuked; the wrongdoer never cut off without remedy. Both these statements are matters of fact. Argument is needless to prove them. We are convinced by what we see within ourselves, and by what we observe without, that we are subject to two antagonistic conditions. We know there are opposing moral facts and tendencies, as certainly as we know there are propitious and adverse conditions and occurrences in our physical environment. These facts are the common property of philosopher and theologian; of unbeliever and Christian. They are here about us. They touch us at the very centre of our existence; they press us on every side; their presence is felt in our relation to our surroundings, whatever they may be. They are wrought into our present existence. There is no possible condition of human progress, even in the wildest dreams of philosophic optimism, in which they shall not be what they have been and are now. Both the intellect and heart of man—the one out of its barren speculations, the other out of the depths of its sorrows—ask whether there be a solution, and if so, what it is? It is not primarily either philosophy or theology that asks this question. It comes spontaneously, because irrepressible, from the depths of every man's self-consciousness when he thinks of himself, his surroundings, his destiny. No philosophy satisfies him. All systems leave more unexplained than they solve. Only that view of the Divine moral government which makes it all-inclusive, and mediatorial in its all-inclusiveness, can explain all. This only furnishes a solid basis for the intellect to rest upon, and brings God near so that the heart can repose in him. It insures goodness and mercy in the present order of things. It makes sorrow, suffering, and the infliction of penalty consistent with the government of God. It harmonizes discipline and chastisement with means for the development of man's

[28] McCosh, The Divine Government, page 72, Ed. 1863.

mental and moral powers, and secures opportunity for the true progress of the race. These are the heritage of the race because Christ has the sceptre of mediatorial empire. The dispensation of mercy was not delayed until Christ came. The expulsion from Eden was with the promise of mercy. It placed the race under probation. It announced a dispensation of the Divine government in which justice and mercy are not antagonistic—each struggling for supremacy as if rivals. They are working together for the same end. In the heart of Christ they are joined in the embrace of infinite love; they dwell in the indissoluble union of the Divine holiness. They are in eternal alliance with the righteousness of God as it is and ever shall be revealed in his works and his ways.

This secures the harmony and unity of that progressive unfolding of the Divine plan the final cause of which is the revelation of the Divine glory. For there can be no progress without harmony in the coöperation of all causes. Unity can have no existence in the universe unless there be a final cause, and that final cause must be an intelligent purpose for a moral end. Eulogies on progress, and on the unity of all things physical and moral, are the merest declamation, if final cause, thus defined, be denied. Schopenhauer,[24] pessimist though he was, was right when he said it is better to know the *why* than the *how*. Science investigates the *how*, but revelation defines the *why*. It was God's design that revelation should precede exact scientific knowledge, that men might know the *why* before they came to investigate the *how*. The *why* is God's purpose to glorify himself. If this be denied, there is no reason for believing in the perpetuation of harmony or the continuance of unity. An unforeseen contingency may destroy the harmony; some catastrophe break the unity. Without it we have nothing to interpret what looks like harmony; nothing to explain the apparent unity. We see not how any one can believe in the possibility of progress, or in the existence of the faintest semblance of harmony and unity in the masquerading of events, and in the

[24] See footnote in Janet's Final Causes, p. 180, Ed. Edinburgh, 1878.

strange confused occurrences about us, if final cause be denied, and if that final cause be not the glory of God in the disclosure of his moral perfections. If this be denied, agnosticism is the only refuge for the intellect, and the heart has nothing to comfort it but the dreary dogmas of pessimism. Man becomes the finality. He is the end of pantheistic materialism. There is nothing beyond him; there is nothing greater for him. This world environs him and crushes him.

