NO "NATURAL LAW IN THE SPIRITUAL WORLD."

A REVIEW OF MR. H. DRUMMOND'S

NATURAL LAW IN THE SPIRITUAL WORLD.

BY

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"Timeo Danaos, et dona ferentes."—Virgil.

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INTRODUCTORY.

The Work recently published by Mr. H. Drummond, entitled "Natural Law in the Spiritual World," is a remarkable example of the necessity there is for defining, at the outset of a treatise, the principal terms made use of in it. Mainly from not having accurately ascertained and stated the use of such terms in the particular connection in hand, this learned and accomplished writer has fallen into a series of extraordinary errors. The present review of his Work will be chiefly devoted to showing this.

The title itself is a remarkable instance of it. A fundamental ambiguity arises from the undefined use in it, and throughout the Work, of the word "spiritual." This word has seven significations attributed to it in Webster's Dictionary: and its substantive spirit has twenty-one. What wonder, that confusion of thought arises, both in the writer's mind and in his readers', when the particular meaning in which each of these words is going to be used is not distinctly stated at the outset!

In order to determine the proper use of these in the present connection, the subject of the Work, as stated in the Title, must first be made clear. "Natural Law" may be transposed into 'Law of Nature': and, 'Nature' being a synonym for 'World,' a contrast is implied in the Title between 'the World of Nature' and "the Spiritual World" or 'World of Spirits.' 'The World of Spirits,' then, is the sense in which the author ought to be using the two last words in his title. But he does not do so. On the contrary, he commonly uses the word spiritual in a directly opposite sense,—I mean, in a figurative instead of a literal sense,—though frequently, led
away after the common misuse of the word, he mixes together the two opposite significations, or glides without perceiving that he does so from the one meaning into the other. Of course confusion of thought and error must be the consequence of such a process.

As this is a fundamental point, it will be worth while, before proceeding further, to make my meaning clear by stating the views I hold of 'the world of spirits.'

Our knowledge extends only to a portion of the material world or universe: and we know and can know absolutely nothing,—nothing even of the existence of a spirit or of a spirit-world,—but by a revelation from that world. The Bible is the only source, whence we can hope to obtain such a revelation. Those, then, who do not receive the Bible as containing a revelation from God, can have nothing to say about spirits or the spirit-world. When they use the expression spiritual, they can use it only in reference to that which is really material or physical, that is to say, to man's mental faculties, which are divided into moral and intellectual, perceptive and conceptive. But this is a figurative use of the word, totally distinct from the literal: and, inasmuch as the twofold use of it in the same connection gives rise to great confusion of thought, and thence to error, it is very desirable that the use of the word should be as far as possible laid aside, 'mental,' 'moral,' 'intellectual,' or 'religious' being substituted for the figurative use of it, and 'psychical' for the literal. In the literal use, too, I shall, in order to guard against misunderstanding, speak of 'the spiritual world' as 'the spirit-world,' in as far as the necessity for speaking of man's composite state will allow.

It is doubtless in consequence of the Bible having informed us that man has a spirit, that the ambiguity in the use of the word spiritual has arisen. It will be well, then, to endeavour to obtain in the first instance a clear idea as to what the doctrine of the Bible on the subject is.

It may be briefly stated thus:—There are three kinds of beings possessing spirits. Two of these—God and angels—are purely psychical or incorporeal beings, that is to say, pure spirits. The third—man—is of a mixed nature, being at once psychical and corporeal,—a being compounded of a body and a soul or spirit. Now the important question for us is this:—What is the result of this compound? What effect on man's physical nature, as one of the animalia, does his possession of a spirit or a psychical nature produce? To
this question the Bible gives but a very limited reply. It informs us that a man's spirit is a distinct entity, capable of severance from the man, and of existence after he, as a man, has ceased to exist. It shows us, that a man may be possessed by many spirits at once, besides his own: but, as these appear to have been exceptional cases for a special purpose, they need not now be taken into account by us. The teaching of the Bible is only thus much to our present purpose, that it tells us that incorporeal spirits can hold intercourse with and exercise an influence upon our spirit. But in what manner and under what limitations it gives us no information. It is evident, then, that great caution and reticence ought to be exercised by us in drawing inferences and forming conclusions on this point.—See further in Appendix, p. 47.

THE AUTHOR'S THEORY.

We need go no further than the second page of the Preface for an illustration of what I have been saying. Therein we read: "Is there not reason to believe that many of the Laws of the Spiritual World, hitherto regarded as occupying an entirely separate province, are simply the Laws of the Natural World? . . . Is it possible to link them with those great lines running through the visible universe which we call the Natural Laws, or are they fundamentally distinct?" So far it may be supposed, that he is speaking of material laws and mental laws: and, if so, I should answer that both of these are Natural Laws; and that there is all the difference between them and the Laws (if there be any) of the Spirit-world, that there is between the Natural and the Supernatural. But he goes on: "In a word, Is the Supernatural natural or unnatural?" A strange question, indeed, to ask, seeing that by 'supernatural' is meant all that is not natural!

The same ambiguity in the use of the word *spiritual* runs through the Work, placing the reader in doubt and perplexity as to the precise meaning of much of it. It is not until he has read half of it, that he comes on a passage which may serve to dispel the doubt. It runs thus:—"In introducing this *new* term spiritual-world"—a sufficient reason surely why a definition of the phrase should have been given—"we are not interpolating a new factor. . . . The spiritual world is simply the outermost circle . . . of the natural world." . .

* The italics are, as a rule, mine.
The plant-world is one circle. The animal-world is another outside it. The inner circles are called the natural, the outer the spiritual. Of the latter the outermost is God.—Thus things differing so widely as do the Natural World and the Spirit-world are brought into one category by being included under one term. And the author essays to prove that they may be rightly so brought. How far he succeeds it will be our task to inquire. At present I will only call attention to the difficulty that is entailed in carrying on the discussion by the author’s using an old “term” in a confessedly “new,” and therefore an improper sense, making it include the two things about which the controversy is to take place, and thus begging the question under the term.

The author bases his argument “in a common principle—the Continuity of Law,” meaning that laws of the Natural World are ‘continued’ or pass on into and regulate the Spirit-world. He seeks to justify this “principle” by precedents in the extension of Natural Law to the Political World and to the Social World. But these precedents are in the sphere of the physical, and not of the psychical World; and consequently they afford no justification for the extension to the latter. For the same reason the principle may be applied to the mental, moral, and religious worlds (if they may be so called), without any ground being obtained for applying it to the Spirit-world.

In a later page the author asserts, that “What is desired to draw Science and Religion together ... is the disclosure of the naturalness of the supernatural.”—His object was to make this disclosure: mine will be to test the authenticity of it.

"INTRODUCTION."

In this he remarks: “The position that we have been led to take up is, not that the Spiritual Laws are analogous to the Natural Laws, but that they are the same Laws. It is not a question of analogy, but of identity. ... The Laws of the invisible are the same Laws, projections of the natural, not supernatural. ... Laws, which at one end, as it were, may be dealing with Matter, at the other end with Spirit.”

Again: “All are agreed in speaking of Nature and the Supernatural. Nature in the Supernatural, so far as Laws are concerned, is still an unknown truth.”
Again: "If there is any foundation for Theology, if the phenomena of the Spiritual World are real, in the nature of things they ought to come into the sphere of Law."

"Science will be complete, when all known phenomena can be arranged in one vast circle, in which a few well-known Laws shall form the radii. . . . To show that the radii for some of the most characteristic phenomena of the Spiritual World are already drawn within that circle by Science is the main object of the papers which follow."

"Science deals with known facts; and, accepting certain known facts in the Spiritual world, we proceed to arrange them, to discover their Laws, to inquire if they can be stated in terms of the rest of our knowledge."

"The establishment of the Spiritual Laws on 'the solid ground of Nature,' to which the mind trusts 'which builds for aye,' would offer a new basis for certainty in Religion."

"The ground taken up is this, that if Nature be a harmony, Man in all his relations,—physical, mental, moral, and spiritual—falls to be included within its circle. It is altogether unlikely that man spiritual should be violently separated in all the conditions of growth, development, and life, from man physical."

"The Law of Continuity is the Law for Laws."

"Continuity is the expression of 'the Divine veracity in Nature.'"

"The argument may be summed up in a sentence. As the Natural Laws are continuous throughout the universe of matter and of space, so will they be continuous through the universe of spirit."

"The conclusion finally is, that from the Nature of Law in general, and from the scope of the principle of Continuity in particular, the Laws of the natural life must be those of the spiritual life. . . . If the Law of Continuity is true, the only way to escape the conclusion that the Laws of the natural life are the Laws, or at least are Laws, of the spiritual life, is to say that there is no spiritual life."


Having now given the reader a synopsis of the chief features in our author's theory in his own words, I proceed to scrutinize the Essays in which he illustrates and defends it. But let me first offer one remark in reference to the last
sentence quoted; because it strikes at the root of his whole theory:—"There is," and can be "no spiritual life," in the sense of 'life of a spirit,' begun in the course of a man's natural life-time, because that spirit existed in him as an immortal spirit from his birth. All that is true is, that "a spiritual," in the sense of a religious "life," must be begun in a man's lifetime in order to his becoming 'an inheritor of the blessedness of the kingdom of the heavens.' There is no Natural Law in this.

"BIOGENESIS."

1. After quotations from Dr. Bastian and Professor Tyndall, the former of whom thought that he had proved, that "living matter is constantly being formed de novo," and the latter that "no shred of trustworthy experimental testimony exists to prove, that life in our day has ever appeared independently of antecedent life," our author says, in Professor Huxley's words, that "life only from life 'is victorious along the whole line.'" "Spontaneous generation has had to be given up."

2. He goes on to say, that "two great schools in the religious world also have defended opposite views—one that the Spiritual Life in man can only come from pre-existing Life, the other that it can Spontaneously Generate itself."

"The advocates of Biogenesis in Religion," it is asserted, "have founded their argument hitherto all but exclusively on Scripture." "If an analogy can be found in [Natural] Biogenesis, Christianity in its most central position secures at length a support and basis in the Laws of Nature."

"What essentially is involved in saying that there is no Spontaneous Generation of Life? It is meant that the passage from the mineral world to the plant or animal world is hermetically sealed on the mineral side. This inorganic world is staked off from the living world by barriers which have never yet been crossed from within. No change of substance . . . can endow any single atom of the mineral world with the attribute of Life."

3. "Where now in the Spiritual spheres shall we meet a companion phenomenon to this? What in the Unseen shall be likened to this deep dividing-line, or where in human experience is another barrier which never can be crossed?" There is such a barrier. In the dim but not inadequate vision of the Spiritual World presented in the Word of God,
the first thing that strikes the eye is a great gulf fixed. The passage from the Natural World to the Spiritual World is hermetically sealed on the natural side. . . . The Spiritual World is guarded from the world next in order beneath by a law of Biogenesis—"except a man be born again", "except a man be born of water and of the Spirit he cannot enter the Kingdom of God." . . . 'The word is not will not, but cannot.' . . . "It is a scientific impossibility. Except a mineral be born 'from above'—from the Kingdom just above it—it cannot enter the Kingdom just above it. And except a man be born "from above," by the same law he cannot enter the Kingdom just above him."

