THE

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ART. I.—THE BISHOP OF MANCHESTER ON THE LIMITATIONS OF OUR LORD'S KNOWLEDGE.

WE desire to offer a respectful remonstrance to the Bishop of Manchester. We do not identify his Lordship with the party which assails religion from the side of a supposed science or philosophy, nor with the party which is careless of the reputation of the Holy Scriptures because it believes that it can fall back on the infallibility of the Church, nor with those who, having entangled themselves in a subtle form of Pantheism, find themselves in consistency compelled to adapt the Bible and Christianity, as the Gnostics did of old, to their own views. The Bishop of Manchester is justly regarded as a man of more than average ability, of independent thought, of Christian piety and of good purpose; and it is for this reason that we offer to him a remonstrance for throwing his ægis over men belonging to the three parties above indicated, and giving the support of his name and official position to philosophy, falsely so-called, discordant with Revelation and incompatible with the doctrine of Christ.

Bishop Moorhouse has published a sermon—in such a manner as to give it the widest circulation possible—called "Voluntary Limitations of our Lord's Human Knowledge." He prefaces his main subject with a sketch of the probable manner in which the universe came into existence, drawn from Schopenhauer and Von Hartmann, but adopted by himself as "most probable." The theory is as follows: 1. We are conscious of our sensations. 2. These sensations postulate the existence of something outside ourselves, namely, "air" or "ether." 3. Vortex-rings of ether, "according to our more eminent physicists," are "the ultimate atoms of matter." 4. "Ether" and "force" together originated the whole of nature external to ourselves. 5. "Ether" is itself

concentrated "force," and, therefore, all objective being proceeds from "force" alone without matter. 6. "Force" is "will." 7. "Will" is either "will to live" or "will to love." 8. "Will" in unconscious nature is "will to live" in ourselves, *it* (this same Will out of which the material universe was formed) is "will to love." 9. If "will" in us is "will to love" it cannot be otherwise in God, who evolved us, because He cannot be inferior to His creation. 10. The object of the Incarnation was that the Divine might become human, in order to reveal, through comprehensible limitations, that God's will was a "will to love."[1]

[1] "If we try to go further back towards the objective origin of these sensations, we find that our nervous vibrations were simply taken up from contact with certain external vibrating *media*—in the case of light and heat from contact with an ether, as in the case of sound with the air. What, then, is the air, and what is that ether which we are obliged to postulate in order to account for our sensations? This question brings us to the very margin of our knowledge. Inference becomes here more precarious and speculation more uncertain; but still, at the imperious impulse of our intellect we are compelled to go on. So, proceeding with all the care they can, some of our more eminent physicists have supposed that the ultimate atoms of matter are but vortex-rings of ether; so that if to force we add ether, we have in very simple forms an account of the whole of that objective nature which is external to our own spirit. To some, however, a further simplification seems to be possible and necessary. What is ether? they ask, and reply, Nothing but a collection of fixed centres of force. Not, then, force and matter, but force alone, must be taken to represent the objective reality of being. But again, what is force? How can we gain the very conception of it? Is it not by the experience which we have of resistance to our own will, the only force of which we have immediate knowledge? If, then, force within us be will, may not the force without us, the force which constitutes the universe, be will also? Two famous philosophers of Germany, Schopenhauer and Von Hartmann, using freely the methods and conclusions of Kant, a greater than either, have come to the conclusion that the real basis of all being is will. . . . The will, which is existence, is the will to live, the blind unscrupulous will, taking counsel neither of wisdom nor of pity, deterred neither by misery nor ruin, to pass into richer life. . . . . Grant that the real behind all appearances is will (as I for one think is most probable), and then how are we to escape the conclusion of the pessimists? No doubt we can join issue with them upon one definite ground. The human will, at any rate, is not simply a blind will to live. It is a will, as we know, instructed by the understanding and inspired by the conscience. How, then, can we believe that the will which evolved or created man is so far inferior to that which it created? . . . If, then, it should ever happen in the process of the ages that the circumstances of a spiritual race of creatures, sharing the Divine quality of moral freedom, should make it possible for the Maker of all to pass into the limitations of their finite life, and through those comprehensible limitations to reveal the fact that His will was a will to love; that when it rose from the mere unconscious uniformities of nature to conscious and volitional life, it showed itself to be inspired by love and ruled by righteousness, how glorious a revelation. . . . If it be granted that for such reasons as these God eternal became man, how far," etc.—*Sermon.*