> Man himself, with all his sorrows and sufferings, with all his hopes and aspirations, and his labors wherewith he has labored under the sun, is but a little incident in the inconceivably vast operations of that primal central power which sent the planets on their courses and holds the lasting orbs of heaven in their just poise and movement.[25]

This is beautiful language; these are perfect sentences. But could anything be more gloomy! Man only a "little incident" in the wonderful order of things in which we are; the orbs of heaven lasting, but the blind forces of nature to which pantheistic materialism assigns man's origin move on, alluring man, their grandest product, by transient joys; deceiving him by false hopes, and then remanding him back to that unconsciousness and non-existence from which they brought him to sport for a few years with his dreams, and laugh at his sorrows before recalling him to the earth whence they evolved him. If this is not the philosophy of despair, what is it? But it is the only and the ultimate conclusion respecting man if the final cause of his existence and of all things in his environment be not the glory of God. What a measureless contrast between this and the place and destiny of man as determined by the mediatorial character of the Divine moral government, subordinating all things to itself!

It will never be accepted. The intuitions of man rebel against it; the intellect of man recoils from the conclusions of its own materialistic speculations. An agnostic, a man versed in physical science, a disciple of Darwin, and the most able and radical exponent of the postulates of Darwinism in our country, has recently said:—

[25] Maudsley, Body and Mind, p. 120.

The materialistic assumption that life of the soul accordingly ends with the life of the body, is perhaps the most collossal instance of baseless assumption that is known to the history of philosophy.[26]

This is significant, coming from the source it does. To its author it may have been unconscious, but it is, in fact, the recoil of the human mind from the conclusions of materialistic speculation. But he goes further and enquires:—

Are man's highest spiritual qualities, into the production of which all the creative energy (of physical force) has gone, to disappear with the rest? Has all this work been done for nothing? Is it all ephemeral, all a bubble that bursts, a vision that fades? [27]

If these questions be affirmatively answered he declares, "The riddle of the universe becomes a riddle without a meaning."[28] This it must ever be on the supposition that man is the finality of creation. For a while and under the materialistic influences of our day, with minds of a certain type and whose culture has been in special directions, this theory may be congenial and in the ascendant. To such minds the observation of Goethe is pertinent. "It is natural to man to regard himself as the final cause of creation, and to consider all things merely in relation to himself so far as they are of use to him."[29] There is in man pride of intellect as well as pride of heart. The two are intimately allied. The one begets the other. Their influence is reciprocal. They combine and magnify man's self-importance in his own eyes. But the spell is only for a short time, and is sure to be broken by the recoil of the intellect in obedience to the unsatisfied aspirations of the soul. The divinely implanted intuitions in man are sure in the end to rebel against any and all conclusions, whether of science or philosophy, which make man the last and the final outcome of all things.[30] Man feels there is something beyond him—something he is to be and fulfil which is the end of his existence. That something he is conscious he does not attain here; that end,

[26] Prof. J. Fiske, Destiny of Man, p. 110.
[27] *Ibid.*, p. 114.
[28] *Ibid.*, p. 115.
[29] Conversation with Ekerman, p. 517, Works, London, 1874.
[30] See Montaigne's Essays, Works, Vol. ii. p. 132, Wright's Ed., New York, 1859.

in the moments of his calmest thought and unbiased self-introspection, he is convinced is not himself but something above and beyond, which he exists to subserve. Materialistic pantheism says, It is blind force; physical science, in the philosophy it is formulating, says, It is irresponsible law. Man under the guidance of his intuitions and obeying the common sense of his race in the premises can never believe either. His own sense of personality ever demands as its objective a personal God. His moral sense, however blind and disordered, demands and recognizes the government of a personal God, and can never consent to the severance of the moral element from the administration of that government. This is what Professor Fiske sees and candidly states.