4. "Let us ask what Revelation has announced with reference to this Spiritual Law of Biogenesis."

"The words of Scripture which preface this inquiry contain an explicit statement of the Law of Biogenesis for the Spiritual Life. 'He that hath the Son hath life, and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life.' . . . There is no Spontaneous Generation in religion any more than in Nature. . . . And, as we have seen, Christ Himself founds Christianity upon Biogenesis stated in the most literal form."

"Not only in his relation to the Spiritual man, but to the whole Spiritual World, the natural man is regarded as dead (Rom. viii. 6; Rev. iii. 1; 1 Tim. v. 6; Eph. ii. 1-5)."

"The inquiry into the Origin of Life is the fundamental question alike of Biology and Christianity."

"Christianity is the mental or moral man plus something else or some One else. It is the infusion into the Spiritual man of a New Life, of a quality unlike anything else in Nature. This constitutes the separate Kingdom of Christ."

On these statements I have the following remarks to make. The figures prefixed to my remarks refer back to the statements to which they relate.

1. Presumptuous as it will appear to be in me to call in question the verdicts of such lights in the world of science as Professors Tyndall and Huxley, I must nevertheless do so, if they are correctly represented. But this I very much doubt. For I have seen nothing in their words, which justifies the gloss put upon them by our author. As I understand the matter it stands thus. Professor Tyndall's experiments have shown, that by using every means, within the skill of man to devise, it is possible to eliminate the power of producing life from a small quantity of matter for a short time. But this is very far indeed from disproving spontaneous generation.
There must be, we may reasonably presume, a particular chemical and mechanical composition, a precise amount of heat and moisture, in fact, a vast number of conditions pre-requisite for the production of life, the absence of any one of which would suffice to prevent the generation of life. So that it may reasonably be presumed, that the very means used to destroy all life-germs would inevitably so far affect the constitution of the portion of matter as to destroy the capability of producing life, which it would have had in its natural state apart from the presence of any germs. The mere exclusion of air might of itself alone be thought likely to preclude life-generation. We read in p. 171: "The development of any organism in any direction is dependent on its environment. A living cell cut off from air will die. A seed-germ, apart from moisture and an appropriate temperature, will make the ground its grave for centuries." Similar conditions must be required in the case of inorganic nature. To me it seems that it must be impossible on the one hand ever to disprove spontaneous generation, and on the other ever to prove it,—the former, because we can never be sure that the means used to destroy possible germs do not also destroy such a constitution of the material as is essential to the production of life; the latter, because we can never be sure that there may not be germs of life present. If this be so, our author has been building on an unsound basis.

2. No orthodox Christian can maintain that the spiritual or religious life can be 'spontaneously generated.' The most that can be affirmed is, that the will of the recipient must concur with the influence of the Spirit. The orthodox Christian will concur in saying, that "the Spiritual man is no mere development of the natural man: he is a New Creation born from Above," inasmuch as there could be no birth at all but by a special influence from above, though not as by an action of the Spirit exclusive of the will of its subject. But see under 4.

3. No law of biogenesis from the next higher Kingdom (in fact, no biogenesis at all) having been proved in the Natural World, there is no ground for the assertion that 'by the same law there must be a birth from the Spiritual World in order to a passage thereinto from the Natural World.'

Seeing that the author in quoting from John iii. 3-5 anticipates that division of his argument, which is professedly devoted to the Scripture view, I shall reserve what I have to say about his remarks on this text for the proper head.
4. We come now to consider what 'Revelation has announced with reference to biogenesis.'

And first it should be emphatically noted, that there cannot rightly be said to be "Law" at all in the case. The wind (πνεῦμα) bloweth where it listeth: . . . . so is every one that is born of the Spirit (Πνεῦματος).

Secondly.—"The words of Scripture which preface this inquiry," says our author. What inquiry he means is not made so clear but that at first sight I supposed, in consequence of Christ's interview with Nicodemus having been adverted to in the preceding context, that it was the inquiry which Nicodemus came to make that was intended. On reading on, however, the quotation of the text which stands at the head of this Essay (I John v. 12) shewed, that 'this Essay' was meant by "this inquiry." But this text is out of place as it is introduced here.

No careful reader of St. John's writings can have failed to notice the peculiar use in them of the word ζωή, life. It is constantly used, not in a literal, but in a quasi-figurative or metaphorical sense. We need go no further for an example than our preceding context (John i. 4): "In Him was life, and that life was the light of men." To say that "In the Word was life," would be, if we took the last word literally, a mere truism. To say, that the possession of life in the ordinary sense, that is, that a man's being a living man, constituted him "the light of the world," would be an absurdity.

What, then, is the salient idea meant to be conveyed by the word life?

An answer to this question may be derived from another saying of our Lord in this discourse with Nicodemus: "God so loved the world, that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but should have an æonic life." The life of the millennial æon is meant (Rev. xx. 4-6). I do not mean by this to imply that it would not be "everlasting." It would be, but not by reason of its being æonic, but because "over those who have part in the first resurrection" (which is the introduction to the æonic life), "the second death hath no power, . . . and they shall reign through the æons of the æons," that is, "for ever and ever." But it is neither the duration of the life, nor the mere being alive itself, that is the salient and cardinal idea here, especially not the latter; for those who are "cast into the lake of fire" are alive there "for ever and ever."
"Blessed and holy [μακάριος καὶ ἁγιός] is he that hath part in the first resurrection." It is the holiness and bliss that are primarily had in view. These are what we must chiefly think of in St. John's use of the word life. These constitute the life. These are they which alone make the 'life worth living.' The word life is used to comprehend them; because life is indispensable to them both. For without it they would not exist. There is thus in the use of the word life a metonymy of the means for the end.

The result we arrive at is, that the meaning of the text quoted by the author may be thus expressed; 'He that has an interest in the Son, that is, in the Son's redemption, has an interest in the bliss and holiness that shall be hereafter; and vice versa.' There is, therefore in this text, no "statement of the Law of Biogenesis for the Spiritual Life." And the same may be shown in the same way of all similar texts. Further, the same line of argument would avail to demonstrate the erroneousness of the author's views in reference to "death" and to the "Origin of Life." To these two I shall have occasion to advert hereafter.

We should especially note, that there is no ground whatever for the assertion, that "Christianity is the infusion into the Spiritual man of a New Life." He who is truly a spiritual, that is, a genuinely religious man, has already been "born again;" and to him Christianity can do no more than give the assurance of Divine help in the present life and of a blissful existence in a future state. But this leads me to advert to what is said about 'the new birth.'

John iii. 3-5 is quoted to show, that "the Spiritual World is guarded from the world next in order beneath by a Law of Biogenesis."

Here we may first observe, that it is manifestly not the Spirit-world that is meant.

Being, then, what may more accurately be called the moral and religious world, what is required to be proved is, that there is "a great gulf" between it and the natural world, a gulf consisting in the difference of life, possessed in the two worlds, which must be analogous to that between the plant and animal worlds; and that consequently the new birth must consist "in the infusion into the "natural" man of a new life, of a quality," it may be, "unlike anything else in Nature;" but still it must be life in a literal sense to satisfy the conditions of the argument. The life may differ "in quality" or degree, but not in kind, that is to say, it must not be transmuted into
anything which would not be recognized as being, literally speaking, life.

Our question, then, is this: Does Scripture teach the infusion of such a life at the new birth?

What I have just shown in respect of the Scripture use of the word life ought to suffice for a conclusive answer in the negative. The life it intends is holiness, and happiness as consequent thereupon.

But let us inquire whether the text, and the only text cited in support of the literal construction really does support it.

On the contrary, none could more explicitly rebut that construction.

In the first place, Nicodemus having taken the words of Jesus in a literal sense, that sense was distinctly repudiated by Jesus, and given up by Nicodemus.

Secondly, the expression "born from above," on which the author lays so much emphasis as meaning from a higher kingdom, has no such reference. In every instance in which it was used by Jesus it is equivalent to 'from heaven,' that is, from a place, not from a spiritual state.

Thirdly, in "he cannot see [discern or know] the kingdom of God," whether we suppose that by this kingdom is meant the Church (as is commonly supposed), or (as I have shown in my Kingdom of the Heavens, a volume of 450 closely printed 8vo. pages, in which I have critically examined every text relating to that kingdom), the millennial Kingdom of Rev. xx. 4, 6, there will be no propriety in the declaration, if the cardinal idea in the new birth is supposed to lie in the possession of life in a literal sense; but there will be, when that idea is supposed to lie in holiness, imputed and infused.

Fourthly, in the words "born of water and of the Spirit," as "of water" cannot be supposed to have any reference to 'life,' so neither ought "of Spirit:" but in both cases the connection with moral and religious cleansing is obvious.

Fifthly, "he cannot enter." A pre-existence to entrance is pre-supposed. The entrance, therefore, could only be of a moral nature.

Sixthly, ver. 6 is equivalent to ‘likes produce likes,’ or, ‘as the product of a birth in the flesh’ is fleshly—carnal, so a product of a birth of the Spirit is spiritual, moral and pious. Moral excellence in the highest sense or the reverse will suit the two members of the sentence; but life will suit neither.

The comparison might be carried on through the whole of
the discourse; but enough must surely have been shown to prove, that something very different from life must have been contemplated by our Lord, and that that something could only have been holiness. So that the notion, that a continuity of 'natural law into the spiritual world' has any sanction in Scripture is utterly destitute of foundation.

The text before us may be thus paraphrased in literal terms: 'Except a man become righteous and holy, he cannot discern the millennial Kingdom when its true nature is proclaimed, nor enter into it when it comes.' There is nothing here about life or biogenesis.

"DEGENERATION."

This Essay opens with insisting on the obvious truth, that all created things, when placed in a position of "Balance" between "Degeneration" and "Elaboration" or "Evolution," will, if they are neglected or themselves neglect to use the capabilities given to them, inevitably degenerate. This is indeed, a truth so obvious, that it may well be accounted a truism, or, more properly speaking, half a truism,—one of those "half-truths," which Tennyson has so strongly stigmatized as being, when set forth by itself, "the greatest of lies." It ought not, therefore, to have been thus set forth. At least a warning ought to have been given, that the other side of the shield would be presented in due course.

After showing that plants and animals, unfavourably situated, will degenerate, the author asks: 'Why should Man be an exception to any of the laws of Nature? If a man neglects his body, he will deteriorate into a savage: if his mind, it will degenerate into imbecility: if his conscience, it will run off into lawlessness.' "Or, lastly, if it is his soul, it must inevitably atrophy" [N.B. No such verb is to be found in the dictionary], "drop off in ruin and decay. We have here, then, a thoroughly natural basis for the question before us" in our text (Heb. ii. 3). "If we neglect, with this universal principle staring us in the face, ["If we neglect so great salvation"] how shall we escape? "If we neglect the soul, how shall we escape the natural retrograde movement, the inevitable relapse into barrenness and death? . . . The answer is: we cannot."
Now, "in each man's very nature Degeneration is the supreme principle. He feels within his soul a silent drifting motion impelling him downward with irresistible force. Instead of aspiring to Conversion to a higher Type, he submits by a law of his nature to Reversion to a lower. This is Degeneration.'

