

THE  
BIBLIOTHECA SACRA,  
NO. XXXIII.  
AND  
AMERICAN BIBLICAL REPOSITORY,  
NO. LXXXV.

JANUARY, 1852.

ARTICLE I.

THE RESURRECTION OF THE BODY.

By Daniel R. Goodwin, Professor in Bowdoin College.

[THE following Article needs some explanation. The Essay in the Democratic Review, to which it refers, appeared in September, 1847. This Article was immediately written in reply and offered for insertion in that Review, in the November following. The Editor declined to publish it, giving as his only reason that such discussions were foreign to the purposes of his Review. The manuscript has therefore lain quietly in our desk till the present time, with no expectation on our part that it would ever see the light. And if the views here controverted were peculiar to one individual, we certainly should not have thought it worth while to trouble the readers of the Bibliotheca Sacra with our reply. But similar views are widely held. Similar objections and statements in regard to the doctrine of the resurrection are often made and industriously urged to the unsettling of the minds and the faith of many; and for ourselves we have not seen them distinctly answered. Besides, as the Democratic Review has since retracted nothing and made no explanation, but as articles similar in tone and character to that here replied to still appear not unfrequently in that and other political Journals; we have at length concluded that if those Journals, while they freely open their columns to one party, do not choose to allow a hearing to both sides, it is no more than simple justice that the public should know it.

This Article is therefore here presented *verbatim et literatim*, as it was sent to the Democratic Review, with the exception of one short  
Vol. IX. No. 33. 1

note which has been added. This fact will explain to our readers the peculiar form in which it appears. We have thought this a better course on the whole than to make any change in it for the purpose of adapting it more perfectly to the usual style of this Theological Review. If we should have leisure, we propose to follow this up with an Essay towards a full historical and dogmatical development of the Christian doctrine of the Resurrection. In that case we shall have an opportunity to make *positive* amends for the *negative* character of the present Article.]

THIS is the title of an Article in the September number of the Democratic Review, from the general doctrines and conclusions of which, the present writer feels bound earnestly and strongly to dissent. As the resurrection of the body has been a part of the creed of the church catholic in all ages, I trust it will not be insisted that a flat denial of that venerable doctrine shall pass in the pages of this Review, unchallenged and unquestioned. The author of the article referred to acknowledges that this doctrine is one of great speculative importance and of universal, practical interest; and, since, at the same time, its discussion does not involve any of the exciting and hackneyed questions of party strife, I trust that the editor will, in this case, so far depart from any rule which he may have laid down to the contrary, as to allow what has already been published in this Review to be controverted in its subsequent pages; provided the discussion be managed with good temper and an honest love of truth.

With the author from whom I beg leave to dissent I have not the honor of the slightest personal acquaintance. I know nothing of his creed or character, of his age or standing, of his social, political or ecclesiastical connections; absolutely nothing but what I learn from the article in question. He will, therefore, not interpret anything which I may say as having an offensive personal application; and I hope he will not consider it discourteous that an entire stranger should, in a spirit of earnestness and candor, call in question his published opinions.

He opens the discussion thus: "In treating this subject, the starting point is to determine two things, viz., what is and what is not; the body either does or does not rise again."

We have meditated upon this statement, and analyzed it in every way we can think of; but must acknowledge ourselves utterly unable to divine what it means. It seems either to require such a vast comprehension of the knowledge of all facts to "start" with, or so to con-

found the "starting point" with the goal, or both; that we cannot flatter ourselves with having got any glimpse of its true sense. And yet, no doubt the author had a distinct and logical meaning, which he has logically expressed; for his very next words are: "to reason at all we must reason on fixed principles." Still, as, with our best efforts we cannot find his "starting point," he will excuse us for not following the course of his argument in his own order. We shall take the liberty of the epic poets, and begin *in mediis rebus*.

We think the statement of our author's general doctrine will be found in the following paragraph:

"If this identical body was raised, how painful, how awful would be the sight! . . . There would be the lame, the blind, those who had lost limbs, who were crippled, the maniac, the savage! This must be if the identical body is raised up; for any different body would not be a resurrection of the body; in *fact*, would be no resurrection at all, but would be a new creation; so that, if the resurrection of the body takes place at all, it *must* be *this identical* body, or else it is no resurrection but a new creation of some other body."

