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A table of contents for *Bibliotheca Sacra* can be found here:

https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles_bib-sacra_01.php

and born of Earth. He was famed for strength and victories in wrestling. He always triumphed ; because, standing on his mother Earth while he struggled, she constantly renewed his strength. He finally engaged with Hercules in a wrestling match. Hercules had learned the secret of Antaeus's strength ; and so, lifting him high in air, and above the strengthening touch of his mother Earth, he crushed him to death in his arms. We should not suffer ourselves to be lifted from our sure footing and source of national strength by this papal wrestler among the nations. Let it suffice that we look at Italy, and Tuscany, and Spain. And let us plant the feet of our little ones in a sure place, remembering that it is a foundation of God, for us and for our children, forever.

ARTICLE VI.

DR. NATHANIEL W. TAYLOR ON MORAL GOVERNMENT IN THE ABSTRACT.¹

BY REV. JOHN P. GULLIVER, NORWICH, CONN.

A SYSTEM of theology, if constructed upon the ideal of Dr. Taylor, would take, as its central truth, the fact that *God is administering a perfect moral government over men.* Around this central fact would be grouped all the teachings of nature and of revelation. The existence, character, and providence of God, would be studied with reference to his position as governor. The constitution and history of man would be investigated with reference to his position as a subject. The special teachings of the inspired word respecting

¹ Lectures on the Moral Government of God, by Nathaniel W. Taylor, D. D., late Dwight Professor of Didactic Theology in Yale College. New York: Published by Clark, Austin and Smith, 3 Park Row and 3 Ann Street. 1859. Vol. I. pp. 417. Vol. II. pp. 423.

the fall and recovery of the race, would be considered as an exceptional and extraordinary application of the principles of moral government to the work of forgiveness and redemption. Indeed, according to this ideal, it is easy to see that all human knowledge, whether of principles or of facts, whether in the form of science or of history, may be arranged and studied in its relations to the same great central fact, the whole being comprised among the means employed, or the results secured, under God's government of the intelligent universe.

It was Dr. Taylor's constant regret, not only that our systems of divinity are made up of partial examinations of subordinate and insulated topics, called forth by the exigencies of controversy, instead of being complete and symmetrical exhibitions of God's moral government; but that they contain absolutely no full or formal discussion whatever of this vital theme. Vid. *Mor. Gov.* II. p. 2.

In this conception, therefore, of God's moral government as centralizing and including all truth, we have the key to Dr. Taylor's system of theology. To the direct elucidation of God's moral government, in respect both to its abstract nature and its practical working, he devoted a large portion of his theological lectures. In the department of natural theology his plan was fully executed. And although he did not, in form, arrange the doctrines of revelation about this central idea; yet so fully are all his most elaborate discussions of these doctrines modelled upon the mould of thought brought out in his essays on moral government, that they may be considered as, in fact, a continuation of those essays, being the application of their principles in specific departments of theology.

The volumes before us contain a discussion of this subject under three different forms :

1. Moral government in its abstract principles, as cognizable by the intuitive and deductive powers of man, disconnected from any particular form of moral government, divine or human. This section is designed to answer the question : What is a perfect moral government ?

2. Moral government in its practical working, as seen in nature and in the experience and history of man. The object of this section is to prove that God's moral government, as seen in nature, is a perfect moral government, according to the exposition of the first section.

3. God's moral government as made known in revelation, especially as unfolded in the Jewish theocracy ; that being a representative system, in which the general principles of God's administration are made known through their exhibition in the temporal government of the Hebrew commonwealth.

It is proposed in the present Article, to give, in a condensed form, the course of thought followed in discussing the first of these points, viz. *Moral government in the abstract*. The object of the Article is to present an outline of this great argument, such as shall be accepted by Dr. Taylor's friends as a fair representation of his views, and such as shall be adapted to the wants of those who may have occasion to become acquainted simply with its prominent features and general scope. This design, of course, excludes any attempt either to advocate or to oppose his views. If these are misstated, in any quarter, the best reply will be a correct statement. If they are in any respect erroneous, such a statement will be the best antidote to the error.

It is, perhaps, desirable to remind the reader that the word "action," as constantly used in these lectures, refers, unless otherwise designated, to the action of the mind in the exercise of its *supreme* purpose or affection, all subordinate choices and all external actions being included only as they are dictated by the governing principle.

The precise language of Dr. Taylor is given in the definitions and in other important forms of phraseology. In such cases, quotation marks are employed. Elsewhere, the language is not that of Dr. Taylor ; and, of course, should not be made the basis of objection to his views, without a careful comparison with the treatise itself.

WHAT IS A PERFECT MORAL GOVERNMENT ?

“Moral government is the government of moral beings by the influence of authority.” Its chief forms are, the government of God, of the state, and of the family. Of these, the government of God, alone, is perfect in its administration and tendencies; while those of the state and family are most imperfect in these respects. None of them, however, is perfect in its results, sin and misery being in existence under them all. Still we know what a perfect moral government is. Its nature, necessity, and design begin to be comprehended by the child, upon the first demand of the mother that its will yield to her will; they are more and more fully comprehended in connection with the relations of civil society, of friendship, and of personal intercourse among men. Though none of these forms furnish an example of perfect moral government, still the human mind is capable of perceiving their imperfections, and so of forming a conception of such a government. We can fully understand its nature and its design, and we can know also what measures are adapted to accomplish its design, as far as we comprehend the circumstances of the case. In God’s moral government, while we can fully understand its nature and design, there must be much in its practical administration, of the fitness of which to the design, we are incompetent to judge. On the other hand, there are essential respects in which we can decide what a perfect moral governor will do, and what he will not do. We are not, therefore, doomed to look upon God’s administration as an impenetrable mystery. We can know, “in all essential respects, what a perfect moral government must be, when administered by a perfect God.” The definition of a perfect moral government, as it is thus known by the human mind, is as follows :

“THE INFLUENCE OF THE AUTHORITY OR OF THE RIGHTFUL AUTHORITY OF A MORAL GOVERNOR ON MORAL BEINGS, DESIGNED SO TO CONTROL THEIR ACTION AS TO SECURE THE GREAT END OF ACTION ON THEIR PART, THROUGH THE MEDIUM OF LAW.”

This definition is considered, in its several parts.

I. "A moral government is an influence on *moral beings*, or on *beings capable of moral action*." This is perfectly evident. It is only necessary to observe that such a government is entirely distinct from the influence of physical causes. It gives, not the necessity, but only the certainty, of its effect. It may exist unimpaired, though wholly counteracted. It leaves the subject as free to perform the act which it forbids, as that which it commands.

II. A perfect moral government implies a *moral governor*. There may be a moral *system*, under which moral beings should act simply from motives derived from the perceived nature and tendencies of their action. But a moral government requires the personal influence of a moral governor.

III. The influence of a perfect moral government is designed *so to control the action of moral beings, as to secure the great end of action on their part*. This is perfectly evident, the only question being: What is the great end of action? It is to produce the highest well-being of all, and to prevent the highest misery of all. Every moral being is capable of acting in a manner which tends to secure this end. Hence a perfect moral government must require such action, and can require nothing less. Moreover, every moral being is, by necessity, compelled to choose one or the other of these objects. If he refuse to seek the highest well-being of all, as his supreme end, and chooses some inferior good, such as the temporal welfare of his family, still he chooses the highest misery of all. For, as he chooses the welfare of his family as his *supreme* end, all other objects, if necessary, will be sacrificed to it, even the entire happiness of the whole universe besides. Therefore his choice, and every other choice, except that of the highest well-being of all, is, "in its true tendency, fitted to produce the opposite result — the highest misery of all." Hence a supreme affection, whatever subordinate action it may dictate, has, in every case, a tendency to secure one of two objects: the highest well-being of all; or, the highest misery of all.