"The Bible view is, that man is conceived in sin and shapen in iniquity. . . . The gravitation of sin . . . sinks a man further and further from God and righteousness, and lands him, by the sheer action of a natural law, in the hell of a neglected life."

"The soul, in its highest sense, is a vast capacity for God. It is like a curious chamber added on to being, and somehow involving being, a chamber with elastic and contractile walls, which can be expanded, with God as its guest, illimitably, but which without God shrinks and shrivels until every vestige of the Divine is gone, and God's image is left without God's Spirit. One cannot call what is left a soul; it is a shrunken useless organ, a capacity sentenced to death by disuse, which droops as a withered hand by the side, and cumbers nature like a rotted branch. Nature has her revenge upon neglect as well as upon extravagance. Misuse, with her, is as mortal a sin as abuse."

"The religious faculty is a talent, the most sacred talent we possess. Yet it is subject to the natural conditions and laws. If any man hide it in a napkin, . . . God will not allow him to have it. . . . Therefore, He says, "take the talent from him." And Nature does it. This man's crime was simply neglect—"thou wicked and slothful servant." It was a wasted life."

"How is the soul to escape to heaven, if it has neglected for a lifetime the means of escape from the world and self?"

"The true problem of the spiritual life may be said to be, Do the opposite of Neglect: . . . so cultivate the soul that all its powers will open out to God. . . . As our conception of spiritual being must be taken simply from natural being, our ideas of the lines along which the new religious nature is to run must be borrowed from the known lines of the old."

The main object in making these extracts has been to show how little thought has been taken to distinguish between the nature of man as a mortal creature of this lower world—an animal, and his nature as an heir of heaven, possessing a spirit endowed with an immortal life. Any one who reads the foregoing passages and most of those taken from the preceding Essay, especially noting those words and clauses
which I have italicized (and they are but a few, cited as specimens) cannot fail to be struck with this. Sometimes the word soul is used as synonymous with a spirit; as in the first extract, in which it appears to be more marked off than in any other instance from man's faculties as an animal, "his soul" being placed in contrast with 'his body, mind, and conscience;' and again, when it is asked "How is the soul to escape to heaven?" and when it is said "So cultivate the soul that all its powers will open out to God?" But, on the other hand, when 'the soul' is spoken of as being 'ruined,' 'decaying,' and 'dying,' 'drifting downward by a law of his nature,' or 'by the action of a natural law,' or as having faculties of 'a religious nature,' which may be improved or wasted, misused or abused, we are led to think only of man's nature as a creature of earth. Even on his own view the author has wholly failed to make good his cardinal point. For he has not shown that "great gulf" between the natural and the spiritual worlds on which he insisted as essential. He has run the two into one another, so as to make them distinguishable only in words, not in fact. It is no wonder, that he can make it appear that Natural Law runs on continuously into the Spiritual World, when he thus confounds together those two elements of man's nature, on which Scripture lays so much stress as being vitally opposed to one another.

 Doubtless it will be said, that in the case of a compound being, possessing at once a material body and an immaterial spirit, which act and react on one another, it is impossible to draw a line of distinction between the two, as it would be also to keep to it, if it could be drawn. Exactly so. That is just the point which I want to bring out. Though the two need not be so completely amalgamated as they are by this writer, yet, so long as they co-exist together (overlapping one another like two parallel lines, so to speak, and mutually affecting each other, we know not how or how much or when), it is impossible for us to distinguish accurately between what is due to man's nature as an animal—a product of Nature, and what is due to his nature as a Spirit—an outcome of the Supreme Spirit. What follows? Surely that our author cannot make good his position. For he cannot prove a continuity of "Natural Law in the Spiritual World," that is, a projection of laws of Nature into the world of Spirits, since all that he can allege may be accounted for by and attributed to the presence of the human or material nature in man. Indeed, what a preposterous notion it seems that laws
adapted to regulate material things, or the processes of material things, should have place in the world of immaterial beings!

In order to bear out our author's theory a man's spirit ought to enter into him at his conversion, or (as many would say) at his baptism, just as the evil spirits are said in the Gospels to have entered into men and swine. In this case, indeed, there would be a biogenesis,—a beginning of life, and a life too of "a higher quality;" for it would be an immortal life. But this is not the received doctrine. Man is held to be born with an immortal life; and therefore must have possessed his spirit or soul at his birth.

The truth is (as I have said before), we know and can know nothing at all about the world of Spirits, nor yet of its laws (if there be any) but what we can gather from Divine Revelation. The matter stands thus. Science has shown us, that the Universe of Nature is pervaded by laws, processes, or sequences (whichever we may prefer to designate them) the effects or consequences of which are unvarying, inexorable, and undistinguishing. In one point of view, namely, as being reliable, and securing universal order, and carrying with them certain retribution for the infraction of them, these are admirable and worthy of the Deity. But in another point of view they are not so. For they are unpitying and merciless, and productive of almost all the evils that exist in creation: and these are incalculable, and in our view infinite. Science fails to account for such a state of things in the creation of a Being who is all-mighty, all-wise, and all-benevolent. Where Science fails, Revelation steps in, and tells us of worlds of spirits which afford an opening for the rectification, in the case of beings whom God has endowed with immortal spirits and constituted responsible agents, of the evils entailed by the constitution of Nature. Nature is the parent of infinite unrighteousness. Divine grace has shown a remedy and a recompense for the unrighteousnesses, in the first place by the redemption of man, and then through him of the regeneration and reconstitution of all things. Our author would have us forego this blessed hope. He would have us believe in a continuity of Natural Law in the World of Spirits. For, if the principle of the continuity of the system of the laws of Nature into the sphere of the Spiritual be admitted at all, we see not where a terminus can be found for it. How can we conceive of a system, which we know (however great may be its advantages) to be productive of such interminable and inconceivable evils,—how can we conceive of it as being projected into
and continued through the realms of the blessed, God Himself forming its "outermost circle," as is said in the Essay on "Death" in a passage which I have noticed (p. 6) and shall have occasion again to notice.

"GROWTH."

"Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow," is taken as the text for this Essay; and the stress is laid on "how they grow," the Natural Law being derived from Ruskin in the form of this answer; 'Not by effort of their own, but by a power inherent in them.' "But how is the spiritual life to grow? How are we to become better men? How are we to grow in grace?" "Christ says, making the application beyond dispute: So you careworn, anxious men must grow. You, too, need take no thought for your life." 'Cast all your care upon God.'

We will first advert to the text, from which the spiritual law is deduced. At a glance it is seen, that the word "life" (implied in "grow") is used in its literal sense; and consequently that the passage applies, not to the spiritual and eternal life, but to the temporal life. Our author, however, seeks to make out in respect of growth—and, therefore, one would suppose, of that principle of life on which growth depends—that the natural law applies equally to both. He says: "Violent efforts to grow are . . . wholly wrong in principle. There is but one principle of growth both for the natural and [the] spiritual, for animal and plant, for body and soul. For all growth is an organic thing. And the principle of growing in grace is once more this, 'Consider the lilies how they grow.'" Now contrast with this the conclusion at which our Lord arrives at the end of this division of His discourse:—"Do not take thought, saying: What shall we eat, etc. . . . but do seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness"; or, as He is reported to have said on another occasion: "Agonise—fight to enter in through the strait gate; for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, but will not prevail." So that, while our author says: "Violent efforts" are not necessary for "growing in grace," our Lord declares that they are; and He thus in effect repudiates the notion of the "Natural Law" holding good "in the Spiritual World."

After this we have no need to follow our author further in his endeavour "to extend the analogy from the body to the
soul by showing that there are two things about the lilies' growth, two characteristics of all growth"; namely, "1. Spontaneousness; 2. Mysteriousness." Nevertheless I will notice two or three points in his argument.

1. Under the head of Spontaneousness,

Our author says: "Applied in any direction, to plant, to animal, to the body, or to the soul this law holds." "To try to make a thing grow is as absurd as to help the tide to come in or the sun to rise."—I am not concerned to question his dictum as to the first three, though it might be questioned as an absolute affirmation. But I do so as to the fourth. It is not correct to say: "No physician of souls has any prescription for spiritual growth." Else why did our Lord teach His disciples to pray? Why did St. Paul exhort Christians to "Grow in grace"? Why have 'means of grace' been provided, and the use of them enjoined?

The reason why the soul differs from the other things mentioned is obvious. They are under 'Natural Law,' which is Necessitarian: but the soul is a denizen on earth from the Courts of heaven. Man was endowed at his creation with a soul or spirit, and a will free to choose between good and evil. He was beguiled into choosing evil; and so he entailed upon himself and his posterity a nature more prone to evil than to good. But his free will remains to him; and a way has been opened to him of recovering all that he lost and more. But this would not be the case, if he were, as to his whole nature, subject to Necessitarian laws. Natural growth may be wholly spontaneous, and no effort of the subject of it may avail to produce or promote it. But the case is different in respect of spiritual growth. An option is afforded to him who covets it, and means are provided, by the use of which he may obtain and cultivate it. Not he who refuses to make any effort on the ground that "no man by mere working at his soul ever approached nearer to the stature of the Lord Jesus," but he who "walks in the steps of the holy example which Jesus left us," and "strives to save his soul alive," he is really "the Christian who works from the centre,"—the centre of a spirit guided by the Spirit. He is the man who alone "has within him the great formative agent, Life," if this term be taken in the Scriptural sense of the spirit of holiness. And consequently he, as our author affirms, is the only man, who not only may, but "must reach perfection."

Our author goes on still on the lines of his former error. Seeking "an argument from Scripture," he says: "The
regenerate soul is a new creature." True. But wherein does the newness consist? Not in life, but in holiness.

2. As to the Mysteriousness.

"A lily grows mysteriously." So also does the regenerate soul (John iii. 8). "The conclusion is, then, that he is a unique phenomenon." Agreed. And I add; If so, he cannot be under 'Natural Law.' For this law does not admit of that which is exceptional. The truth is, however, that the argument is worthless. For no conclusion to the purpose can be drawn from the circumstance of two things agreeing in being to us mysterious,—not wholly intelligible.

"DEATH."

The motto prefixed to this Essay is "'To be carnally mind is Death."—Paul.'

"The interest of the investigation here," it is stated, "lies in the fact that Death is one of the outstanding things in Nature which has an acknowledged spiritual equivalent. ... Next to Life the most pregnant symbol in religion is its antithesis, Death."

"What, then, is Death? ... Of course what Death is depends upon what Life is. ... And, "according to H. Spencer's definition, [natural] Life is the continuous adjustment of internal relations to external relations. ... It is for a man to be 'in correspondence with his environment.' ... When any part of the organism by disease or accident is thrown out of correspondence, it is in that relation dead." 'If hearing is lost, if sight, if taste, there is in each case partial death: if all sensibility and consciousness be lost, that is, if a man be wholly out of correspondence with his surroundings, the thing (for he is now a thing) is Dead. Such is natural death.'

And hence it is inferred, that "Spiritual Death is a want of correspondence between the organism and the spiritual environment."