We suppose it is clear from this that the author means, by the "identical body," strictly and precisely *the* body as it exists and is constituted at the moment of death. This must be so, or there can be no motive for the horror expressed at the resuscitated forms of the lame, blind, maimed, crippled and crazed. If we may go back to one day before death to find the "identical body," which is to be raised, how can any theoretical limit be set to the right of retrogression? We understand the author's major proposition, therefore, to be: that *if the resurrection of the body takes place at all, it must be a resurrection of each body precisely as it existed and was constituted at the moment of death*. His minor proposition, as gathered from the general drift of his article, is: that *it is impossible that each body should be raised precisely as it existed and was constituted at the moment of death*. Ergo, *there can be no resurrection of the body*. Such, if we understand it, is his argument reduced to a syllogistic form. For the sake of brevity and convenience of reference we shall beg leave to retain throughout these remarks the designations *major* and *minor proposition*, as we have just applied them.

Now, we utterly protest against and deny the *major proposition*. But, inasmuch as our author has vouchsafed no proof of it except what may be contained in the strong assertions of the paragraph just quoted, we shall defer for the present what we have to say on that

head. He spends his strength in endeavoring to establish his *minor proposition*. If he has failed in this, of course his conclusion fails; and if he has succeeded in this, the *major proposition* yet remains to be tested before his conclusion is established.

Let us see, in the first place, how he succeeds in proving that the resurrection of "this identical body" is an "utter impossibility."

He begins very scientifically and learnedly with proving at large, that, as far as can be ascertained by chemical or any other physical tests, the human body is subject to the same general laws of development, growth, and decay, while it lives; and of dissolution, decomposition, and dispersion, when it dies, as those to which the bodies of the ox and the horse are subject. All this is "what is;" and, of course, it is no news to any body. But what does it prove? Does it prove that therefore it is *impossible* for God to reconstruct and reanimate the human body? Is it therefore to be thought a thing incredible that GOD should raise the dead? We can see no such force of proof in those facts. We are not aware that any body has undertaken to bring positive evidence of a resurrection of the body from chemistry or natural philosophy; and we cannot conceive what disproof there is in the absence of proof derivable from those sciences.

But, (it is insisted,) after the minutest chemical analysis, after the most patient and thorough testing by all known agents and reagents, after the most careful examination, and after ages of experience, we have never found any more signs of a tendency to a resurrection in the body of a dead man than in that of a dead dog. And what then? Therefore there is and can be no resurrection of the human body? Most lame and impotent conclusion! As though we already knew everything pertaining to the powers, properties and possibilities even of material things; as though we were not prying deeper and deeper into the secrets of nature every day; as though there were not evidently dynamics and laws at work in the material world, which elude all our chemical tests and physical reagents; and, *as though we could see distinctly around and above the power of Almighty God*, which, with its higher, and perchance forever inscrutable laws, presides over and controls all the laws and functions of nature. All positive evidence for a resurrection of the body must be sought for in the teachings of Revelation; and that evidence, be it more or less, is not in the slightest degree affected by this chemico-physical argument; it is left just as it was and where it was, entire and intact.

But, says our author, "if these remarks serve to prove this fact,

viz., that the same particles which now form our bodies will [may?] hereafter enter into the formation of others, which none can successfully deny, it at the same time will make self-evident [*make self-evident?*] the fact that the moment a body is resolved into its elementary principles, they at once cease to bear any relationship whatever with the form which they had previously entered into, so that the gases which now constitute any specific body will, when it ceases to exist, and they in consequence become set free, *cease to bear forever afterwards any more relationship to that PARTICULAR body, than if they had NEVER entered into it at all.*"

Now we assert, with all due deference, that those elementary principles do and always must continue to bear a practical, historical relation to that body; that it is and will ever remain a fact in their history that they once entered into the composition of that body; and that this is not a barren fact, but that all their subsequent history is modified and in some degree determined by that fact; so that all the changes and transmigrations through which they afterwards pass, all the combinations into which they afterwards enter, are different from what they probably would have been, had that fact been otherwise. And, moreover, there is nothing in the proposition just quoted, with all its italics and capitals, which can ever "make it self-evident," either that it transcends the power, or that, as a matter of fact, it is not the will, of Almighty God, to reconstruct that dissolved body, restoring those elementary principles to their former positions and relationships. There is nothing in that proposition which renders any positive conclusions in regard to a resurrection of the body, derived from a well-authenticated revelation, incredible or even improbable. Again, it leaves all such positive evidence untouched and unimpaired.