IV. The influence of a perfect moral government is the

influence of authority. Authority is defined to be "The influence of a right to command, which imposes an obligation to obey, as this right results from competence and disposition to give and maintain the best law." It is the *personal* influence of the ruler resulting from his power, wisdom, and goodness, leading the subject to accept his command as the highest *evidence* that the act commanded is fitted to secure the best end of action. It differs from the influence of natural good and evil, which give this evidence through the known nature and tendencies of action. These two influences may coexist and cooperate in giving evidence as to the tendency of action. But they are distinct. However powerful the latter may be, without the former, there can be no moral government. The right to govern never rests on any relation between the parties, but solely upon the competence and disposition of the governor. The right of a parent to govern his child, does not rest upon the fact that he is the parent; but from the fact that his being a parent is presumptive evidence that he will govern in the best manner. So the simple relation of Creator gives no right, of itself, to govern. A malignant Creator would have no just authority.

The view that the right to govern is given by power to reward and punish, places the influence of government solely in natural good and evil, appealing to the selfishness of the subject exclusively. It is the doctrine that might makes right. All permanent distinctions between right and wrong are thus destroyed; the one being changed to the other with every change of power.

V. A perfect moral government involves the exercise of authority *through the medium of law*. The following definition is given of the law of a perfect moral government:

"The law of a perfect moral government, is the promulgated will of the moral governor, as a decisive rule of action to his subjects, requiring benevolence on their part, as the best kind of action, and as the sum of obedience, forbidding selfishness on their part as the worst kind of action and the sum of disobedience, expressing his preference of the action required to its opposite, all things considered, his satisfaction with obedi-

ence and with nothing but obedience on the part of subjects, and his highest approbation of obedience and highest disapprobation of disobedience, and including the appropriate sanctions of the moral governor's authority."

The defence of the successive propositions of this definition, occupy the remainder of the treatise.

1. The law of a perfect moral government is the *promulgated* will of the moral governor as a *decisive rule* of action to his subjects. His will must be promulgated to be known; and, being promulgated, ignorance is no excuse for disobedience. It is decisive, because it emanates from one competent and disposed to give the best law; whose authority is therefore final on the question as to what the best law requires.

2. The law of a perfect moral government must require *benevolence* as the best kind of action, and forbid *selfishness* as the worst kind of action, on the part of moral beings.

(a) 'The influence of benevolence and selfishness *upon other sentient beings than the agent*, proves that the one is the best and the other the worst kind of action. This appears :

(a²) In the fact that each of these affections is *supreme*; that is, fixes upon its object as the *supreme end of action*; being thus distinguished from all subordinate acts of will; and in the fact that each is also *elective* or *voluntary*; being thus distinguished from mere instinctive or constitutional preferences.

Benevolence is the elective preference of the highest well-being of all, to every object that can come into competition with it. The highest well-being of the agent cannot come into competition with it, both being secured, in all cases, by the same action; therefore a man is never called to choose the loss of his own highest well-being for the sake of the general good. The necessary *means* of the highest well-being of the agent, e. g. his virtue, can never thus come into competition; therefore a man is never called upon to do wrong for the general good. But, with these exceptions, every *other good* to the agent, and the escape from every *other evil* by the agent, may thus come into competition

as an object of choice. These objects, which may compete with the general good, are termed in the scriptures "*the world*," in which sense the word is used in this treatise. To these the benevolent purpose prefers the highest well-being of all, together with all which is implied in that well-being, and all the means necessary to secure it. It is a purpose to sacrifice all good, and to endure all evil, which may be necessary to the highest well-being of all, with the exception of the agent's own highest well-being and its means; which, in the nature of things, cannot be inconsistent with the highest well-being of all. It is the true nature and tendency of benevolence, then, to secure the best end; and it is, therefore, the best kind of action.

Selfishness on the contrary elects, as its supreme object, the world and all means necessary to secure it; and its tendency is, of course, to destroy all good, viz. happiness and the means of it, and to produce all evil, viz. misery and the means of it, on the part of other sentient beings, so far as may be necessary to secure its end. Selfishness is, therefore, the worst kind of action.

(b²) That benevolence is the best and selfishness the worst kind of action, to other beings than the agent himself, appears from the fact that each is an *intelligent* act. They are *intelligently* directed, each to its object; so that the disposition to do good or evil is allied to wisdom to do each. Knowledge gives power, and so enhances the capacity of benevolence to do good, and of selfishness to do harm.

(c²) The same appears from the fact that each is a *morally free* act, each of which excludes the other: benevolence excluding selfishness, with all its power for evil; selfishness excluding benevolence with all its power for good. The opposite of each is something more than its mere non-existence. It is the non-existence of the other with all its power for good or evil. This expulsive power enhances the good of the one, and the evil of the other.

(d²) A fourth consideration is, that both are permanent, not as being absolutely unchangeable, but as opposed to fluctuating, states of mind. The mind changes its governing purpose only with *great difficulty*. The whole tendency

of each of these principles is to perpetuate itself, with all its power for good or for evil.

(e²) A fifth consideration is, that both are predominant states of mind ; subordinating, each to its own purposes, *all the faculties of the being* ; thus increasing the power of each for good or for evil.

These facts, severally conclusive, furnish in their combination irresistible proof that benevolence is the best, and selfishness the worst, kind of action, so far as they are related to other beings than the agent.

(b) That benevolence is the best, and selfishness the worst, kind of action, appears from their *relation to the agent himself* ; benevolence being adapted to secure the highest happiness, and selfishness the highest misery of which he is capable from action.

(a²) This appears from the tendency of the *objects of action*, the one to give the highest happiness, the other to cause the highest misery, to the agent.

(a³) Benevolence seeks an object which is fitted to give the highest happiness to him who contemplates it. It will be admitted that the object best fitted to produce this result, is the highest happiness of all, together with all the means necessary to secure it, especially the perfect virtue of all other moral beings. But it has been shown that benevolence is the only action, on the part of the agent, which is fitted to produce the highest happiness of all other moral beings. Therefore, because benevolence alone tends to secure the *object* desired, it is indirectly adapted to secure the highest happiness of the agent.

The same is shown from the very nature of *good, worth, value, or excellence*. These belong to no object absolutely, but only as that object is *related to sentient beings*. Nothing is good but happiness and the means of happiness. The value of benevolence to all other beings, is its fitness to secure their highest happiness; its value to the agent himself is its fitness to secure his highest happiness. Had not the highest happiness of all, and his benevolence as its means, this tendency to secure happiness to the agent, he could not choose it. There

would be no ground for motive.¹ But inasmuch as he is capable of receiving higher happiness from the highest happiness of all others, than from any other source, his own benevolence, as the means of the highest happiness of all others, becomes the best kind of action to him.

It is not necessary that these results should be actually secured. The worth of the action depends solely upon its *fitness* to secure them. Moreover in making these estimates of the value of benevolence to the agent, we are to regard him in his highest perfection of faculties and character, unhardened and unperverted by selfishness.

(b³) "Selfishness, on the part of a moral being, is perfectly fitted to secure to him the highest misery of which he is capable from an object of action."

The argument here employed is precisely the reverse of that just considered. The highest misery of all is the object which is best fitted to cause misery in a moral being. It is

¹ This is the somewhat famous "*self-love theory*" of Dr. Taylor. It consists simply in the assertion that since "the will is as the greatest apparent good," any object chosen must contain a good to the mind, that is, must give happiness to it. This happiness from the object is not *directly* chosen, but the object is chosen, and yet the object is chosen *because* it gives happiness. In choosing the highest happiness of the universe, the agent does not make his own highest happiness, which is involved in it, an object of thought or pursuit, yet does this induce him to make the choice. If any prefer that phraseology, it may be said, that the happiness of the universe is the *objective* motive, while his own happiness, which is involved in this, is the *subjective* motive, in his choice. If he received no happiness in securing the happiness of others, he could not choose it. Some prefer to express this distinction thus: The agent's own happiness is *instinctively* regarded in his choices, but the object chosen is *deliberately* or *voluntarily* regarded. The former influences him unconsciously, the latter consciously.