"What is the spiritual environment?" "There are in the natural world different degrees of environment. A plant has one degree: an animal a higher: but, until man appears, there is no organism to correspond with the whole environment. Is man in correspondence with it? He is not. ... The spiritual world is simply the outermost segment, circle, or circles of the natural world. ... We call these circles
spiritual, simply because they are beyond us or beyond a part of us. What we have correspondence with, that we call natural; what we have little or no correspondence with, that we call spiritual. . . . Suppose we call the outermost circle God. Suppose we substitute 'Communion' for 'correspondence.' . . . Those who are in communion with God live, those who are not are dead. . . . The essential nature of Spiritual Death consists in want of communion with God.

"We do not need to go to Revelation for the proof of this. That has been rendered unnecessary by the testimony of the Dead themselves. . . . When the Agnostic tells me he is blind and deaf, dumb, torpid, and dead to the spiritual world, I must believe him. Jesus tells me that. Paul tells me that. Science tells me that. He knows nothing of this outermost circle."

"Without a God of Nature the God of Revelation is only half intelligible, and only partially known. God is not confined to the outermost circle of environment. He lives and moves and has His being in the whole. Those who only seek Him in the further zone can only find a part. . . . He who knows not God in Nature only partially lives. He who knows God only in Nature lives not. There is no 'correspondence' with an Unknown God." . . . "This (the inadequacy of the religion of Nature) is one inference. But the most important is, that the absence of the true Light means moral Death. . . . Grant that morals have their own base in human life: grant that Nature has a religion, whose creed is Science. There is yet nothing, apart from God, to save the world from moral Death. Morality has the power to dictate, but none to move. Nature directs, but cannot control." . . . "Between them, Nature and Morality provide all for virtue—except the Life to live it." . . . "The carnal mind, the mind which will not correspond with God—this is not moral only, but spiritual Death. And Sin, that which separates from God, which disobeys God, which can not in that state correspond with God—this is hell."

"The true environment of moral life is God. Here conscience wakes. Here kindles love. Duty here becomes heroic; and that righteousness begins to live, which alone is to live for ever. But, if this Atmosphere is not, the dwarfed soul must perish for mere want of its native air. And its Death is a strictly natural Death. . . . Without communion with the spiritual Environment there can be no Religion."
There is so much that is admirable in this Essay that I have been led to quote more than was called for by my immediate purpose. That purpose is to point out wherein our author falls short of the truth; and my limits will compel me to restrict myself to doing this.

I might begin by pointing out that the definition he has adopted of natural death is open to be questioned. For example, a man with one arm paralysed will not be able to use that arm, yet it is not dead. Again, a person in a swoon may be so completely 'out of correspondence with all his environments,' that he may be believed to be dead. Yet he may not be dead: he may revive. But this point is not of sufficient importance to dwell upon it. I will give Webster's definitions in a Note.

The question at issue here is this:—Can the rule of "Natural law in the Spiritual world" be shown to hold good in respect, not of death as an event,—the act of dying, but of death as a state?

No one can doubt that in this case the use of the term must be figurative: nor yet that, in this as in its correlative—life, there are two figurative senses, or rather a division of the figurative sense into two degrees, severally appropriate to this world and the next. The expression, "the second death," sanctions such a division.

"Of course," says our author, "what Death is depends upon what Life is." Now I have shown that the primary figurative sense of 'life' in the New Testament is 'holiness and happiness.' Holiness is the salient idea in respect of this world: happiness of the next; but each involves and implies the other. Similarly, then, with regard to 'death,' used figuratively, there is what is commonly called 'spiritual death,' meaning a 'death in trespasses and sins'; and there is 'the second death, which is the lake of fire.' Here, in like manner, we see that 'sin'—unholiness, is the prominent idea in respect of this world,—and sin is certain to entail present misery, more or less;—while suffering is the idea so in excess in the next life as almost to obliterate the remembrance of that which is its cause—sin.*

* "Death. 1. That state of a being, animal or vegetable, but more particularly of an animal, in which there is a total and permanent cessation of all the vital functions, when the organs have not only ceased to act, but have lost the susceptibility of renewed action. . . . 8. In theology: perpetual separation from God and eternal torment; called the second death. 9. Separation or alienation of the soul from God; a being under the dominion of sin, and destitute of grace, called spiritual death."—Webster's Dictionary.
Now it must be perfectly obvious, that Natural Law cannot be shown to extend to that "lake of fire" (whatever may be meant by this symbolical expression), which is the place of incarceration of all unholy spirits. The only question then, is, whether it can be shown to enter into that spiritual element of man's mixed state (consisting of a natural and a spiritual—or rather a religious element), which is commonly called 'the spiritual world,' but which would be better designated as 'the religious world.' Now, as nothing can be alleged in favour of an affirmative answer but what may be satisfactorily accounted for by the influence of the natural element on the spiritual, and as 'the natural' and 'the spiritual' are opposed to one another, and the doctrine of Scripture also is opposed to the affirmative, the answer must be in the negative.

Our author is by no means self-consistent in what he says about the Spiritual and the Natural worlds. First of all he makes the Natural to include the Spiritual world, even going so far as to include God in the former by representing Him as being 'the outermost circle' of it. He thus destroys the strong contrast between the two, making it at the most to be only one of degree, and not of kind. At the same time he begs the question at issue by making the natural world include God, and, therefore of course all God's works. For, if 'the natural world' includes 'the spiritual,' the laws of the former must necessarily be continuous through the latter. Yet, with singular inconsistency he says: "We call the outermost circles spiritual, simply because they are beyond us or beyond a part of us, we having little or no correspondence with them." Now the truth is, that naturally man has no correspondence with them, simply because he is a fallen, natural man, "born in sin, and under the wrath of God." When he is "born of the Spirit," he becomes "a new creature" (in a figurative sense): and in proportion as he grows in grace, he puts off the old man, and puts on the new man, that is, he becomes liberated more and more from the Natural Law, by which "the flesh lusteth against the spirit."

"The essential nature of Spiritual Death does" not "consist in the want of communion with God". This want is the consequence of Spiritual Death, not the thing itself. According to Scripture this Death consisted in or ensued on the loss of an innocent, a holy nature, which produced alienation from God; and consequently aversion to communion with Him.

It is worthy of note how completely our author ignores that world of spirits which is called hell. It is true, he uses
the word 'hell.' But the way in which he does so appears to show, that he not only ignores, but rejects the idea of such a place. For he says: "Sin is hell." Yet St. Paul says: "The wages of sin is death," by which last word he must mean, it would seem, "the second death." For sin itself is the fruit of spiritual death. So that this text may be paraphrased thus:—'The recompense of sin is the second death.'

When our author says: Spiritual "Death is a strictly natural Death," he must mean, that it is not an arbitrary appointment of God, but ensues in the course of Nature by a natural law. For he goes on to say: "It is not an exceptional judgment upon Atheism." But in this, again, he ignores the fall of man by which the law (if such it be) was superinduced. And we are not concerned to deny that a being, who is a compound of the natural and the spiritual, must be in part under Natural law.

"MORTIFICATION."

This Essay may be concisely described as an instruction how to grow in grace with all allusion to grace left out.

"Hitherto we have concerned ourselves with the condition of the natural man with regard to the spiritual world. We have now to speak of the relations of the spiritual man with regard to the natural world. These, or at least to part of it, we shall find to be that of Death."

"The solution of the problem will simply be this, for the spiritual life to reverse continuously the processes of the natural life. The spiritual man having passed from Death unto Life, the natural man must next proceed to pass from Life unto Death." [Note the different senses in which the words 'Life' and 'Death' must be used in the two clauses.] "Regeneration must be accompanied with Degeneration."

The methods of effecting this 'degeneration' are three:—

"Suicide, Mortification, and Limitation:" (1) The peculiar feature of Death by Suicide is, that it is not only self-inflicted but sudden." [?] So some sins; e.g., drunkenness, must be broken with "suddenly or not at all."; (2) Mortification. "In contrast with Suicide Mortification implies a gradual rather than a sudden process." . . . "The difference between a sin of drunkenness; and, let us say, a sin of temper is, that in the former case the victim who would reform has mainly to deal with the environment, but in the latter with
the correspondence.” (3) Limitation. ‘Many correspondences can neither be reduced by a gradual mortification nor cut short by sudden Death.’ . . . “The love of money, e.g., up to a certain point is a necessity: beyond that it may become one of the worst of sins.” . . . “At what point it must cease each man has to determine for himself. . . . In many ways the limitation of the natural life is the necessary condition of the full enjoyment of the spiritual life.” . . . “The lesson of self-denial, that is to say, of Limitation, is concentration. . . . It is only Limitation which can secure the Illimitable.”

I am quite unable to see any support that this Essay gives to our author’s theory of the continuity of ‘Natural Law into the Spiritual World.’ And I shall therefore content myself with furnishing this brief summary of it.

“ETERNAL LIFE,"

This Essay begins with the following paragraph:—“One of the most startling achievements of recent science is a definition of Eternal Life. To the religious mind this is a contribution of immense moment. For 1800 years only one definition of Life Eternal was before the world. Now there are two.”

1. The old one had been first given thus:—“This is Life Eternal—that they might know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent.”—Jesus Christ. Then the new one, taken from Herbert Spencer, was prefixed to the Essay as a second motto or text:—“Perfect correspondence would be perfect life. Were there no changes in the environment but such as the organism had adapted changes to meet, and were it never to fail in the efficiency with which it met them, there would be eternal existence and eternal knowledge.”

On the preceding page is given, in an extract from The Unseen Universe what, it may be presumed, the author would have us regard as a definition of eternal and universal death, —‘the utter dissolution of the whole visible universe from that loss of energy,’ which has been discovered to be going on.—As I can dispose of this in a few words, I may as well do so at once. All we know of the material universe leads to the belief that it is based on a system of cycles. Just, then, as the sun, if we take it at the summer solstice, goes on contracting its apparent cycle until it reaches the winter solstice, and then reverses its course, so may it be with regard to the supposed “loss of energy” in the universe, which, there-
fore, cannot be proved to be "doomed to utter dissolution." The presumption is, on the contrary, on the other side in proportion as the cyclical theory is held to be more probable than that of a progressive deterioration and decline.

2. The author proceeds to remark: "As to what there is in the Spiritual Life necessarily endowing it with the element of Eternity, the maturest Theology is all but silent. It has been reserved for modern biology at once to defend and illuminate this central truth of the Christian faith. And hence in the interests of religion, practical and evidential, this second and scientific definition of Eternal Life is to be hailed as an announcement of commanding interest."

3. "Science confronts us with an actual definition of an Eternal Life, based on... the necessary conditions. It does not pretend that it can fulfil these conditions.... It simply postulates the requisite conditions without concerning itself whether any organism should ever appear, or does now exist, which might fulfil them. The claim of religion, on the other hand, is that there are organisms which possess Eternal Life. And the problem for us to solve is this: Do those who profess to possess Eternal Life fulfil the conditions required by Science, or are they different conditions. In a word, Is the Christian conception of Eternal Life scientific?"

4. "Before we reach an Eternal Life we must... find an organism so high that in some part of its development it shall have added a correspondence which organic death is powerless to arrest,—a region, where the Environment corresponded with is itself Eternal. Such an Environment exists. The Environment of the Spiritual world is outside the influence of those "mechanical actions," which sooner or later interrupt the processes going on in all finite organisms. If then we can find an organism which has established a correspondence with the spiritual world, that correspondence will possess the elements of eternity—provided only... that the Environment be perfect.