But it is still insisted that "no restoration of bodies could take place without a destruction and complete annihilation [?] of very much that has been brought into existence. The restitution of any specific body whose original elements now form a component part of another body, must necessarily cause, if it took place, a destruction of that body." [And what if it did? Did not the construction of this latter body require the destruction of the former? And is not this process of destruction and construction the mere ordinary course of nature?] "Moreover, is it not a fact, that bodies go out of existence, and become as entirely extinct as though they had never existed at all [?] and therefore a resurrection of this identical body could not possibly be implied or understood; for in order for a resurrection or

restoration to take place, the thing so restored or raised must *necessarily be in existence*. Now, if a body has gone entirely out of existence, it is *impossible* for it to be restored."

The statement that "a body has gone entirely out of existence," we suppose must mean one of two things; either, that, as a body, in respect to its form and constitution, it has ceased to exist; or, that, in respect to its very substance and the material which composed it, it has been annihilated.

The latter sense cannot be that which our author intends, for he elsewhere expressly recognizes "the law of nature that no particle of matter is ever lost;" and yet it is only with this latter sense of the words that there is any self-evidence or convincing power in the proposition "that it is *impossible* for a body which has gone entirely out of existence to be restored."

But if, when the terms are explained in the former sense, that proposition be self-evident, then the trouble of all his elaborate argumentation might have been saved; for, in that sense, it is a mere formal decision of the question in debate, and, if that decision itself is self-evident, all discussion is clearly a waste of time. And yet we are not aware that those who believe in the resurrection of the body have denied that, so far as the point could be ascertained by chemical and physical tests, the human body is, in many cases, resolved into its original elements. To *their* minds, therefore, the proposition that "it is impossible for a body which has been thus dissolved to be restored," cannot be supposed to be "self-evident." But if the proposition be not "self-evident," then the author has furnished no evidence for it whatever. Indeed, it will be seen that, according to his statements, the restoration, reconstruction, reorganization of any body, under any circumstances and on any hypothesis, is a sheer absurdity; for, in order that a body may be restored, reconstructed, reorganized, he expressly makes it necessary that it should already exist, actually constructed and organized!

It is true our author, immediately hereupon, goes into a profound argument to show that, though the body might perchance be restored if it were simply resolved into "dust," yet, inasmuch as it is resolved into oxygen and other "gases," its restoration is impossible and inconceivable. Now we must honestly confess, whatever imbecility of mind, whatever lack of science or of philosophy the confession may betray, we must confess that the assertion of its being any jot or tittle more absurd or inconceivable for God to reconstruct a body from its original gaseous elements than for him to reconstruct it from

its scattered particles of dust, is neither "self-evident" nor in any other way evident to our humble apprehension.

We agree fully with our author that the great difficulty in this discussion is "that men do not define things properly to their own minds. They are content with indistinct pictures, vague imaginings, dreamy and indistinct sensations, instead of fixing and defining things permanently, and giving them a tangible, fixed and definite form and position." We shall therefore endeavor not to be juggled with at this point.

We take for granted that the "elementary principles" into which the body is said to be resolved, are matter, true and proper matter. This they certainly are unless our author, with Leibnitz and Herbart, prosecutes his metaphysical analysis beyond the power of all his chemical tests. At all events, they are either matter or not matter. If they are not matter, then the material particles which have been resolved into them, have, according to our author's own principles, utterly ceased to exist. But this is contrary to his express assumption that no particle of matter is ever annihilated. If, on the other hand, they are true and proper matter, then, like all matter, they are, or consist of, material particles. And the definite, identical, material particles of a cubic inch of oxygen gas are no more annihilated, or absolutely lost and confounded by being mixed with another cubic inch of oxygen gas, than are the definite, identical particles of a cubic inch of "dust" by being mixed with another cubic inch of homogeneous dust.<sup>1</sup> It certainly is assuming more than is "self-evident" to say that omniscience cannot identify them and trace them through their new combinations, and that omnipotence cannot segregate them and restore them to their former connections. We do not here contend that this could be done by any human power or merely natural process, but we insist that the thing is not inconceivable and therefore is not absolutely impossible.