Now, if two young undergraduate scholars, taking their daily walk together—those walks in which so many crude thoughts are broached and abandoned—should talk thus to each other, at the time when the difference between the ego and the non-ego, the objective and the subjective, the phenomenal and the real had first burst upon them, who would complain? As we looked at their bright eager faces, determined to solve what all hitherto had found insoluble, we should "bless them unawares," and should think, with a half-amused smile, of the time when they would look back to their physico-metaphysico-theologico-dialectical ventures with a hearty laugh over the audacity of their Icarian flights in the realms of Pantheism. But Bishop Moorhouse! A man who has been Bishop of Melbourne, and is Bishop of such a city as Manchester! A successor to the practical Bishop Fraser—a thinker who has reputation to lose, the author of the first of the Hulsean Lectures of 1865, a preacher who knows the difference between a sermon and a schoolman's paradoxical theory!

The theory does not lead up directly to the thesis—only so far as this—that our Lord in becoming incarnate subjected Himself to the limitations of humanity—which, if by it be meant that He subjected Himself to those limitations in respect to His human nature, might be granted without the support of any theory. Having reached his thesis, the Bishop passes from physics to logic. The argument here is as follows: 1. Our Lord's person contained two natures, the Divine and the human. 2. It is of the essence of our human nature to be limited in faculty, and consequently in knowledge. 3. Therefore, to deny His ignorance is to deny His humanity. "It is to be either illogical or heretical." The argument admits being stated in the same form, with a certain change. 1. Our Lord's person contained two natures, the Divine and the human. 2. It is of the essence of the Divine nature to be unlimited in faculty, and consequently in knowledge. 3. Therefore, to affirm His ignorance is to deny His Divinity. It is either to be illogical or heretical. The conclusion in the second case follows with as absolute certainty from the premisses as in the first case, and we are landed in a logical contradiction.

Surely such logomachics are out of place in such a subject. Let Dr. Moorhouse explain to us how limited knowledge and unlimited knowledge can reside in the same person at the same time, and he will have solved the mystery of Christ's being (a mystery which it is in no way necessary for us to solve). But till that mystery has been made comprehensible by our faculties we must be contented with the fact of the

co-existence of the limited and the unlimited, although we cannot understand it. Is there anything singular in that demand upon our faith and reason? Can we reconcile the co-existence of infinite justice and infinite mercy in the Divine nature? Can we reconcile Divine predestination with human free-will, or omnipotence with inability to undo the past? Yet we must believe in the existence and co-existence of all these things—of infinite justice and infinite mercy, of predestination and free-will, of omnipotence and a form of inability in the omnipotent—if we believe in God at all. Why do we not reject one or other of the seeming contradictions? Why don't we deny predestination in behalf of free-will or free-will in behalf of predestination? Because we find, on questioning ourselves, that the cause of our being unable to reconcile these things is the weakness of our apprehending powers; or, if we are too proud to adopt that language, we may say instead, the law imposed upon the human intellect. While, therefore, our minds and the conditions under which we think are what they are, we must believe that our Lord's knowledge was limited, else He would not have possessed perfect human nature; and we must believe that it was unlimited, else He would not have possessed perfectly the Divine nature. But how He could have had at once limited and unlimited knowledge we must confess that we know not. And we need not know.

But there is this great difference in the parties to the present contest. Those that maintain that His knowledge was not limited, but unlimited, while they are equally logical or illogical with their adversaries, run no risk of dishonouring their Master; while those that insist on the limited nature of His knowledge, ignoring that it was also unlimited, can scarcely fail to do Him dishonour. Bishop Moorhouse tells us that our Lord stands in the same series with the other Jewish prophets, inspired, like them, to know the truth in some points, and left in ignorance on others.[1] Accord-

[1] "They it is true were but servants, and He a son. . . . Not the less, however, must we regard our Lord as standing in the same series with the prophets, and as sent to complete the same mission. If, then, the Lord Jesus came to continue and complete that ministry of instruction and redemption which was begun by the prophets, is it not natural to assume that the purpose of inspiration in the two cases would be the same? If the supernatural aid of the Spirit was bestowed on the prophets to enable them to discern spiritual truth, surely the aim and purpose would be the same in the case of the Son, who, in respect to truth, came to complete the mission of the prophets. . . . Our Lord's practice was precisely what we should expect it to be if in His case, as in that of the prophets, it was only spiritual truth which formed the subject of Divine inspiration."—*Sermon.*

ing to this view, He not only did not reveal, but He did not know anything about natural science, Biblical criticism, the age and authors of the books of the Old Testament. He might have been mistaken about the authorship of those books as well as any other contemporary Jew of equal mental cultivation, and if He said that a book was written by David He meant no more than that He and His auditors thought so.[1]