5. "We have still to prove Eternal Life."... "The problem is with a material body, and a mental organization inseparably connected with it, to bridge the grave."... "Science abolishes with authoritative hand the very truth we are asking it to define."... 'A permission to go on is the most that Science can grant to Religion.'... "The fact of Immortality rests for us on a different basis. ... "When we turn... to the doctrine, as it came from the lips of Christ, we find ourselves in an entirely different region. He makes no attempt to project the material into the immaterial. The
old elements, however refined and subtil as to their matter, are not in themselves to inherit the Kingdom of God. That which is flesh is flesh. Instead of attaching Immortality to the natural organism, He introduces a new and original factor. . . . To Christianity 'he that hath the Son of God hath Life, and he that hath not the Son hath not Life.' This, as we take it, defines the correspondence which is to bridge the grave. This is the clue to the nature of the Life that lies at the back of the spiritual organism. And this is the true solution of the mystery of Eternal Life.” . . . “That which determines the correspondence of the spiritual organism is a Principle of Spiritual Life. It is a new and Divine Possession. He that hath the Son hath Life: conversely, he that hath Life hath the Son. And this indicates at once the quality and the quantity of the correspondence which is to bridge the grave. He that hath Life hath the Son. He possesses the Spirit of a Son. That spirit is, so to speak, organized within him by the Son. It is a manifestation of the new nature. . . . It comes not from generation, but from regeneration. . . . It is a filial relation. With the new Spirit—the filial correspondence, he knows the Father—and this is Life Eternal . . . . This also contains the guarantee of its eternity. Here at last is a correspondence which will never cease. Its powers in bridging the grave have been tried. The correspondence of the spiritual man possesses the supernatural virtues of the Resurrection and the Life.” . . . “The Christian argument for Immortality stands upon the pedestal, on which the theologian rests the whole of historical Christianity—the Resurrection of Jesus Christ.”

1. In proceeding to examine the foregoing statements we may first notice that, in so far as they depend on the expression “eternal life,” in John vii. 3, they lose their force from the circumstance, that what our Lord said was “the aëronic life,” that is to say, He contemplated primarily (as before shown), not the everlastingness, but the blessedness of the future life. The text would be more closely rendered thus:—“And the aëronic life is this—that they should know Thee, the only true God, and Him whom Thou hast sent.”

2. This may help us to see why 'the maturest Theology is all but silent as to there being anything in the Spiritual Life necessarily endowing it with the element of Eternity.' There is in truth nothing. The spiritual life in particular has no such endowment. The natural life has it equally. For the Scripture-doctrine is, that man is born an immortal creature.
This may serve to show, that the author has formed an entirely erroneous conception of the meaning of the expression ("the eternal life") used in our Version. Nevertheless, as "the element of Eternity" is unquestionably a "central truth of the Christian faith," we must examine what our author has to advance in reference to it.

We have brought before us two conceptions of everlasting life. And we have first to examine the Scientific Conception.

3. Now we are candidly told, that this life is to the scientist "but a speculation," "a biological conceit. The conditions necessary to an Eternal Life do not exist in the natural world. . . . A Perfect Life to Science, is simply a thing which is theoretically possible—like a Perfect Vacuum."—If this be so, is it not folly to waste our time in thinking about such a thing,—a thing which its propounders hold never did exist, and which, as far as our Scientific knowledge goes, never can exist. For, in the first place, the hypothesis is (1) one of the co-existence of a perfect organism and (2) of a universe perfect in itself and (3) in relation to the perfect organism. But we have no proof of the existence of any one of the three conditions. Science strongly disproves the existence of both entities by showing that nothing is free from imperfection or unproductive of evil. It also leads us to believe, that the universe has not been constituted with exclusive reference to any organism or organisms in particular, so that the one should ever be, and still less permanently continue in perfect correspondence and harmony with the other. Change is an essential characteristic of life. Everything living is every moment undergoing change. So is everything without life. And there is no correspondence between the changes. So that there can never be "perfect correspondence." This, then, is not a definition of an actual, nor even, as far as we can judge, of a possible state of things. It is not "an actual definition of an Eternal Life:" it is a mere "conceit" about a creation of the imagination. It must, therefore, be a sheer waste of time to indulge in speculations about it,—a mere building of castles in the air. Further, seeing that "the conditions necessary to an Eternal Life do not," as our author tells us, "exist in the natural world," how can any argument be deduced hence for "Natural Law in the Spiritual World"?

4. The author speaks of "a natural organism" and of "a spiritual organism." What is "an organism"? Webster says, "An organical structure;" and "Organic bodies are such as possess organs, on the action of which depend their growth and perfec-
tion, as animals and plants."—What is 'a spirit'? "An immaterial, intelligent being,"—a being "without body, parts, or passions." How can any organic structure or material beings have attained to such a height as to "have added a correspondence which organic death is powerless to arrest;" and which, therefore, it would seem, can pass as a material being into the class of immaterial beings—can "project the material into the immaterial." Can material beings, subject to "Natural Law," thus carry with them that Law into "the Spiritual World"? In the latter part of his treatise the author appears to discard the notion of natural organisms existing in the world of spirits, while it would seem to follow from what he says here, that he must or ought to hold that they do, and he implies in one place that God is an organism. But in truth there is such a variation in his use of some cardinal terms, that I have been in places unable to form a clear conception of what his meaning is. Is not 'a spiritual organism' a contradiction in terms?

5. We turn now to "the Christian conception of Eternal Life." But I must first say a few words as to a principle which the author lays down, and from which he apparently deduces "the Natural Law" which in this instance runs on continuously "into the Spiritual World." The principle is, that "the most complex organisms are the longest lived." On this I will only observe that, while it may be taken to hold good as a general rule, the rule is subject to many exceptions; and it cannot, therefore, be admitted to the rank of a Natural Law. It is not a law of Nature that, "as we ascend in the scale of Life we rise also in the scale of longevity." Compare, for example, a man with a raven said to live 500 years, a parrot 200, a carp and an eagle 100, an elephant said to be 500 years in attaining full growth, not to mention some plants.

"Life Eternal," our author tells us, "is to know God (John xvii. 3). To know God is to 'correspond' with God. To correspond with God is to correspond with a Perfect Environment. And the organism which attains to this, in the nature of things must live for ever."—Now (1) up to this point we have been led to suppose, that he was using the expression "Eternal Life" according to the common conception of it as being identical with 'everlasting life,' and we have written on this hypothesis. It is true that he does not, he could not altogether discard the idea of everlasting duration; but we now find that he makes this idea subordinate to a higher. The expression 'everlasting life' evidently cannot mean literally "to know God." It means simply a life which is everlasting.
And “to know God” cannot be everlasting life. At the most it could only be the means of attaining to an everlasting life. But this it cannot be in our case; because we are already according to Scripture immortal beings. The statement, then, can only be taken as being made in some figurative sense.—(2) No organism, being such as we understand by the term, can attain to a perfect correspondence with God. (3) “Those who profess to possess Eternal Life,” in the sense of everlasting life, unquestionably do not “fulfil the conditions required by Science.” For everlasting life is claimed for all men. (4) “The Christian conception of eternal life is” not “scientific.”

I will dwell only on the last point in reference to the text on which the author bases his present argument. On the ground of it he throws aside the everlastingness of the life as being anything more than a “part of the conception.” “The popular idea,” he says, “is that Eternal Life is to live for ever;” but “the Bible would never commit itself to any such empty platitude.” [!!] “This is Life Eternal—to know.” “Even Science has more in its definition than longevity.” . . . “In the world with which biology deals, Evolution culminates in knowledge.”—Now this is a very partial view of “the Christian conception of Eternal Life.” To know God is not “eternal life”—not, that is, “the æonic life,” in its entirety. It is only one of several constituents necessary to it; and it is quite clear that our Lord could have meant to say nothing more of it. To exemplify this a tree may be taken as an analogue of the æonic life. The root will represent its fundamental basis in life: the strong durable trunk its everlastingness: its widespread branches the knowledge of God in its manifold comprehensiveness: the fruit its holiness: the completeness and perfectness of the tree as a whole its unalloyed happiness. Everyone of these constituent elements is indispensable. Without the life none of them could exist any more than could a tree without a root. Without the everlastingness, the end and object, as placed in happiness, could not be attained; since just in proportion to the greatness of the bliss would be the poignancy of the anguish, if it were alloyed by the thought that the time would come when that bliss would terminate. Without the full knowledge of God none could be holy as He is holy; for it is only by beholding, as in a glass, the holiness of God that any can be changed into and reflect the same image by being renewed after His likeness. And without holiness none could be complete and perfect as God is per-
fect; and thus be made capable of perfect happiness. While all are thus shown to be essential, it is the happiness that is the end and crowning object of the whole. The mere knowledge of God, if it went no further, would be like a tree, which failed to produce the fruit which was the object for which it was allowed to grow. ‘Knowledge,’ then, is not the highest “Evolution,” in which a “correspondence might take place.” And in answer to the question, “Is anything better conceivable, anything worthier, fuller, nobler, anything which would represent a higher form of Evolution or a more perfect ideal for an Eternal Life?” I say, Yes: holiness is better, and happiness is better still. For each implies all that precede it.

“To correspond,” says our author, “with ‘the true God and Jesus Christ is Eternal Life.’ The quality of the Eternal Life alone makes the heaven—mere everlastingness might be no boon.”—No doubt. And no lower quality than that of holiness will either “make the heaven” or suffice for “correspondence” with the true God. “To know” merely is a degree too low in the scale. The proposed solution, therefore, will not solve the problem.

After what has been shown the progress of the Spiritual man may be thus set forth. By his birth of the Spirit he receives a new principle—a religious principle, and is made “an inheritor of” the æonic life—the life of bliss in “the Kingdom of Heaven.” As he grows in grace his hold on that life, that is, the assurance of its being his, increases. He has continually augmenting knowledge of God. And, as he advances in that knowledge, he advances in holiness; until, when God sees him to be ripe for removal, by the withdrawal of the mortal life he is put in virtual possession of the æonic life.

This brings us to the consideration of the text, which our author makes the basis of his attempt to find ‘a bridge over the grave.’ As he has not quoted it accurately (see pp. 9, 27), I must first of all do so.” “The witness [that God hath borne concerning His Son] is this—that God gave to us an æonic life; and this life is in His Son. He that hath the Son hath the life: he that hath not the Son of God hath not the life” (1 John v. 10-12). Observe, that it is “the life,” “the æonic life,”—the life of the millennial æon, during which that “kingdom of God,” of which our author speaks, would be set up upon earth:—it is of this that St. John is speaking, and having regard, not to the immortality to which that æon would be the introduction, but to the ‘blessedness
and holiness' of the life during it. And what he means by 'having the Son' is shown by what he goes on to say:—
"These things I have written unto you, that ye may know that ye have [i.e., in store for you] an æonic life, even unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God." So that "he that hath the Son" is simply a periphrasis for 'a believer.' And this text is out of place in the author's argument, which, being deprived of it, falls to the ground.

It also breaks down, as the former did, in respect of the æonic life being made to consist exclusively in the knowledge of God.