This is distinct from the question as to *what that quality is* in benevolence which thus gives happiness to the agent. Dr. Taylor and other utilitarians would say: "It is its tendency to secure the highest happiness of the universe." Others would say: "It is the presence of the quality we call *rightness*, considered apart from all its tendencies." This quality, according to the latter view, admits of no further definition or analysis, being a simple idea. Those who hold this view would say: "The universal happiness is good, but the love of the universal happiness is better," — that is, the securing of the universal happiness gives great pleasure, but the *choice* of the universal happiness gives still greater pleasure to a moral agent; so that he would still choose the universal happiness, though all the present tendencies of that choice were so changed that the result would be the universal misery.

the direct tendency of selfishness to secure this object. Therefore selfishness is fitted to produce the highest misery in the agent. As there is no evil but misery and the means of it, and as selfishness is the means fitted to produce the highest misery, therefore it is the worst kind of action. Nor is it necessary that these results actually exist. The evil of the action to the agent is to be measured by its *fitness* to produce his highest misery, and that in the perfect unperverted action of his powers, unmarred by any previous act of selfishness.

(b²) The fitness of benevolence to afford the highest happiness, and of selfishness to cause the highest misery, to the agent himself, is further seen in the fact that each is intelligent action. The agent fully knows all the results, both of good and evil, which flow from his action; and will therefore gather from the one all the happiness which it is capable of giving, and receive misery from the other in like manner.

(c²) The same fitness of each to produce its result, is seen in the fact that it is the agent's *own action*.

As with full knowledge he surveys the results of his benevolence, he exclaims: "I have done it;" or of his selfishness, he exclaims: "I have caused it;" thus approval becomes *self-approval*; and abhorrence, *self-abhorrence*.

(d²) The same is seen in the fact that moral *liberty* is an element in each kind of action. In the case of benevolence, the joy of the agent is immeasurably enhanced by the thought: "I did this voluntarily. I could have done otherwise." In the case of selfishness, misery would be immeasurably increased by the same thought.

(e²) The same is seen in the fact that each is *predominant* action, using for its purposes every power of the intellect, the sensibility, and the will. Under the sway of benevolence, all would be awakened to the highest activity, contemplating or achieving that which is best fitted to give happiness to the soul. Under the sway of selfishness, all these powers are employed in contemplating or causing all which is best fitted to create misery.

Thus is the proposition demonstrated, that benevolence is the best, and selfishness the worst, kind of action, considered

both in relation to the agent himself and in relation to all other sentient beings.

3. The third point in the definition of the law of a perfect moral government is, that it requires benevolence as the *sum of obedience*, and forbids selfishness as the *sum of disobedience*; that is, requires benevolence universally and only, and forbids selfishness universally and only, requiring subordinate action only when it is the appropriate expression of benevolence, and forbidding the same only when it is the appropriate expression of selfishness.

As moralists have often made executive actions alone cognizable by law, losing sight of the action of the will and heart, a distinction is now drawn between *predominant* and *subordinate* action — predominant being that action in which the agent selects his supreme object, — subordinate being that action which is dictated by this supreme preference. The only predominant acts possible to a moral being are benevolence and selfishness. These states of mind are here defined more fully than before, thus:

“Benevolence consists in the elective preference of, or in electively preferring, the highest well-being of all sentient beings, for its own sake, to every other object in competition with it, as an object of choice or preference.”

“Selfishness consists in the elective preference of, or in electively preferring, some inferior good to the highest well-being of all sentient beings; and is, of course, a preference of this inferior good to the prevention of the highest misery of all; that is, a preference of the highest misery of all to the absence of the inferior good, as these objects come into competition as objects of choice.”

Each of these is a mingled act of the will and heart, being at once a choice and an affection; each is intelligent, each is free, each permanent, and each predominant. They differ in their end and tendency: those of benevolence being the production of the highest well-being of all; those of selfishness being, through the choice of some inferior end, the production of the highest misery of all.

Subordinate action pertains to each of these forms of predominant action, and it consists of two kinds :

(a) Immanent subordinate action, including all "elective preferences, voluntary affections, dispositions, or purposes, in which no present act of mind or body is directly willed."

(b) Executive subordinate action, in which some act of body or mind is directly willed.

The latter may be divided also into :

(a²) Overt action, which is the act willed; and :

(b²) Imperative volition; which is the act willing it.

It is evident that, in this subordinate action, the agent does not aim *directly* at the great end of action, but only at some limited degree of happiness. Should this limited happiness be consistent with the highest well-being of all, then *indirectly* the agent promotes the great end of action; should this be inconsistent with the highest well-being of all, then he *indirectly* defeats the end.

Having made these distinctions, the author proceeds to the proof of the proposition just stated, viz. that benevolence is the *sum of obedience*, and selfishness the *sum of disobedience* to the law of a perfect moral government.

(a) "*Predominant action, either in the form of selfishness or benevolence, is not only unavoidable, but it is the only action on the part of moral beings which, in all the circumstances essential to their condition, is possible.*"

It is possible that every moral being should choose between the highest good of the universe and some inferior object. It is certain that every moral being will choose between these, for *his own* highest happiness depends upon the choice of the former. He cannot exist as a moral being without deciding whether he will seek his own highest happiness or an inferior form of happiness. It follows, therefore, that "in all circumstances essential to his condition as a moral being," he must be benevolent or selfish. Since a perfect law must cover all the possible circumstances of a moral being, and since these forms of action alone are demanded in all such possible circumstances, it follows that these alone can be the sum of obedience or of disobedience.

But is not *subordinate* action, in some of its forms at least, also essential and universal in all the possible circumstances

of a moral being? It is not: because, first, it is conditional action, depending upon predominant action, without which it cannot exist; secondly, different kinds of subordinate action are required in different circumstances, so that no form of such action is possible in all circumstances; thirdly, the same subordinate action may be dictated by benevolence, in some circumstances, and by selfishness in others, e. g. taking human life, indignation, forbearance, etc. Some forms of subordinate action are invariably linked with a predominant purpose in the very name given them; e. g. murder is taking human life for a *selfish* end; patriotism is a *benevolent* love of country, etc. These are not properly subordinate actions, but are only specific manifestations of the predominant action, and of course are unchangeable. Inasmuch, therefore, as no form of subordinate action is possible under all the circumstances of a moral being, this cannot be the sum of obedience or of disobedience.

This view is confirmed by the fact that the law of a perfect moral government enjoins or prohibits subordinate actions solely through the predominant principle. In requiring benevolence, it requires all the *appropriate expressions* of benevolence, and, *vice versa*, of selfishness. Specific statutes may sometimes be given, as in the case of the ten commandments, on the ground that the acts specified are *so generally* expressions of the predominant principle, that it is proper to make them the subject of statute. Special statutes are also required in some cases to remove ignorance, on the part of the agent, of the true tendency of the subordinate action specified; in others, to deepen a correct conviction already formed. In all cases, they are to be interpreted as general directions as to the kind of predominant action to which the act specified belongs. The law, properly speaking, deals only with predominant action, and through this reaches surely and precisely all forms of subordinate action. All this is in full accordance with our Saviour's teaching, that the whole duty of man is comprised in the great law of love.

(b) The same appears, if we consider, "*That predominant action in the form of benevolence is the only morally right ac-*

tion, and in the form of selfishness, is the only morally wrong action on the part of moral beings." This is maintained :

(a²) From the established meanings of the words *right* and *wrong*, in common life, and of the word *moral*, as applied to action. *Right* signifies fitness to accomplish an end ; *wrong*, fitness to prevent an end. To use these words to designate some other quality, would be as improper as to use the word *sound* to describe *color*. Now it has been shown that the great end of action, on the part of moral beings, is the highest well-being of all. Hence all morally *right* action is action which is fitted to promote that end ; and all morally *wrong* action is action fitted to defeat that end. But it has been shown that benevolence and selfishness alone are thus fitted to promote or prevent the highest well-being of all. Hence these are the only morally *right* or *wrong* kinds of action.

Again, it has been shown that the word *moral* only applies to action which is intelligent, free, permanent, and predominant, and that these qualities belong only to benevolence and selfishness. These, therefore, are the only *morally* right or wrong kinds of action. The emotions of self-complacency and remorse can only be awakened by action possessing these qualities.