---

<sup>1</sup> Our author evidently assumes oxygen in the state of a *gas* to be an "elementary principle." Of course he does not recognize the materiality of caloric. In this we are willing to follow him. It will be perceived that we have instanced a mixture of dust with *homogeneous* dust. As the "gas" was assumed to be mixed with a homogeneous gas, it was but fair that the "dust" should be placed in similar circumstances. But if any one prefers the hypothesis of a mixture of *heterogeneous* dust, he is welcome to all the advantage to be gained thereby; which will be this, that, as he has no right to assume the "dust" to be so coarse as to be separated by mechanical means, in order to its separation by chemical agents, one more step will ordinarily be necessary than in the case of the gas, for the "dust" must itself be reduced to a fluid state before it can be brought under the influence of the attraction of affinity.

The case just stated involves precisely the pinching point in the argument on the other side, if that argument pinches anywhere. For as to saying, as our author seems to do, that one simple substance loses its identity by entering into *composition* with another simple substance; that is plainly false, even on natural principles. Let us try a few instances.

If a certain number of grains of pure copper be combined with their definite proportion of oxygen, and this oxyde of copper be dissolved in nitric acid, we shall have the nitrate of copper, which may exist in a perfectly liquid form. But by decomposing this nitrate of copper the pure copper may be reproduced — the very same copper and no other — the “identical” copper, with which the process was begun. Now copper is as truly an “elementary principle” as oxygen gas.

But gases may be recovered from their combinations as well as metals. Let a quantity of oxygen and hydrogen be combined in due proportion for forming water. Let the water be decomposed by means of a quantity of potassium, and the hydrogen will be liberated, the very same hydrogen as at first; and, the potash being decomposed, the original, identical oxygen may also be recovered. If, in these processes, some portion of the original, simple substances should escape from us, it would only show the imperfection of our instruments, but would not in the slightest degree affect the applicability and force of the argument for our present purposes. We have here a mere business of *degrees*. No *principle* is involved in the recovery of the whole, which is not involved in the recovery of a part. If then, with our limited, practical powers, we can recover a part, surely it cannot be said to exceed the bounds of omnipotence to recover the whole; it cannot therefore be absolutely impossible.

So much for cases of *inorganic* combinations. Now take cases which involve the *organic* influence of the principle of life.

Let a quantity of calcium and a quantity of phosphorus be respectively combined with a due proportion of oxygen; let the lime be combined with the phosphoric acid; and let this phosphate be mixed with a soil (or, certain ingredients of a soil) which did not before contain a particle of calcium or phosphorus. Let some grains of wheat be planted in that soil; and, by an analysis of the product, we may obtain, in its original, simple form, a portion at least of the identical calcium and phosphorus with which we began, mingled perhaps in this case, with a small proportion of each of those substances derived from the seed.

One case more: A. takes certain crystals of arsenic, and, having pulverized them and combined the metal with the proper proportion of oxygen, mingles the poison with B.'s food, who swallows it, and dies. Some time after, by an analysis of the contents and *coatings* of B.'s stomach, the arsenic is recovered and recrystallized. It either is or is not the "identical" arsenic which A. gave. If it can be proved, to the satisfaction of a jury, that it is not the same, then the evidence that A. is guilty of the alleged act of poisoning B. is not at all increased by the detection of this arsenic in B.'s stomach, for it is not the arsenic which A. is alleged to have administered, but some other.

If it be said here that the arsenic, as a mass, is indeed the same, but that the individual crystals are not "identical" with those originally pulverized; we answer that thus the specific point for which we are now contending is yielded, viz., that the alleged impossibility of the resurrection of the "identical" body cannot arise in any degree from the fact that the simple elements, into which it has been resolved, enter into *new combinations*. The whole difficulty is carried back to the point to which we have already referred it, viz., the fact that these simple elements become mingled with other quantities of *homogeneous* elements. We admit, in the case supposed, a very high degree of improbability that the reproduced crystals of arsenic are, each of them, as a matter of fact, identical with some one of the original crystals. But can any one positively prove that, even as a matter of fact, they certainly are not identical; still more, can he prove that it is absolutely impossible and self-contradictory that they should be? As to the supposition of mechanical marks or defects, they could not indeed be reproduced by crystallization; but, the identity being in other respects restored, they could easily be reproduced by mechanical means.