And again in the erroneous view of "the kingdom of God."

Our author has written: "Correspondence in any case is the gift of Environment. The natural Environment gives men their natural faculties; the spiritual affords them their spiritual faculties. It is natural for the spiritual Environment to supply the spiritual faculties; it would be quite unnatural for the natural Environment to do it. The natural law of Biogenesis forbids it; the moral fact that the finite cannot comprehend the Infinite is against it; the spiritual principle that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God renders it absurd."

Now what is all this but an argument showing that the natural and the spiritual do not form (as he would have us conceive of them) the opposite extremities of one line, but rather are like to two wholly distinct lines, diametrically opposed to, but at one extremity of each overlapping the other. He has represented the Universe as a series of concentric circles, crossed by a line of Natural Law. The innermost of these circles surrounds the inorganic world: the next the vegetable world: the next the animal world: the next the human world [The last three constitute the organic world]: the next, if he acknowledges any such existences as good and evil angels (of which there is no indication) would be the world of such spiritual beings: the last the Creator of all, God. His theory is, that the same "Natural Law" runs through the whole of these concentric circles; but that in the first three (forming the purely material world) the Law is exclusively Natural; in the last three it may be more or less modified by the co-existence in different degrees of a spiritual element, varying from the lowest degree of spirituality in man to the highest in God. This is at least the best idea I have been able to form of his theory.

In contradistinction from this I would offer the following
illustration as more accurately representing the real state of things. The material Universe or World of Nature and the immaterial Universe or World of Spirits are two wholly distinct things. The former we know to be regulated by unvarying Laws. Of the latter we know and can know nothing but by Divine revelation. But the Christian Revelation concerns itself with Nature in general only in so far as it is affected by man, and man is interested in it. We can, therefore, speak of and compare the two only so far as Scripture guides us. Now I submit that the state of man,—who is represented as a fallen creature—would be best illustrated by the supposition of two streams, proceeding from opposite sources, meeting and flowing together for a short space, and then separating, and severally returning to their fountainheads. The one—the Natural stream, owing to the action of the old serpent, the devil, has its source in the pit of hell, whence it is projected (like the deadly inflammable oils or the burning devastating lava which in some places issue from the bowels of the earth) only to carry with it ruin and desolation by means of the 'wars and fightings' and other evil doings which characterize the human race. The other—the Spiritual stream, is "a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb," fructifying the earth wherever it flows and fraught with blessings to all with whom it comes in contact. The result of two such widely diverse streams coming in contact cannot be harmony. Foul oil will not amalgamate with pure water. Burning lava cannot project its seething mass into a river, and run on with it in its return-course. Nothing can follow from a junction of such opposite fluids but a struggle for life or death, accompanied for a time with bitter strife and appalling uproar. There can be no end to this strife but by the extinction of the one or the other. That which conquers will not take the law from the conquered. Especially the river of God will not carry back any one of the elements which proceeded from hell to deposit it at the footstool of God's throne. Each will end at the source whence it sprang.

Is not this latter illustration much more in accordance with the Word of God than the former in respect of representing the case between the natural man and the spiritual man? It must surely be unnecessary to pile up text upon text to show that it is. The Law which governs the natural man cannot enter the spiritual sphere so far as to coincide with the spiritual Law.
"I am come,' said Christ, 'that ye might have life, and that ye might have it more abundantly.' And that He meant literal life, literal spiritual and Eternal Life, is clear from the whole course of His teaching and acting."—This is a sentence which, with the argument founded on it, may well astonish any one. In the first place, the wording is most extraordinary. To say "literal spiritual . . . Life" is like saying 'bad good life.' It is using at the same time two predicates which, when used in connection, contradict one another; and thus sheer nonsense is produced. But, further, it is said to be clear that "Christ meant literal life." Now, according to Webster, life in this connection would mean "that state of being in which the soul and body are united," and in the Scriptural use "supreme felicity." The former is the literal meaning: the latter a figurative. That Christ did not mean the former is clear from the circumstance that "they"—His sheep, had the natural life before He came; and consequently He could not have come, that they might have it. That He did mean the latter is no less clear from the fact, that He could mean none other than the æonic life; that is to say, "supreme felicity" hereafter. If the assertion quoted stood alone, we should be quite at a loss to know what was meant by it. But, as we read on, we discover that after all that natural life, which is life in the literal sense, is not meant; and that a supernatural life, which is life in the "metaphorical" sense, is meant. But still we fail to get a clear conception of what is meant by this "spiritual and Eternal Life." "Eternal Life," we are told, "as a question of Life, is a problem for Biology. The soul is a living organism. [7] And for any question as to the soul's Life, we must appeal to Life-Science." Again, "growth in grace . . . proceeds according to Natural Law, and the leading factor in sanctification is Influence of Environment." Such assertions as these might give rise to a long discussion, if it were once entered upon. Therefore I will leave off without meddling with them.

"ENVIRONMENT."

This Essay opens with pointing out that all that we have and are comes to us from two sources—"Heredity and Environment." As to this a question might be raised, founded on Gen. ii. 7: "God formed man of the dust of the ground. And He breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man
became a living soul." Are two distinct acts meant—1st, the formation of man as an animal; 2nd, the endowing him with an immortal spirit; or is only one act meant? But it will not be necessary to raise this question here, it being admitted that according to Scripture man is a compound being, possessed of a material and an immaterial nature. So far as the former is concerned, we have no objection to make to what our author advances.

But, when he goes on to say, "In the Spiritual World, also, the subtle influences which form and transform the soul are Heredity and Environment," the case is different. What does he mean by "the soul"? On the answer to this question the whole issue will depend. Now further on he calls the soul a "faculty"; and afterwards speaks of it as 'expending energy,' and of 'the defeated spirit as struggling in the wreck of its religious life.' Again, he speaks of "men who have no soul," and of "men who have a soul." And he says, "The entire dependence of the soul upon God is not an exceptional mystery. . . . It is the law of all Nature. The Spiritual man is not taxed beyond the natural. . . . The arrangements for the Spiritual life are the same as for the natural life." From all this it would seem, that he does not regard the soul or spirit as being a distinct immaterial entity, but as a 'religious faculty' of the material creature, man. If this be the correct view, we can have nothing more to say. It did not need in this case an elaborate Essay to establish the doctrine of "Natural Law in the Spiritual World." This would follow as a matter of course: it would be a mere truism. The Scriptural doctrine, however, respecting spirits differs very widely from the foregoing.

When our author says, "Few things are less understood than the conditions of the spiritual life," we can quite agree with him: nay, we hold that they are not and cannot be understood. We totally differ with him, however, when he says, "Living in the spiritual world, nevertheless, is just as simple as living in the natural world. And it is the same kind of simplicity. For it is the same kind of world. There are not two kinds of worlds. The conditions of life in the one are the conditions of life in the other." We hold that there are to us "two kinds of worlds"—the earthly or Natural, and the heavenly or Supernatural.* The former may be taken as

* It may be supposed from his prefacing this Essay with a quotation from Emerson, which concludes with the following words, that he does not believe in two worlds: "I answer: Other world? there is no other world. God is one and omnipresent: here or nowhere is the whole fact."
comprehending all that we can learn from Nature respecting Nature, that is, respecting the material Universe: the latter all that Revelation tells us respecting the Spiritual, that is, the Supernatural Universe. We call in question nothing that the author says respecting the former. But we do call in question everything that he says in reference to the latter; because it is not in accordance with what we gather from the only source of information—the Holy Scriptures. For example. He said in his last Essay, "Growth in grace . . . proceeds according to Natural Law." We question not, that there may be an increase in virtue "according to Natural Law." But this is an increase in the sphere of the Natural. Whereas "growth in grace" is a growth proceeding from a special influence of the Divine Spirit wholly without the sphere of the Natural according to Scriptural doctrine.

The following extracts furnish some more examples, in which it may be seen that the author is keeping within the sphere of the Natural; and therefore cannot be proving that "Natural Law" is continuous into "the Spiritual World," if by this expression be meant the Supernatural sphere.

"One might prove how the spiritual life also is modified from outside sources—its health or disease, . . . all its changes for better or for worse being determined by the varying and successive circumstances in which the religious habits are cultivated."

"Our Environment is that in which we live and move and have our being. Without it we should neither live nor move nor have any being. In the organism lies the principle of life; in the Environment are the conditions of life. Without the fulfilment of these conditions, which are wholly supplied by Environment, there can be no life. An organism in itself is but a part; Nature is its complement."—All this may be very true when predicated of Nature only. But is it necessarily true when God is said to be the Environment (as in p. 265)? Doubtless it may be—it cannot but be true in a certain sense; because, God being the Creator and Efficient Cause of all that exists and occurs, everything must be ultimately referred to Him as the Doer of it. And just as the Apostle could say, "In Him we live, and move, and have our being," a heathen (Seneca) could also say, "Prope est a te Deus; tecum est; intus est." But is the saying true in respect of the Evangelic scheme of doctrines—of Redemption, Providence, and Grace? We trow not. These are outside of the Natural; and there can be no ground for saying that the special in-
fluences of the Divine Spirit are subjected to Natural Law. Indeed, if they were, they would not be special.

"So long as the organism continues to grow, act, think, speak, work, or perform any other function demanding a supply of energy, there is a constant, simultaneous, and proportionate drain upon its surroundings. This is a truth in the physical and therefore in the spiritual world."—The inference can have validity only where there is an "organism which continues to grow," etc. But this there is not in "the spiritual world," unless the word 'spiritual' be used (as it apparently is here) in that lower sense in which it is equivalent to 'religious'; and then 'the world' is brought within "the physical world."

"In the spiritual world especially, ... in laying the foundations for a religious life, he will make no unworthy beginning, who carries with him an impressive sense of so obvious a truth as that without Environment there can be no life. For what does this amount to in the spiritual world? Is it not merely the scientific restatement of the reiterated aphorism of Christ, 'Without Me ye can do nothing.' There is in the spiritual organism a principle of life; but that is not self-existent. It requires a second factor, ... an Environment."

—Hereon I observe (1) that it is plainly shown here, that by "spiritual" nothing more is meant than "religious"; (2) that, if it be taken in the higher sense, it has yet to be shown, that there is such a thing as a "Spiritual organism"; and (3) that our Lord did not make the statement quoted in the sense of "Environment." The text is thus rendered in the Revised Version: "He that abideth in Me, and I in him, the same beareth much fruit: for apart from [severed from] Me, ye can do nothing" (John xv. 5).

"The cardinal error in the religious life is to attempt to live without an Environment. Spiritual experience occupies itself not too much, but too exclusively with one factor—the soul. We delight in dissecting this much tortured faculty." This is another example, showing that 'spiritual' is used as synonymous with 'religious.'