(b²) From the nature of *subordinate action*, which is the only other kind of action possible to a moral being. A moral being is always acting morally right or wrong, because he is always acting under the direction of the predominant principle. But none of his subordinate acts, when considered apart from the predominant principle, are *morally* right or wrong. They are right or wrong in the general sense of fitness, because they are fitted to secure some limited good or evil which are necessary to the general happiness or hostile to it. But they are not morally right or wrong. That this is so, is evident from the fact, that an act which is thus indirectly fitted to promote the general good, may be prompted by selfishness, so that, if such act is *morally* right, we have the absurdity of a being acting morally right and wrong at the same time. On the other hand, benevo-

lence may, in some cases, require a given subordinate act, and in other cases forbid it, as in changing circumstances the act may promote or prevent the highest well-being of all.¹ But *moral* action cannot thus change its character. Subordinate action, then, can be right or wrong in the *general* sense, but not in the *moral* sense.

The conclusion is therefore reached, that the law of a perfect moral government requires benevolence as the *sum of obedience*, and prohibits selfishness as the *sum of disobedience*.

4. The fourth point in the definition of the law of a perfect moral government is: "That it must express the lawgiver's preference of the action required to its opposite, *all things considered*." This is advanced in opposition to the view of some that God forbids sin "in itself considered," but prefers it "all things considered." As if a parent should say to his children: "You shall not lie," and should then add: "On the whole, considering all the advantages which are to result, I hope you will lie!" Such a law would be a mockery. It would be no expression of the choice of the lawgiver; for a choice is always made between two objects "all things considered," while at best only an involuntary desire can be awakened for an object "in itself considered." Moreover, if these two wills coexist, which of them are we to understand to be expressed in the law? This idea of two wills, in this form of it, making, as it does, holiness and sin direct competitors as objects of choice, is absurd. It is to be carefully distinguished from the choice of a *system* to which sin is incidental in preference to any *system*, possible to God, which excludes sin. In this case sin is chosen, not in preference to holiness, but in preference to the non-existence of the best system.

5. The fifth point in the definition of the law of a perfect moral government is: "That the lawgiver can be satisfied with obedience and with *nothing but obedience* on the part of subjects."

¹ It should again be borne in mind that nothing here said implies that acts such as we name justice, veracity, murder, profanity, etc., are changeable in their moral character. For these words bear a complex meaning, and include both subordinate and predominant action. A recent writer in the Princeton Review has overlooked this statement. See Taylor on Moral Government, Vol. I. p. 54. note.

This appears as follows. The law is the expression of his will, and he can be satisfied only when his will is done. The law is the means of securing the best end, and requires the best action, and he can be satisfied with nothing else. Moreover, if obedience alone will not satisfy him, it is impossible to ascertain what will satisfy him. Especially can the lawgiver be satisfied only with obedience, because obedience alone honors the law and sustains the authority of the lawgiver; while disobedience dishonors the law, and if uncounteracted would destroy the authority of the lawgiver. A single act of transgression, tolerated by the lawgiver, would break down his authority; for "what is done once, may be done again; and what is done by one, may be done by all." Aside from the intervention of an atonement, the pardon of a single sin would destroy the authority of the ruler. Why, then, is not the authority of human governments broken down by the failure to detect crime, and by the exercise of the pardoning power? Because they do all they *can*. While this disposition to do all they can is evinced, there will be authority up to the measure of their power. But the failure to do all they can, at once destroys all which can properly be called authority. There may be an acquiescence in their rule, on the part of subjects, which will prevent actual revolution and anarchy; but authority exists only in name. The exercise of the pardoning power, by human governments, results from their known fallibility. Its sole object is, to correct mistakes. If it oversteps this function, it destroys authority. Of course it has no place, in this form of it, in a perfect moral government. Nor can it be said that the transgressor, by any act of his own, can repair the injury he has inflicted upon the authority of the lawgiver, so that the lawgiver can be satisfied with anything else than his obedience. He cannot annihilate his act of sin. Not by repentance, nor by works of supererogation, nor by voluntary suffering, nor by the endurance of punishment, can the transgressor replace the authority of the lawgiver where he found it; for that authority required none of these, but obedience alone. The *infliction* of punishment will sustain authority. But this is the

act of the lawgiver, not of the transgressor ; while even this fails to reform the subject, or to restore him to happiness ; and hence is no substitute for obedience, in the estimation of a benevolent lawgiver.

The conclusion is, that the law of a perfect moral governor is an unqualified claim for obedience, and for obedience *alone*, and that he can be satisfied with *nothing else*.

6. The sixth point in the definition of the law of a perfect moral government is : " That it expresses the lawgiver's *highest approbation* of obedience, and *highest disapprobation* of disobedience."

By this is not meant that it expresses a higher approbation of obedience than of the highest happiness of all. These are related as means and end, and of course cannot come into competition as objects of choice. But it is meant that the law expresses as high an approbation of obedience as of the highest happiness of all, and a higher approbation, than of any object which can come into competition with it. On the other hand it expresses as high a disapprobation of disobedience as of the highest misery of all, of which it is the means, and a higher disapprobation than of any object which can come into competition with it. Hence a perfect moral governor will evince a greater repugnance to disobedience, than to any loss of happiness or experience of suffering which may be connected with or dependent on disobedience. That is to say : when the *universal* happiness and the means of it, become incompatible with the happiness or the exemption from suffering of a disobedient *individual*, the former will be chosen, in preference to the latter.

7. The seventh point in the definition of the law of a perfect moral government is : that it *involves sanctions*.

The discussion of the nature, necessity, and equity of legal sanctions, is preceded by a consideration of the relation sustained by the moral governor to his kingdom, his qualifications for office, the moral character which he must possess and manifest, and the mode of this manifestation.

Every moral being sustains relations to other moral beings, each of which has its peculiar object, function, and du-

ties. The object of the relation of the governor to the subject, is to secure right moral action. The means of securing this object must be the peculiar influence of a moral government, which is the influence of *authority*. Other influences, as that of natural good and evil, may and must be combined with this; but they are distinct from it. One cannot obey or disobey simply from regard to natural good or evil; for these acts have respect to a *person*, and are the accepting or rejecting of the authority of that person. *Authority*, then, is the peculiar influence of a moral government, without which it can have no existence.

This authority depends upon the manifested competence and disposition of the governor to govern in the best manner, that is, upon his knowledge and power, and upon his benevolence. Sanctions are not necessary to the proof of the knowledge and power of the governor. They can only affect his authority by their relation to the great question of his *benevolence*.

Now benevolence in a moral governor plainly involves the highest approbation of obedience, as the best thing, and the highest disapprobation of disobedience, as the worst thing. It involves, also, every possible effort, on his part, to secure the one and to prevent the other. Hence he must make it *manifest* to his subjects that his law, which pronounces right moral action the best thing and wrong moral action the worst thing, is a correct transcript of his own feelings. The possession of these feelings is necessary as the basis of his authority; their manifestation, as the proof of his authority. So that both the possession and manifestation are essential to the proof of his benevolence. Moreover, benevolence requires that this manifestation shall be so decisive that no doubt can remain in the minds of his subjects that he possesses these feelings. The simple prevention of the natural result of disobedience in causing the highest misery of all, is not such decisive proof of the possession of these feelings. For it is supposable that such prevention may be caused by a lower degree of disapprobation of disobedience than the highest. Nor will anything he may do in *other* relations

give such decisive proof, so long as he fails to do all he can in his relation as *moral governor* to manifest these feelings. The proof which admits of no doubt must be given in all relations. His highest approbation of obedience, and his highest disapprobation of disobedience, must not fail to appear wherever the manifestation of these feelings is called for. Least of all would such failure be admissible in his relations as moral governor.

We are now prepared to consider what a perfect moral governor must do, in his relation of moral governor, to manifest his highest approbation of obedience, and his highest disapprobation of disobedience, thus proving his benevolence and establishing his authority. Here we discover the office of *legal sanctions*, which are thus defined :

“The sanctions of the law of a perfect moral government consist in that natural good promised to obedience, and in that natural evil threatened to disobedience by the moral governor, which establish or ratify his authority as the decisive or necessary proof of it, by manifesting his benevolence in the form of his highest approbation of obedience and his highest disapprobation of disobedience : and which, for this purpose, include the highest possible degree of natural good in each case of obedience, and the highest possible degree of natural evil in each case of disobedience.”