Nor is this all. He might have been mistaken about His own nature, and have supposed Himself Divine when He was but human. Would not His laying aside His knowledge (if that thing were possible) have interrupted the consciousness of His personal identity? Would it not have made it impossible for Him to know that He had existed before Abraham? And how could He, on the hypothesis, have knowledge of the nature of His Sonship? Dr. Moorhouse urges vehemently that He certainly would not have deceived, and that His words imply a claim to a Divine nature. But that is not the point. Why should He not have been mistaken there as well as about the authority and genuineness of the Old Testament and other matters, as Barchocebas may have thought himself the Messiah and Montanus is said to have believed himself to be the Holy Ghost? Dr. Moorhouse struggles against an inevitable inference. He declares that there is no axiomatic truth that he believes more undoubtingly than our Lord's divinity—that he can't help believing it, knowing Him in His teaching, His life, and His spirit; that Christ was too honest and faithful to deceive on such a point—that we must believe Him because by making the claim He condemned Himself to death; and we must trust such a man, speaking solemnly at the crisis of his fate.[2] But all this is beside the mark. It does not prove what has to be proved. A man must be something more than faithful and honest and convinced before we can believe him telling us that he is the

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[1] "When he quoted passages from the Old Testament, he might have no more knowledge of their age and actual authors than that which was current in his own time. . . . The more firmly shall we hold the reality of our Lord's human limitation as well in knowledge as in moral energy." —*Sermon.* Bishop Moorhouse has not defined what he means by "moral energy," and we do not venture to interpret the words.

[2] "'I adjure thee by the living God,' said the high priest, 'that thou tell us whether thou be the Christ, the Son of God.' As all the false witnesses had failed to prove the truth of their accusations, our Lord's life depended on His answer to this question. By His affirmative answer to it He condemned Himself to the cross and knew that He did. Can any words be more solemn than those of a man at the crisis of his fate, than those by which he knowingly condemns himself to death? If ever, then, the Lord Jesus is to be believed, surely it is at such a moment as this. And what is His answer? 'Thou hast said!'"—*Sermon.*

Son of God. He must be incapable of being led astray by error. He must know. And *we* must know that in making such a claim he could not be mistaken, or we must eliminate from the argument for his divinity all proofs or indications resting upon statements made by him or upon acts done by him under an impression which might have innocently arisen from his human ignorance. *Humanum est errare.*

In very truth is it possible for any intelligent being to lay aside his knowledge, remaining still in the perfection of his nature? A man cannot do so. He may lay aside his glory, he may lay aside his outward appearance, he may lay aside his wealth, he may lay aside his power, and still be the same person that he was before, his essential nature unmaimed and undestroyed. But can knowledge be ranked with those things which may be put on and off, like a glove, or once possessed is it a κτῆμα ἐς ἀεί until we are plunged into some stream of Lethe? If the Queen gave up her royal pomp, if she became disfigured in face, if she became as poor as Belisarius and as incapable of affecting the fortunes of the world as that fallen hero in his old age, she might still exist in the integrity of her nature, But could she (or any other human being) by an act of will lay aside knowledge once acquired? Could she, by an act of will, not know what she does know? If she ceased to know what she does know, would not such ignorance arise from her nature having become maimed, that is, imperfect? If what is true in this respect of man is true of all other intelligent beings (and how can it be otherwise, since the question depends upon the essential characteristics not of the knowing subject but of knowledge itself?), it is not only incredible but impossible that our Lord should have laid aside His knowledge and still have continued in the perfection of His Divine nature. Is it not less difficult to believe in the co-existence of unlimited and limited knowledge in our Lord's person than to believe that He was imperfect either in His Divine or in His human nature?

F. Meyrick.

Art. II.—THE "RANSOM."—Matt. xx. 28.

"*THE Son of man came to give His life a ransom for many.*"

What did our Lord mean when He used the word represented in English by "ransom"?

As He came to fulfil the law and the prophets, we must