Our author thinks that by his doctrines, (1) "that the organism contains within itself only one half of what is essential to life; (2) that the other half is contained in the Environment; and (3) that the condition of receptivity is simple union between the organism and the Environment," he can "place on a scientific basis these three truths of immense practical interest": (1) "the utter helplessness of
man”; (2) that “the soul must find its life in God”; and (3) that “the condition is simple receptivity.”—It is perfectly true, that these conclusions may be arrived at both scientifically and Scripturally, naturally and supernaturally. But what follows from this? Certainly not that there is a continuity of “Natural Law in the Spiritual World.” It does not follow that, because the conclusions are arrived at by deductions from Natural laws in the one case, there must therefore be Natural law in the other. It may be, and Scripture leads us to believe that it is the fact, that the salvation of the soul is absolutely of the free unfettered grace and mere mercy of God, man ‘having no power by his own natural strength to do that which is acceptable to God without the grace of God by Christ preventing him that he may have a good will, and working with him, when he has that will’ (Art. x.). If by free grace, then not by law: “otherwise grace is no more grace.” “We are not under law, but under grace” (Rom. vi. 14, xi. 6).

But, further, the question may be raised; Is it correct to make God the sole religious environment? When we are translated to God’s heaven it may be; but so long as we are upon earth creation is our immediate environment. This means that we have not only a duty towards God, but also towards our neighbour, ourselves, and all God’s creatures. Is it allowable to leave the latter out of account?

“There is,” says the author, “a brief phrase of Paul’s which defines our relation to God with almost scientific accuracy,—‘Ye are complete in Him.’ In this is summed up the whole of the Bible anthropology—the completeness of man in God, his incompleteness apart from God.”—Again I must call attention to the original, which is rendered thus in the Revised Version:—“ In Him (Christ) ye are made full” (Col. ii. 9). This does not seem to me to bear out the Environment theory.

In order to form a basis for obtaining a suitable answer to the question: “In what does God complete man,” an attempt is made to show that “the lower departments of Nature are already complete enough.” “But the moment we pass beyond the mere animal life we begin to come upon an incompleteness.”—The question is too wide to be discussed within my limits. I can only express entire dissent from the author’s view; and quote a line from the verses out of In Memoriam, which preface the next Essay:—

“Nature, red in tooth and claw with ravine.”

Is this being “complete,” and “about as good a world as might be?”
"Conformity to Type."

"CONFORMITY TO TYPE."

Proceeding on the principle, that in all Nature 'likes beget likes,' our author says; "The Scientific Law by which this takes place is the Law of Conformity to Type [i.e., to progenitors]. . . . The Artist who operates upon matter in this subtle way and carries out this law is Life. There are a great many different kinds of Life,—'of men, of beasts, of fishes, of birds' (1 Cor. xv. 39). . . . There is another kind of Life of which Science as yet has taken little cognizance. It obeys the same laws. It builds up an organism into its own form. It is the Christ-Life. As the Bird-life builds up the bird, the image of itself, so the Christ-Life builds up a Christ, the image of Himself, in the inward nature of man. When a man becomes a Christian the natural process is this: The Living Christ enters into his soul. Development begins. The quickening Life seizes upon the soul, assimilates surrounding elements, and begins to fashion it. According to the great Law of Conformity to Type this fashioning takes a specific form. It is that of the Artist who fashions. And all through Life this wonderful, mystical, glorious, yet perfectly definite process, goes on "until Christ be formed" in it. . . . Is there any fallacy in speaking of the Embryology of the New Life? Is the analogy invalid? Are there not vital processes in the Spiritual as well as in the Natural World? The Bird being an Incarnation of the Bird-Life, may not the Christian be a spiritual incarnation of the Christ-Life? And is there not a real justification in the processes of the New-Birth for such a parallel? Let us appeal to the record of these processes."

Before following our author in his appeal, I must state the objections which occur to me as lying against what he has advanced.

1. He is not entitled to claim any sanction from what St. Paul wrote in 1 Cor. xv. 39. He did not speak of 'life,' but of 'flesh.' And there are but three kinds of life known to us, namely, of plants, animals, and spirits. His divisions into "Bird-Life," "Reptile-Life," and so on, have evidently been devised to afford a colourable ground for distinguishing between man's animal-life and what he calls his 'spiritual life.'

2. His argument is wholly based on life being "the Artist who fashions," that is to say, the principle or cause to
which every kind of life and its particular development is due. Now he says very truly: "We know all but nothing of Life yet, nothing of development." And not only because, knowing nothing about it, we cannot be justified in predicating generally anything about it, but also because, having no ground whatever for attributing to life the development into "oak and palm, worm and man," of germs in which "there is no shade of difference" discoverable, his argument is based on an unwarrantable assumption. It rests on a groundless surmise. Nay, it is not only destitute of proof; but there is something to be said in disproof of it. We know that in protoplasm, "the formal basis of all life," there are the seeds of life, but not life itself. We know, too, that the foetus is "quickened" at only about half the time of its progress towards birth. So that, though growing in the first half, it does not possess life. Even to the scientist (provided that he acknowledges a God), it may perhaps appear to be the more probable hypothesis to account for the widely differing developments from what are apparently identical germs, that they are the workings of an ever-operating God. Certainly it will appear to the Christian to be so.

3. With what propriety can the author frame a parallelism between a Christ-life and a Bird-life! In no other instance is there anything similar to what he calls the Christ-life. In every other that he specifies there is a different creature to each different life, either a worm, or a reptile, or a bird, or a dog, or a man. But the last, it seems, may or may not have two lives,—a human and a Christ-life! And the Christ-life has an organism of its own. Where are the organs? What are they called? How does "the quickening Life seize upon the soul,"—an entity which has already an immortal life? What are the "surrounding elements" that it "assimilates?" But we will not follow him further in his parallelism; for we are treading on delicate ground. He cannot surely be serious? At best is he not "paltering with us in a double sense" of a novel kind. We shall see more clearly, as we proceed to consider his appeal to Scripture.

The appeal is to such expressions as the following:—"that the Christian was a new creature, a new man, a babe, 'begotten of God,' God's workmanship, 'renewed in knowledge after the image of Him that created him,' 'predestinated to be conformed etc.'" It is truly said that "the originality of this entire New Testament conception [or rather the author's conception of it] is most startling," when it is taken literally. Nay, in some
of the examples it is *jejune*, in some ridiculous, and in at least one positively blasphemous. The concluding sentences of the paragraph are worthy of the first:—"When will it be seen that the characteristic of the Christian Religion is its Life, that a true Theology must begin with a Biology? Theology is the Science of God. Why will men treat God as inorganic?" Does not everything organic undergo change, and eventually perish?

Our author proceeds to 'work out the analogy' by proposing three questions.

I. "What corresponds to the protoplasm in the spiritual sphere?"

"The spiritual Artist" (that is, Life) . . . "must have a peculiar kind of protoplasm, a basis of life. . . . He finds this in the materials of character with which the natural man is previously provided. Mind and character, the will and the affections, the moral nature—these form the basis of spiritual life." . . . 'The material world supplies the material for the vegetable: the vegetable for the animal: the animal for the mental: and lastly the mental for the spiritual. . . . In this womb the new creature is to be born, fashioned out of the mental and moral parts, substance, or essence of the natural man. The only thing to be insisted upon is that in the natural man this mental and moral substance or basis is spiritually lifeless. . . . It wants, that is to say, the kind of Life which constitutes the difference between the Christian and the not-a-Christian. It has not yet been born of the Spirit.' . . . 'This protoplasm has the two properties requisite:—a capacity for God which produces a "longing of the soul after God," and a plasticity, which fits the soul for conversion.'

Here at length we have arrived at that, which we have been desiderating all along,—a description which will enable us to form an accurate conception of the sense in which our author uses the words *soul* and *spiritual.*—The *soul* according to him is a part of the protoplasm,—the mental and moral ingredient in the animal or natural man. It must consequently be distinct from the spirit, which according to Scripture is an entity, separable from and therefore wholly independent of the mental and moral faculties which man possesses as an animal. Now we hold the true view to be, that the *soul* is a term expressive of the *immortal life of the spirit*, and the term *spirit* is expressive of the *spiritual or ethereal* nature and also of the incomprehensibility by us of the immortal entity. The
term *soul*, then, is wrongly applied to man's intellectual and moral faculties. We should alter the last-quoted sentence so as to read thus:—"This protoplasm has the two properties requisite:—a capacity for God which is capable of producing a longing of the natural man after God, of the creature after its Creator, and a plasticity which capacitates him for yielding under the Spirit's influence to conversion."—With regard to the word *spiritual*, the author plainly uses it to denote something beyond or higher than intellectual or moral. Yet it cannot be used for pertaining to the spirit of man; for the natural man possesses a spirit. It can, therefore, only be used in the sense we have been surmising, namely, as nearly synonymous with *religious*, meaning by this word, not that vague religiousness which is possessed by natural men, who "seek after God, if haply they may find Him," but a thorough conversion of the whole man to God. The result is that, while we agree in the thing, namely, that the effect of the Spirit's regenerating influence is Conversion, we disagree in respect of the proper term to express it when speaking literally. He uses the word *spiritual*. I would reserve this word for 'relating to the spirit,' and would express the result of the birth of the Spirit as a religious Conversion,—"a turning from darkness to light and from the power of Satan unto God." No doubt he has the sanction of customary use; but the consequence of such use is to produce inextricable confusion of thought, and such serious errors as may be seen exemplified in this Treatise.

II. The second question is: "What is the Life—the hidden Artist who fashions the protoplasm? . . . The natural man is its basis, the spiritual man is its product, the Life itself is something different. Just as in an organism we have these three things—formative matter, formed matter, and the forming principle or life; so in the soul we have the old nature, the renewed nature, and the transforming Life." Before I comment on these extracts I will quote the pith of the remarks on the third question.

III. The question is this:—"What do we know of the process and the plan?" . . . 'A new element here comes in—the conscious power of choice. To meet this some revelation of the Type is necessary. This can come only from the Type. . . . The Incarnation is the Life revealing the Type. . . . Its end is the revealing of God. . . . The Type must be an Ideal. . . . Christ is the Perfect Man. . . . How is the Christian to be conformed to the Type, *i.e.*, to the Ideal? . . .
From the standpoint of biology this practical difficulty vanishes in a moment. . . . The law here is the same biological law that exists in the natural world. . . . Is Conformity to Type produced by the matter or by the Life, by the protoplasm or by the Type? . . . Conformity to Type is secured by the type. Christ makes the Christian. . . . So much for the Scientific evidence. Here is the Scriptural.’ [The texts quoted before (see p. 11) are then repeated with the addition of “Except a man be born again, he cannot see, cannot enter the Kingdom of God.”] “The indirect agent is Christ, the direct influence is the Holy Spirit. In other words, Christ by His Spirit renews the souls of men.” . . . “The Christian in his life-aim is in strict line with Nature. What men call his supernatural is quite natural.” . . . “The work begun by Nature is finished by the Supernatural—as we are wont to call the higher natural. . . . The goal of Evolution is Jesus Christ.”