(a) Legal sanctions establish or ratify the authority of the moral governor, by manifesting his feelings toward obedience and disobedience, and by thus indirectly proving his benevolence : in this manner *sanctioning* his right to rule.

(b) They consist, exclusively, in natural good promised to obedience, and in natural evil threatened to disobedience. Nothing but these can *sanction* his authority. The evidence of knowledge and power cannot do it ; there must be evidence of benevolence, also. The evidence of benevolence, in giving the best rule of action, and in a kind and blameless deportment in other relations, cannot do it ; for all this may be consistent with the supposition that he does not feel the *highest* approbation of obedience and the *highest* disapprobation of disobedience. These feelings, from the nature of

the case, can only be decisively exhibited through the medium of natural good and evil in the form of reward and punishment.

(c) Legal sanctions, as now defined, ratify the moral governor's authority as the *decisive* proof of it. By decisive proof is meant, not a slight balance of probability, nor merely sufficient proof, but proof which is weakened by no opposing evidence, and which is the highest the nature of the case admits. No degree of natural good and evil, in the form of reward and punishment, would constitute legal sanctions, if, in other relations, the lawgiver failed to give evidence of perfect benevolence. The very word *sanction* implies the absence of all opposing evidence. It is a *decisive proof*.

(d) Legal sanctions become decisive proof of the moral governor's authority by manifesting his benevolence in the form of *his highest approbation of obedience, and his highest disapprobation of disobedience*.

Natural good and evil do not always possess the same significance. Natural good is sometimes conferred in the form of payment or wages for value received or services rendered. Natural evil is sometimes inflicted simply to reform the offender, in which case it is termed *chastisement, discipline*, and sometimes, in loose language, *punishment*. But when these become *legal sanctions*, their only office is to sustain the authority of the lawgiver. This demands, as we have seen, a manifestation of his highest approbation of obedience, and his highest disapprobation of disobedience. Hence natural good and evil, when employed as legal sanctions, must be used in that *form and degree* which will constitute such a manifestation.

Having thus proved that such a degree of natural good and evil, in the form of legal sanctions, as would manifest the highest approbation of obedience and the highest disapprobation of disobedience, would constitute a decisive proof of the governor's benevolence and authority, the author pauses in his argument to inquire, if it is a thing incredible that such a manifestation should be made. Though we should not advance to the next step in the argument, and

prove that such a manifestation is *necessary* to the proof of God's benevolence; yet have we already removed all presumption against such a manifestation. For no one can affirm that a manifestation which, if used, would be a decisive proof of God's benevolence, will not be used. No one can affirm that what would be a *decisive* proof, may not be a *necessary* proof of God's benevolence. One who leaves the argument from reason at this point, may go to the scriptures convinced, first, that such a manifestation, if made, would not be *inconsistent* with the benevolence of God; secondly, that it would, if made, be a *decisive proof* of his benevolence; and, thirdly, that the failure to make it, might be a decisive proof *against* his benevolence. In the words of our author: "Who knows, who can prove, that the highest blessedness of the moral universe — not to add also the promotion of the perfect misery of all — does not require this manifestation of God through the medium of legal sanctions, that all may see and know what a friend he is to right moral action, and what an enemy he is to wrong moral action. Who knows, who can prove, that the Book which declares that an infinitely perfect Being employs such an influence for such a purpose, declares a falsehood?"

Having thus shown that legal sanctions are the *decisive* proof of the moral governor's authority, the author now proceeds to argue that they are the *necessary* proof of his authority. That is, they are not only a proof without opposing proof, thus fully establishing his authority, but a proof without which there is no proof of his authority, but proof against it.

(c) "Legal sanctions are the *necessary* proof of the moral governor's authority, as the *necessary* proofs of his benevolence in the form of his highest approbation of obedience and his highest disapprobation of disobedience."

(a²) Legal sanctions are, in *some respect*, or under *some relations*, necessary as the proof of the moral governor's authority. This appears:

(a³) *From the import of the phrase "legal sanctions."*

The *sanction* of a treaty of the United States, is the ratification of the President and Senate. Without this, there is

not only no proof of its validity, but decisive proof of its invalidity. The word, as applied to law, carries with it this generic meaning.

(b³) From the *nature of the law* of a perfect moral government.

(a⁴) Such a law must be, as has been shown, not only an *expression* of proper feelings, on the part of the lawgiver, toward obedience and disobedience, but an expression fully proved to be a *sincere* expression. The proof, moreover, must be all the nature of the case admits. A moral governor may furnish proof of these feelings in three ways: by giving the best law; by annexing sanctions to it; and by executing those sanctions. If he fail, in any one of these ways, to manifest these feelings, then an essential part of the proof of his authority is wanting, and the omission to give an essential part of the proof of his authority, proves that he is not benevolent. The subject has a right to proof in *acts* as well as in *words*.

(b⁴) Such a law must be, also, an *authoritative* rule of action. But can a lawgiver claim obedience to his law while it remains uncertain whether he will reward obedience or punish disobedience; or rather while, by omitting to annex or execute sanctions, he gives evidence that he will do neither, and even furnishes reason to fear that he may reverse the treatment of the two classes? Such a law could possess no possible authority.

(c⁴) A law without sanctions is not law, but only *advice*. Advice is a simple declaration of what is best. It implies no feeling or preference, on the part of the adviser, and is even consistent with the preference that the thing advised should not be done. Law is the absolute and unqualified expression of the will of the lawgiver that the thing commanded should be done. Compliance with advice is discretionary; compliance with law must be unquestioning and unhesitating. Rejection of advice violates no right of him who gives it; rejection of law violates a most sacred right, upon which the general happiness depends. Advice involves no good or evil as coming from the giver; law is attended by reward and

punishment. Advice carries no binding influence from the will of the adviser; law binds the will of the subject to the will of the ruler. Law, then, divested of sanctions, loses all which makes it law. It is mere advice.

It is proved, therefore, from the very nature of law, that sanctions, in some form and degree, are necessary to the proof of the moral governor's authority. The same appears:

(c³) From the fact that a law without sanctions is a decisive proof that the lawgiver is unable or unwilling to execute sanctions. No other reasons than these can be conceived for their omission. But if he is unable, then he is incompetent to govern; if unwilling, then he is not benevolent. Sanctions, then, are *necessary* to the proof of his authority. The same appears:

(d³) From the fact that conformity and non-conformity to a law without sanctions, equally disprove and subvert the moral governor's authority. There being no evidence of such authority, conformity must be prompted by some other motive than regard for his authority, and so ignores its existence; while non-conformity is an open declaration that the governor is not entitled to the obedience claimed; and so, being uncounteracted by the infliction of punishment, bears testimony that he has no right to reign. A law without sanctions must stand wholly on its own merits, as estimated by the subject. All personal authority is impossible. The lawgiver is entirely hidden from him.

Legal sanctions, then, are necessary, *in some respect*, and *under some relation*, as the proof of the moral governor's authority.

(b²) "Legal sanctions are necessary to establish the authority of the moral governor, as the necessary manifestations or proof of *his benevolence*."

It is admitted that other things besides legal sanctions are necessary to this proof: such as a blameless, kind deportment in other relations. But it is claimed that the expression of proper feelings toward right and wrong moral action is likewise necessary. The question then is: Can this expression be made without legal sanctions?

(a³) It cannot be made by mere *professions* of the neces-

sary feelings of benevolence toward right and wrong moral action.

Mere professions of a principle which, if it exist at all, will show itself in action, only serve to awaken suspicion. They are consistent with indifference and even with insincerity. The worst tyrants have professed their regard for the general good. In such cases it is acts, not words, which are demanded.