But what is the logical consequence of this if not that the final cause of all things is the glory of God? If man is a *part* of nature, that does not prove he is the *end* of nature, its last and final effort; that beyond him and for him there can be nothing more. It was Leibnitz who said the future could be read in the past, and that the present is big with the future. Man feels this; he sees it. He has all the presentiments it begets within him respecting both the future of the individual and of the race. There is the condition of subordination here. We see it everywhere. This condition of subordination makes all the effects we see tributary—not final. "In this sense it is certain that no phenomenon is absolutely finished."[31] How do we know that man as he is, is a finality? Every other phenomenon in the physical world is against the conclusion. Considered in his mental powers, his aspirations of soul, his sorrows, his sense of dissatisfaction with his surroundings, and his irrepressible desire to "feel after God if haply he may find him," man is the least like a finality of all the phenomena of the visible creation, animate or inanimate. The only possible conclusion from these facts is that man himself exists to subserve a higher purpose than do any of the objects of the visible creation which exist to serve man; but reasonings cannot end with man.

[31] Janèt, Final Causes, p. 28.

We must begin with man as man, when his development or his creation had made him what he is: not indeed as regards the acquisitions of experience or the treasures of knowledge, but what he is in faculty and in power, in the structure and habit of his mind, in the instincts of his intellectual and moral nature.[32]

In the argument, as a mere argument, it makes no difference whether man, as he is now, be the result of development or the work of special creation. Man is here, and he has faculties, powers, habits of mind, and intellectual and moral instincts, which, in themselves, proclaim the necessity of conditions for their perfect unfolding different from any in his present surroundings. They demand for the explanation of their existence the subordination of man to a higher power as the final cause of their existence. They are the facts proving that, however closely, on the physical side of his being, man is ralated to the physical world and amenable to physical law, he is, on this side of his being, as closely related to moral law and is the subject of the Divine moral government. The degree of perfection attainable by man under present conditions is, we believe, greater than anything whereunto he has yet attained; but it must always be limited, and man must ever feel the pressure of the limitation while his environment is what it now is. Nothing adequately responds to the needs and longings of the faculties, powers, intellectual and moral instincts, of man but the belief in immortality, and his eternal subjection to the moral government of God, that God may be eternally glorified by that subjection. This response is in the gospel. Jesus Christ and him crucified is the only light in which man can see the final cause of his existence. As he learns of Christ, whether he be peasant or philosopher, he will come to know that "the chief end of man is to glorify God and to enjoy him forever."

The mediation of Christ is therefore the central fact in the Divine government, both physical and moral. He is Mediator, not in one thing, but in all things; nor is it conceivable how he could have been the Mediator of those chosen to salvation in him, unless the power with which he was invested extended to all things that he "might give eternal life to as

[32] The Unity of Nature, by the Duke of Argyle, p. 526, Am. Ed.

many as were given him." For this reason the government of God is one thing if we deny, and fundamentally a different thing if we accept, the doctrine of Christ's mediatorial sovereignty. This is the radical difference between Orthodoxy and Unitarianism, or whatever departures from Orthodoxy tend, in their logical and theological outcome, to Unitarianism. The systems diverge here. Other points of difference, in their last analysis, resolve themselves into this. The mediating Christ and the cross constitute the barrier, and cause the irrepressible antagonism. The basal conceptions are irreconcilable; the fundamental beliefs are radically divergent. The one allies itself to metaphysical theories the other cannot accept, because they contemplate God and man, and the present and the future, from points of view that are radically different. No definition either of the moral condition, nor of man's present hostile attitude toward the Divine law, nor of the nature, mode, and purpose of the Divine government, physical and moral, in which the systems can be harmonized, is possible. But our limits forbid anything more than the statement of this, and we have adverted to it because it is germane to the subject discussed in this paper. Its discussion is important in view of present tendencies of thought in the field of Christian doctrine and the outlying surroundings of theological speculation. The nature of the Divine government, both physical and moral, and the Mediatorial Headship of Christ over both, are inseparably allied. This is what we have sought to show in this paper. The truth is a vital one. If we are entering upon an era of earnest discussion of fundamental beliefs as to what the gospel is, and as to the scope and purpose of revelation, Christ's mediatorial sovereignty is *the* orthodox belief about which the discussion must centre.