It will be obvious, that the cardinal point on which the validity or invalidity of the author’s argument turns is, whether the life spoken of in the ultimate case as “Spiritual Life” is life in a literal or in a figurative sense. As in the previous cases,—plant-life and animal-life, with all the sub-divisions he makes of them,—the former sense is indisputably the true one, so, for his argument to have validity, it must be the sense in the “spiritual” case—the “Christ-life.” He was so sensible of this, that he began with placing the matter in so strongly literal a point of view, that there appeared to be no room to doubt that he was going to maintain the literality of the life in “the spiritual world.” Yet almost imperceptibly, and seemingly without being aware whither he was drifting, he runs ashore and suffers shipwreck on the figurative coast. He lands with a candid avowal that he has reached a religious haven. We meet him there, and hail his admission that it is conversion that man needs, and that this is the goal that he himself has arrived at. Not that, even now, he recognises that conversion is a totally different thing from life. He persists in using the former term to the last. And we must, therefore, offer a final argument in refutation of the view, drawn from the text which he superadded to his last collection. What is the product of a birth? Is it life? No. Life is not an entity. It has no substantive or independent existence. It is only a quality. It does not come into existence at the birth; for it pre-exists it. It becomes recognisable only after the birth; and then only as an attribute of a new creature.
Without that creature there would have been no life. The same (I mean, that a substantive entity is produced) will apply to the previous stages in the author's argument—to the cases of all kinds of life. So must it, then, to the birth of the Spirit, if this be a bringing into the world of life in a literal sense. Show us, then, the new creature that is born. You must not point to a man 'turning from Satan unto God,' 'being renewed after the image of Him that created him,' 'beginning to live to God.' He is no new creature in a literal sense. He is only one 'putting off the old man,' and 'putting on the new man,' figuratively speaking. A literal mean cannot properly be made to connect two figurative extremes. "Life" (literally taken) has no power to "transform" an ungodly man into a godly man, which is what is really meant by transforming "the natural man" or "the old nature" into "the spiritual man" or "the renewed nature." How absurd it would be to say, 'In the soul we have the ungodly man, the godly man, and the transforming life!' And as he can on his view produce no product of the new birth, we must conclude that the author's argument breaks down, and his theory affords no support to "Natural Law in the Spiritual World."

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"SEMI-PARASITISM," "PARASITISM," AND "CLASSIFICATION."

Inasmuch as these—the last three—Essays do not call for any lengthy notice from me, I will take them together. They are admirable Essays, well worthy the perusal of everyone who has the interests of genuine religion at heart. They are mainly devoted to drawing parallelisms between certain correspondences in Natural objects and in the religious world, e.g., the Hermit-Crab, inhabiting the shell of the Whelk, of which "the correlative in the moral and spiritual spheres" is said to be "the Parasitic Doctrine of Salvation" (exemplified in "(1) the doctrine of the Church of Rome; (2) that represented by the narrower Evangelical Religion"). This is a SEMI-PARASITISM resting on the basis that "any principle which secures the safety of the individual without personal effort or the vital exercise of faculty is disastrous to moral character."

PARASITISM is exemplified in the Sacculina, a minute organism, which preys on the body of the Hermit-crab. "The Sacculina is a degenerate type." It is "a Sacculina
when it might have been a Crustacean.” There could be no more impressive illustration than this of what with entire appropriateness we might call “the physiology of backsliding.” “We may formulate the general principle thus: Any principle which secures food to the individual without the expenditure of work is injurious, and accompanied by the degeneration and loss of parts.” “It is when we come to study the working of the principle in the religious sphere that we discover the full extent of the ravages which the parasitic habit can make on the souls of men.” This is exemplified in (1) Going to Church; (2) Abuses of Systems of Theology.

Classification is illustrated from two specimens of earth, one containing crystals, “fashioned by some mysterious geometry into forms of exquisite symmetry,” the other “an assemblage of small glassy objects built up into curious forms.” The cardinal difference between them is, that the crystals belong to the material, “the dead world:” the others are shells, and belong to the living world.” Only Life can make the latter.—“We propose to inquire whether among men, clothed apparently with a common beauty of character, there may not yet be distinctions as radical as between the crystal and the shell; and, further, whether the current classification of men, based upon Moral Beauty, is wholly satisfactory, either from the standpoint of Science or of Christianity.” “What if there be a moral beauty and a spiritual beauty? . . . We ask an answer in terms of biology: Are they flesh or spirits? Are they living or dead?” . . . “What is the essential difference between the Christian and the not-a-Christian, between the spiritual beauty and the moral beauty? It is the distinction between the Organic and the Inorganic.” [From the Biological standpoint the lifeless is the inorganic: the having life the organic. But both moral and spiritual or religious beauty are comprehended in the latter.] “Moral beauty is the product of the natural man, Spiritual” [religious] “beauty of the spiritual” [religious] “man.” . . . “The Law of Biogenesis is at once the foundation of Biology and of Spiritual religion. And the whole fabric of Christianity falls into confusion, if we attempt to ignore it.” [The two last assertions I of course deny.] . . . “The first law of biology is: That which is Mineral is Mineral; ‘That which is Flesh is Flesh; that which is Spirit is Spirit.’” [These two last clauses, which are substantially a quotation from John iii. 6, may be paraphrased and explained in either of two ways.—(1) ‘The thing (the neuter article is used), which is produced by the flesh is of a fleshly
nature: that by the Spirit of a spiritual nature. Both at first are in an infantile state; but, when they have attained to maturity, the latter no less than the former will be a product similar to its progenitor. The spirit of the latter, having by the grace of the Divine Spirit been converted and imbued with religious sentiments and affections, will grow up into a holy spirit “meet for the inheritance of the saints in light.”

(2) ‘The thing produced by the flesh is of a carnal kind: that by the Spirit of a religious kind, that is, it has genuine religious sentiments and affections.’ This construction is justified by other sayings of our Lord, e.g., “God is a Spirit; and those who worship Him must worship Him in spirit,” that is, with truly religious feelings: “The words that I speak unto you are spirit and life,”—spiritual and life-giving, that is, of efficacy to convert and renew, when taken in a religious sense."

Our author goes on: “The mineral remains in the inorganic world, until it is seized upon by a something called Life outside the inorganic world: the natural man remains the natural man, until a Spiritual Life from without seizes upon him, regenerates him, changes him into a spiritual man.”—The two cases are not parallel. There is an infusion of life in the one. There is none in the other: nothing more than a religious and moral conversion in a creature, who remains physically the same; no “change of nature,” no “passing from death unto life” in the same literal sense.

The author says immediately afterwards: “Any one is entitled to hold, that the character of the not-a-Christian is as beautiful as that of the Christian; but what he is not entitled to hold, is, that both in the same sense [he must mean the higher sense] are living.”—I would apply this rule to himself.

When, however, he goes on to say: “Man is a moral creature, and can and ought to arrive at great natural beauty of character. But this is simply to obey the law of his nature—the law of his flesh; and no progress along that line can project him into the spiritual” [the truly religious] “sphere;” I can quite agree with him. I must crave leave, however, to append these words:—’and à fortiori not into the Spiritual World’—the world of Spirits in the supercelestial realms. His proposition of “Natural Law in the Spiritual World” is, therefore, not shown to hold good. And such passages as Rom. vii. 7—viii. 25; 1 Cor. ii. 11-12, do not accord with it.

Of course I can also heartily agree with such statements as the following. “In dealing with a man of fine moral charac-
"Semi-parasitism," "Parasitism," and "Classification." 47

ter, we are dealing with the highest achievement of the organic kingdom. But in dealing with a spiritual man we are dealing with the lowest form of life in the spiritual world. . . . The spiritual man is a mere unformed embryo. . . . But it doth not yet appear what it shall be."

APPENDIX.

In the theological use alone the word spiritual and its cognate terms have three distinct sets of uses:—the literal, the figurative, and the symbolical. The last is directly opposed to the first, inasmuch as it must express something in strong contrast with it. The mean is of an intermediate character.

1. In the literal use spiritual denotes of or relating to a spirit, and might be otherwise expressed by psychical.—The following are Scriptural examples of this use. I Cor. xv. 15: "There is a natural" [animal or physical] "body: and there is a spiritual body" [psychical or spirit-like in being ethereal, immortal, and insusceptible of suffering, bodily or mental]. Eph. i. 3: "Who hath blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places" [with every blessing appertaining to spirits]. Eph. vi. 12: "against the spiritual hosts of wickedness" [the hosts of wicked spirits] "in the heavenly places." The substantive, spirit, occurs about 400 times, mostly as denoting a personal being or entity, either the Holy Spirit, good or evil spirits, or man's spirit.

2. The figurative use of spiritual may best be expressed literally by religious.—The following are a few examples. Rom. i. 11: "I long to see you that I may impart to you some spiritual gift," meaning religious edification. Rom. vii. 14: "The law is spiritual,"—reaches to the inward disposition. Rom. xv. 17: 'The Jews' spiritual [religious] things: the Gentiles' carnal [irreligious] things.' I Cor. iii. 1: "I could not speak unto you as spiritual" [religiously minded], "but as unto carnal" [earthily minded]. I Cor. x. 3: "Did all eat the same spiritual meat" [fed upon Christ—"that spiritual rock,"—by faith]. Eph. v. 19: "spiritual songs" [songs of a religious character]. I Peter ii. 5: "a spiritual" [religious] "household . . . to offer up spiritual" [religious] "sacrifices."—The adverb occurs in the same sense in I Cor. ii. 14: "because they are "spiritually discerned" [discerned by the renewed mind].—Of the substantive in this use there are very many examples, spirit meaning commonly the dis-
position or temper of mind, e.g., "poor in spirit." "how doth David in spirit call Him Lord": "the spirit [the renewed man] is willing": "in the spirit and power of Elias": "what manner of spirit ye are of": "worship in spirit and in truth" [sincerely and truly]: "the spirit of holiness, of bondage, of adoption, of slumber, of the world, of meekness, of faith": "in the spirit, and not in the letter": "to be carnally-minded is death; but to be spiritually-minded is life": "the flesh [the natural] lusteth against the spirit" [the renewed disposition].

3. Inasmuch as the symbolical use is to be expected only in a symbolical book, it is to the Apocalypse alone that we can look for it.—The adjective, indeed, does not occur at all; it scarcely could do.—But there is an example of the adverb in chap. xi. 8: "which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt,"—names used, by reason of the hateful ideas connected with them, to denote the once beloved but now cast off city Jerusalem.—The substantive occurs in a quasi-symbolical sense in chap. i. 10 and iv. 2: "I was in spirit," that is, in an ecstatic state; and again in chap. xxi. 10: "He carried me away in spirit." It is fully symbolical in the following. Chap. xiii. 15: "He had power to give a spirit [Imperial existence] to the image of the wild beast," "the image" denoting the Flavian dynasty of the Caesars, and "the wild beast" the Julian. Chap. xvi. 13, 14: "I saw three unclean frog-like spirits, . . . the spirits of wonder-working demons,"—meaning Galba, Otho, and Vitellius, whose occupation of the throne was like to the saltatory action of frogs, in that they only leapt up upon it to fall off again. Chap. xviii. 2: "Babylon is become a hold of every unclean spirit." This is descriptive of the state of the Roman empire between Nero and Vespasian.

The material, Natural, or physical and the immaterial, Spiritual, or psychical are two distinct genera, having nothing in common, but being rather opposed to one another. The moral and the religious are species or elements of the former. But, owing to the term spiritual being commonly used for the latter (the religious), a confounding together of things essentially distinct in their nature has arisen. Our author has hence been misled: and, from failing to observe the distinctions between the literal and the figurative uses of this word and of some others (e.g., birth, life, death), has been led in my opinion into many errors.

THE END.

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