Now there are three acts possible to a moral governor, through which he can exhibit his feelings toward right and wrong moral action. These are : giving the best law ; annexing the requisite sanctions ; and executing those sanctions. The *first* is necessary to the proof of his benevolence, but cannot, alone, constitute such proof ; for a selfish being might give such a law, and that only for selfish ends. The *second* would be necessary to such proof, and would, with the first, constitute such proof, so long as there is no demand for the execution of the sanctions. But should the lawgiver fail to annex sanctions to his law, he would fail to give the only unambiguous proof, possible in the circumstances, that he has the appropriate feelings of benevolence toward right and wrong moral action. The *third* would be necessary in the case of obedience or disobedience actually existing. In such a case the third must be combined with the first and second, in order to give the proof demanded in the circumstances. These are the acts which benevolence, if it exists at all, will prompt. Without these, mere professions are worse than useless.

(b³) This expression of the necessary feelings of benevolence toward right and wrong moral action, cannot be made in any other supposable way without legal sanctions.

(a⁴) It may be supposed that a greater amount of obedience to the best law might be secured without legal sanctions, than with them, so that these greater results of obedience would prove the benevolence of the moral governor. This derives the proof of the benevolence of the moral governor, and consequently of his authority, solely from the obedience of the subject. Of course obedience, in such a case

is not submission to authority ; for the authority of the governor is not established when the obedience is rendered ; nay, in consequence of the failure to annex sanctions, there exists, at the time the obedience is rendered, actual proof against his authority. The so-called obedience, then, is simply prompted by the nature and tendencies of such obedience as seen by the subject. Now there is a natural possibility that, in such circumstances, there may be a greater amount of obedience without legal sanctions. But the question, like all in moral reasoning, is one of probability. And the probability certainly is, that the greater the motive, the greater will be the amount of right moral action. We have, then, no reason to conclude that there will be a greater amount of right moral action without legal sanctions than with them, but reason to the contrary. But if we concede the correctness of the supposition, even then we have no proof of the benevolence of the lawgiver. For the obedience which results, is not rendered out of regard to him, but solely from the perceived nature and tendencies of the action ; and the happiness which results does not, in any sense, depend upon the will of the governor, else it would be legal reward. The results, then, have no connection with the lawgiver, and therefore prove nothing in regard to him ; while the omission to show the proper feelings, as a moral governor, toward right and wrong moral action, proves that he is not benevolent. In the case supposed, we have no personal authority, and of course no moral government. It is only a moral *system*. The governor would be entitled to no more authority than any other being who should propound the same rule of action.

(b⁴) It may be supposed that by promising a reward to obedience, while he threatens no penalty to disobedience, the moral governor would prove his benevolence and so establish his authority. But this is impossible ; for, all the evidence of benevolence which he gives in rewarding right moral action, is counteracted by the failure to show the appropriate feelings toward wrong moral action. In general it may be said, that if the lawgiver bestows no reward upon

obedience, he fails to express approbation of it, but rather disapprobation; and if he inflicts no punishment for disobedience, he expresses no disapprobation of it, but rather approbation. He punishes obedience by withholding the reward, and rewards disobedience by withholding punishment. His giving the best law without sanctions, is an act which must have been prompted by the selfish principle in some form, such as "caprice, despotic humor, favoritism, a spirit of self-aggrandizement, the love of applause, or of a weak, indulgent tenderness, which sacrifices public good to individual happiness."

Having thus proved (a²) that legal sanctions are necessary in *some* form and under *some* relation, and (b²) that they are necessary as the proofs of his *benevolence*, to establish the moral governor's authority, the author pauses before proceeding to the third point in the argument, to remark:

"We see why the attempts to prove the benevolence of God from the light of nature have been so often, not to say uniformly, unsuccessful." While all sound theists admit that God is administering a perfect moral government over men, this most important relation "has been wholly overlooked in its true and proper bearing on the conclusion." But how is it possible to frame a satisfactory argument for the benevolence of God, while we only examine his acts as the Creator and as the providential Disposer of events, and omit all notice of these acts, as directed by the necessities of his moral government? Suppose the act of a parent punishing a child, or that of a surgeon amputating a limb, were examined without any reference to the moral influence of the one and the physical necessity of the other in causing the happiness of the subject. What conclusion could be arrived at, but that they were dictated by cruelty? What wonder, then, that the argument for God's benevolence, from the light of nature, should be so unsatisfactory; while the fact which alone furnishes the key to his plan of action, is entirely overlooked. If the book of revelation, which is especially designed to reveal the fact that God is administering an economy of grace, assumes the existence of a perfect moral government, of which

such economy is a part, may we not expect that the book of nature will fully make known what the other assumes? Will not the Book which tells us what God is, *by what he says*, correspond with the book which tells us what God is, *by what he does*?

The author now proceeds to the third argument in proof of the necessity of legal sanctions, to the establishment of the moral governor's authority.

(c³) Legal sanctions are necessary for this purpose as proofs of his *highest approbation* of obedience and *highest disapprobation* of disobedience. In other words: only that degree of natural good and evil can constitute legal sanctions which shall manifest these feelings.

(a³) Other modes in which natural good and evil have been supposed to become legal sanctions are insufficient.

(a⁴) Natural good promised as a mere dictate of *individual kindness*, and natural evil inflicted as a mere dictate of *individual unkindness*, cannot constitute legal sanctions. Such a course simply proves the existence of certain feelings on the part of the lawgiver toward an individual, but give no indication of his feelings toward the universe. The love, in the case supposed, may, for aught that appears, be a selfish love; and the hatred, mere malignity. Natural good and evil, thus employed, give no decisive evidence of benevolence; while the failure to give such evidence as the case demands, proves unqualified selfishness.

(b⁴) Natural good and evil, employed simply as *moral discipline*, cannot constitute legal sanctions. It is credible that natural good and evil may be employed before the subject comes under the proper influence of moral government, to prepare the way for better results than could otherwise be secured. It is also credible that the same may be employed under an economy of grace, to reform the transgressor. In loose language, this may be called punishment. But, accurately speaking, it is chastisement. These differ essentially from each other. "Chastisement aims, exclusively, at reformation; legal penalty, not at all. Chastisement is inflicted in love; legal penalty, in wrath. Chastisement, in its design

and tendency, is a blessing to its subject ; legal penalty, an unmitigated curse. Chastisement has a special respect to the individual's benefit ; legal penalty respects the good of the public." It is plain, therefore, that chastisement cannot be the penalty of the law. It would be absurd to threaten a transgressor with a blessing.

(c⁴) Natural good cannot become a legal sanction as the *payment of a debt* to the subject, for something received which is not due. Obedience is due from the subject. If it were not, there is no proof that the payment might not be prompted by some other motive than regard for the general good. Besides, on the supposition, the proof of the lawgiver's authority depends on the obedience of the subject, obedience being demanded before authority is established. Reward can properly be termed a debt only in the sense that the general good requires that obedience be followed by happiness, but not in the sense of payment for a service not due from the subject.

(d⁴) Natural evil cannot become a legal sanction as the *payment of a debt* from the subject to the moral governor. The subject does not owe suffering, but obedience. The one is not an equivalent for the other. Moreover, the endurance of suffering is not the act of the lawgiver, and so can prove nothing in regard to his character. It is the infliction of suffering, alone, which evinces his feelings toward disobedience.

(e⁴) Nor do natural good and evil become legal sanctions as *so much motive* to secure right and prevent wrong moral action. Their influence as motives may be combined with their influence as proofs of the moral governor's authority. But if the former displace the latter, then the subject is acting without any regard for a personal lawgiver, solely from the perceived nature and tendencies of his action. Sanctions act upon the subject by awakening his respect for the ruler whose character prompts him to inflict them. Their influence upon his hopes and fears is only subordinate and incidental.

(f⁴) Nor do they become legal sanctions because it is *abstractly right* to reward and punish, irrespective of the ten-

gency of so doing to produce happiness and to prevent misery. It is often said that the ill desert of sin, and not the good of society, is the ground of punishment. But this is a distinction without a difference; for the ill desert of disobedience results entirely from the injury done to society by impairing the authority of the lawgiver. Otherwise it has no connection with the lawgiver or his authority or the good of society as dependent upon it. Is this affirmed on the ground that transgression is "evil in itself," and deserves punishment "for its own sake?" But what is meant by the phrase "evil in itself?" There are but two things to which these words apply: one is *suffering*; the other, the direct *means* of suffering, as ignorance or infamy. Sin is an evil in itself, because it is the direct means of suffering. To punish sin in a case in which no prevention of suffering would follow, would only increase the very suffering which gives ill-desert to sin. The justice of punishment depends upon the utility of punishment. It is to be vindicated solely on the ground that its infliction, by sustaining the authority of the lawgiver, is, on the whole, promotive of happiness. If the nature of things were so changed that the general happiness would be promoted and the universal misery prevented, by the punishment of innocence, then innocence ought to be punished. Obedience would then have the same relative nature as disobedience, and would differ from it only in name.

(g⁴) Nor do they become legal sanctions as the dictate of *justice* as distinct from benevolence. Justice is only a form of benevolence. It is benevolence upholding the authority of law for the public good. Their claims never clash.

(b³) It is argued that natural good and evil can only become legal sanctions by showing the moral governor's highest approbation of obedience and highest disapprobation of disobedience, from *the nature of legal sanctions*, as already shown. It has been shown that the sanctions of law must be natural good and evil, in the form of reward and punishment. It has been shown that the law can be sanctioned only by proof of the lawgiver's highest approbation of obedi-

ence and highest disapprobation of disobedience. It follows, therefore, that the natural good and evil, employed as sanctions, must furnish such proof.

(c³) It is utterly *insupposable* and *inconceivable* that natural good and evil should become legal sanctions in any other way than by showing the moral governor's highest approbation of obedience and highest disapprobation of disobedience.

(a⁴) Every one knows that natural good and evil, in the form of reward and punishment, are the most significant and appropriate expressions of the lawgiver's feelings toward obedience and disobedience, and that the degree of natural good promised, and of natural evil threatened, measures the degree of his feeling toward obedience and disobedience. Now, as has been shown, the governor is bound to give all the proof of his feeling possible in the case; and any failure to do this disproves his benevolence. It follows, that it is *necessary* that he use the most significant and appropriate expression of his feeling; and that any degree of natural good or evil which falls short of giving such expression, cannot be legal sanctions.

(b⁴) Again: if natural good and evil become legal sanctions in any other way than the above, it must be either by not manifesting *any* degree of the appropriate feelings, or by manifesting a *less* degree than the highest.

(a⁵) It cannot be the former, for he cannot use natural good and evil at all, for any reason, or with any motive, as legal sanctions without showing some degree of approbation of obedience and disapprobation of disobedience. Nor, if he could, would they give any sanction to his authority; for they would give no information as to his character.

(b⁵) It cannot be the latter; for:

(a⁶) Benevolence implies the *highest* approbation of obedience, and the *highest* disapprobation of disobedience; so that the degree of natural good and evil, in the form of reward and punishment, which expresses these feelings, is necessary to the proof of their existence; that is, is necessary to the existence of legal sanctions. If the lawgiver expresses a lower degree of these feelings than the highest, he fails to

express that degree of these feelings which a benevolent being possesses, and expresses only that degree which a selfish being possesses. Nor can this defect be supplied by combining with such a lower form of expression other influences which may go to prove the benevolence of the lawgiver. For such supposable influences are not legal sanctions, which sanctions have been shown to consist only in natural good and evil in the form of reward and punishment. Moreover, the supposed lower form of expression is incapable of being strengthened by any such influences, as proof of the moral governor's authority; because it has no validity, in itself, as such proof; but, on the contrary, furnishes proof against his benevolence. Being an *expression*, it not only furnishes no proof of the existence of any other degree of feeling than that which it expresses, but furnishes proof that no such degree of feeling exists. However strong other evidences may be of the moral governor's benevolence, this defective expression, contained in the sanctions of his law, would be sufficient to neutralize them.

(b⁶) Nor can it be shown that a less degree of natural good and evil than is necessary to express the lawgiver's highest approbation of obedience and highest disapprobation of disobedience can prove his benevolence, and so become legal sanctions, even on the supposition that such less degree would secure a *greater amount* of right moral action, and with it of happiness, than any higher degree; for:

(a⁷) Were this true, the moral governor could furnish no proof of the fact to his subjects, except his own declaration, which is no evidence, so long as his benevolence, and of course his veracity, remain unproved.

(b⁷) The *probability* would be, that the stronger the motive furnished by the sanctions of the law, the greater would be the amount of obedience; so that the evidence *within reach of the subject*, would preponderate against the moral governor's benevolence.

(c⁷) By failing to furnish the proof of his benevolence, which is given by its natural and proper expression in the form of legal sanctions, when he assumes the relation of

moral governor toward a subject, he gives *positive proof* that he is not benevolent.

(c⁶) Nor can it be shown that the supposed less degree of natural good and evil can constitute legal sanctions, even if we admit the *most favorable conceivable results* in the conduct of subjects, under its influence. We may suppose that, under such an influence, but *one instance* of such disobedience occurs, yet there is no proof that, under the stronger influence of the sanctions now advocated, that one instance would not have occurred. Or we may suppose that all are obedient, without a *solitary exception*; yet we have no proof that such obedience will continue another day; nor that, under the influence of the sanctions now advocated, it might not have continued forever.

(d⁶) Moreover, in the case supposed, the moral governor gives no evidence that he would annex the highest sanctions to his law, even if the highest good required it.

In other words : it is impossible to prove the benevolence of the moral governor by any present favorable results of his government, or by any supposed future results. It can only be proved by the fact that he has done all he can to secure the best results. On this basis, let the results be what they may, the proof of his benevolence rests securely. It is given, when it ought to be given, at the time of the promulgation of the law. Then, if ever, must the question of his authority be settled. Should he propose, to his subjects, to test the question of his authority, by making a trial of his law, and watching its results, he puts himself in the position of a petitioner for obedience, and not of a ruler who demands obedience; while, at the same time, he is giving decisive proof against his benevolence, by refusing to express the necessary feelings of benevolence toward right and wrong moral action.

By this reasoning is the proposition (c³) established, that it is utterly *insupposable* and *inconceivable* that natural good and evil should become legal sanctions, in any other way than by showing the moral governor's *highest* approbation of obedience, and *highest* disapprobation of disobedience.

(d³) A fourth argument in support of the same proposi-

tion (c²), is derived from the fact that men regard the supreme law of the State, so far as it is administered by a disinterested patriotism, as expressing, through its sanctions, the highest approbation of obedience and the highest disapprobation of disobedience.

Inasmuch as, in the opinion of Dr. Taylor, the errors of Universalists and infidels, concerning the sanctions of God's government, are to be traced, in part, to certain false assumptions concerning the penalties of civil law, a chapter in the second volume is devoted to a consideration of this topic, a brief notice of which is here inserted. In this essay it is maintained that the supreme law of the state is the law which requires "the elective preference of the highest happiness of the state to every object which can come into competition with it;" that in administering this law, the governor takes cognizance only of overt action as proof of obedience, or disobedience; that the reward of obedience is the protection of the life, liberty, and property of the subject, which is the highest good a civil government can confer; that the punishment of disobedience is death; which, even unattended with torture, is the supreme evil to man; and that this civil government evinces its highest approbation of obedience, and its highest disapprobation of disobedience to the supreme law.

The overt action which constitutes the decisive proof of a violation of the supreme law of the state, is murder or treason. In some extraordinary exigencies, other acts may be considered equally hostile to the very existence of government, and to the public good as depending upon it. All such overt action must, in every wisely-administered government, be made punishable by death. Such law, alone, is the supreme law; such acts, alone, are a violation of that law; such penalties, alone, are legal sanctions.

But there are other acts which are only in a limited degree injurious; and which, therefore, are not proof that the perpetrator cherishes any principle of hostility to the state. These are simply *mala prohibita*, and comprise all crimes from the highest to the lowest — from burglary to the careless turning to the left instead of the right, on the high-

way, which do not receive the penalty of death. The penalty, in such cases, is not to be regarded as the expression of the lawgiver's feelings toward obedience or disobedience to the supreme law, since there is no proof that that law has been violated; but only as so much motive to induce the subject to conform to certain minor regulations, which are not the supreme law. Hence such penalties are not legal sanctions; and any reasoning from them to the sanctions of God's government, will be fallacious.

The principle then is, that only such overt acts as, to human intelligence, are decisive proof of hostility to the state, are, properly speaking, a violation of law and punishable by legal sanctions. All acts injurious to the public welfare which, to mere human intelligence, are not decisive proof of such hostility, are not a violation of law, in the highest sense of that term, but only of certain rules and regulations; and these, though enforced by sundry pains and penalties, are not punishable by legal sanctions. In the former class are to be found all acts of hostility to human life, and to the existence of the government. In the latter are to be placed all crimes against property, the social relations, the public convenience, etc. The former are *mala in se*, so far as the state is concerned; though, as in the case of David and Uriah, they may, in extraordinary cases, be committed by one who is still loyal to the government of God. The latter, though only *mala prohibita* so far as the state is concerned, may involve the principle of hostility to the divine law of love, and so be absolutely *mala in se*. Hence the importance of discriminating, in our reasonings from the government of imperfect men who can take cognizance only of overt acts, to the government of God who searches the heart. Such discrimination shows that, in every well-administered human government, the principle is recognized, however imperfectly it may be carried into execution, that the violation of the supreme law must be followed by a punishment expressive of the highest disapprobation of the crime, which is the punishment of death.

Thus is the proposition (e) established, that legal sanc-

tions are *necessary* to the proof of the moral governor's benevolence in the form of his highest approbation of obedience and highest disapprobation of disobedience. After remarking that Christianity is not a selfish system of religion, inasmuch as its sanctions are primarily and chiefly designed to present *God* to the mind, in all the attractiveness of his benevolence and the majesty of his authority, and showing that Universalists and infidels cannot, on their system, prove the benevolence of God, the author proceeds to the concluding proposition in the definition of legal sanctions :

(f) "*The legal sanctions of a perfect moral government include the highest natural good possible in each case of obedience, and the highest natural evil possible in each case of disobedience.*"

It will be perceived that the argument upon which this proposition rests, has already been fully considered ; so that we have before us a conclusion reached, rather than a proposition to be demonstrated. It is not, therefore, deemed necessary to prolong this Article with a minute analysis of the remainder of the treatise. It may be well, however, to note that the obedience to be thus rewarded is *continued* obedience. So that the reward ceases when the obedience ceases, and that from the commencement of disobedience the penalty of unmingled and eternal misery is incurred. Subsequent repentance cannot reëstablish the claim to reward, nor can it relieve the transgressor from the penalty, except so far as it diminishes his capacity for suffering. Another point prominently insisted upon by the author is, that, while no one can prove that these highest forms of reward and punishment are not necessary simply as *motives* to maintain allegiance among the subjects of a moral government, yet "that the present argument does not rest upon this basis, but rests solely on the ground that they are necessary for another purpose, that of sanctioning or establishing the *authority* of the moral governor."

The author concludes by answering three objections:
Objection 1. "It is said that on the principle that reward

is to be continued only while obedience continues, it follows, that punishment is to be continued only while disobedience continues; or, in other words, that repentance and reformation are a just ground of forgiveness."

The objection arises from a false view of the essential claim of law. Law demands *uninterrupted* obedience. Such obedience alone sustains the moral governor's authority. The moment obedience ceases, the support ceases. On the other hand, the relation of disobedience to the moral governor's authority is eternal. One act of transgression, if counteracted, would break down his authority forever. But as the basis of reward is the support of authority, when the support ceases, the reward must cease. As the basis of punishment is the destruction of authority, the single act deserves the punishment. Its effects can only be counteracted by a full display of the lawgiver's *highest* disapprobation, which display of course demands the highest punishment. "As the tendency of the act to destroy his authority is eternal, the expression of his highest disapprobation must be eternal." Moreover, the objection proceeds upon the assumption that *equity* demands the pardon of the penitent transgressor. This assumption is groundless; it is not admitted in human governments; it connects ill-desert, not with transgression, but with impenitence; it makes repentance for transgression impossible, since there can be no repentance where there is no ill-desert; it makes forgiveness for transgression impossible, and also for impenitence, since impenitence is impossible where there has been no sin; it destroys the influence of penalty as a motive to obedience, since there is no punishment for transgression, but only for impenitence. But, aside from all these absurdities which are involved in the objection, the principle which settles the whole question is, that sin on its *first* appearance is a fit object of the highest disapprobation. For although, by continuance, it will increase in strength and extend its actual desolations, yet in its very *inception*, is it fully capable, if uncounteracted, of utterly destroying law and authority, and, with these, the universal happiness. It thus becomes worthy of the highest punish-

ment, not on account of its continuance, but from its *intrinsic nature*. It is not the actual results of sin, limited as these are by the agency of the moral governor, but its *tendency* and *capability*, which give its ill-desert.

Objection 2. "Since punishment is only justified on the ground that the public good requires it, it would follow that if *all* rebel, benevolence would forbid their endless punishment, since none would remain to receive the benefit."

This objection, if correct, would certainly not apply to any state of things now existing. Moreover, it might be that in such a case other worlds and races might be created who should receive the benefit of such an example. But if this were not possible, then the objection supposes a case in which not only such sanctions are impossible, but in which moral government, from which they have been proved to be inseparable, is impossible.

Objection 3. "It is said that it is incredible and impossible that benevolence should adopt a moral government with a legal penalty consisting of the highest degree of natural evil."

No being who is not omniscient is competent to make such an assertion as this. For no finite mind can know that such a system of government is not "the best means of the best end, which an infinitely perfect Being can accomplish," nor even that, great as the evil may be to individual sufferers, it may not be absolutely insignificant as compared with the good thereby secured.

If these reasonings concerning the nature of moral government, considered in the abstract, are sound, it is plain that their application to God's moral government, as this is unfolded in nature and revelation, effectually sweeps away one of the strongest objections of infidelity to Christianity, and establishes both the justice and the *benevolence*, both the possibility and the *necessity*, of those sanctions which have been annexed to God's law, in the majestic words: "THESE SHALL GO AWAY INTO EVERLASTING PUNISHMENT; BUT THE RIGHTEOUS INTO LIFE ETERNAL."

NOTES ON THE PRECEDING ARTICLE.

It should be observed that the *personality* demanded by the argument as an attribute of the moral governor need not be vested in an individual. A Triumvirate, a Parliament, or a Democracy may possess it. Public opinion may possess authority as well as an individual.

The note on page 364 has been objected to as implying that Dr. Taylor would make the universal happiness more important than the love of universal happiness. He expressly declines making any comparison between them, on the ground that, being related as means and end, they cannot come into competition as objects of choice, or as subjects of valuation. Vid. p. 372. It is worth while also to notice that the phrase "self-love," which has occasioned much misconception in regard to this theory, did not originate with Dr. Taylor, but was adopted by him from Dugald Stewart, who employs it in his *Essay on the Active and Moral Powers* (Vid. *Chris. Spec.* for Mar. 1830, Article on the Means of Regeneration). Edwards, also, uses the phrase in his *Essay on the Nature of Virtue*, and so does Griffin in his *Park St. Lectures*. Hopkins, also, draws out the distinction fully in his *Essay on the Nature of True Holiness*.²

ARTICLE VII.

NOTICES OF NEW PUBLICATIONS.

THE GOSPEL IN LEVITICUS.¹

WITH some forced constructions, some straining for analogies, some artificial turns of thought and style, this volume combines many good traits. It is both evangelical and popular. It will interest the majority of Christians. It will instruct all classes.

¹ The Gospel in Leviticus; or the Exposition of the Hebrew Ritual. By Joseph A. Seiss, D. D., Author of *Lectures on the Epistle to the Hebrews*, *The Last Times*, etc. Philadelphia: Lindsay and Blakiston. 1860. pp. 403. 12mo.

² For Syllabus of Dr. Taylor's treatise on Moral Government, see page 452.