We plant ourselves at one of those original crystals. It consists of certain individual and identical, though homogeneous, particles, arranged according to a certain law in certain definite, relative positions. It is dissolved; and its particles are mingled with other homogeneous particles. Now the question is, can it be rationally conceived that those original particles should be segregated from their present mixture, and restored each and all to their original relative positions, and the whole to its original form? We freely admit that such a result cannot be *secured* by any power of man or known law of nature; but we fearlessly assert that the accomplishment of such a result cannot be proved to transcend the power of Almighty God,

who can identify every particle of matter which he has created, and control its movements according to the counsels of his own will. We not only assert that such a result can be conceived to be accomplished by the exercise of *miraculous power*, but we assert that its actual accomplishment would not violate any known, positive laws of nature, but would be in perfect accordance with them all; and indeed is one of the possible contingencies under those laws. Therefore it is not absolutely impossible.<sup>1</sup>

If now it be insisted that, after all, the crystal so reproduced, i. e.,

---

<sup>1</sup> The most scientific men will confess that there may be exceptions to the recognized laws of nature, or, perhaps we should rather say, higher laws harmonizing both the rule and the exception, laws which may transcend the scope of their loftiest generalizations. A king of Ava is said to have heard patiently all that the Christian missionaries had to tell him about heaven and hell, and the mysteries and doctrines of Christianity; but when they chanced to say that water, in their country, was sometimes found in a solid state, he declared *that* to be so palpable a lie, that he would not believe anything else they had told him. Now he will hardly be thought to have shown himself much of a *savant* or a philosopher; yet he reasoned from what were to him familiar and invariable laws of nature. Had he been told that the solid water, though much colder than the liquid, would float upon it from comparative lightness, he might have denied the possibility of such a phenomenon, even though he had known much more of nature's laws than he did; for, that bodies are expanded with heat is one of the best established laws in the material world. But how would his incredulity have been excited almost to madness, had he been told that water, which he knew to be one of the best means of extinguishing fire, is composed of two ingredients, one of which is among the most inflammable of substances, and the other a substance without which no flame whatever can exist!

Scientific men will also admit that, (assuming the so-called imponderable agents *not* to be material substances,) a body may present a great variety of forms, without either losing its substantial identity or even suffering decomposition. Water will serve yet again as a convenient and striking illustration. It is the massive ice that renders rivers, lakes and seas impenetrable to the lightest and the bulkiest ships; it is the expansive steam which propels the hastening vessel across the vast ocean, bringing into proximity regions the most widely separated. We seek it from the spring to quench our thirst; we inhale it with the atmosphere to sustain our lives. Blown into an attenuated bubble, it is black; dashed headlong in the foaming cataract, or gently descending in wintry flakes, it is white. Falling in drops, it exhibits all the colors of the prism in the rays of the sun; floating in clouds and vapors, it adorns with unnumbered hues and untold beauty the evening and the morning sky. It may be so heavy that the power of myriads of horses could not raise some of its masses from the earth; it may be so light, so much lighter than air, that the power of myriads of horses could not prevent its ascending towards heaven. It may be pellucid in the purling brook; or it may be frozen into opaque, compact masses, or into little, solid, lustrous, acicular crystals. Thus *real identity amid apparent diversity* is one of the recognized laws of nature.

with all its original particles in their original relations, is not "identical" with the original crystal; then the word "identical" must be used in a sort of hyper-metaphysical sense, in which it is not applicable to material, visible things at all. For, according to such a view, supposing an ultimate particle of water to consist of a particle of oxygen united to a particle of hydrogen, (and the contrary cannot be proved,) it would follow that, if this particle of water be decomposed into the two gaseous particles, the reunion of these same gaseous particles would not reproduce the "identical," original particle of water, but a different one. And *à fortiori* it would follow that an ounce of water being decomposed and the same elements reunited, or being converted into steam and that steam condensed, or even being poured out of one vessel into another, the water which would result and remain would not be "identical with" the original water, but somewhat different. Hence it would follow that, as all visible material things are in a constant flux, the idea of identity would be absolutely inapplicable to anything in the physical universe, except, perhaps, to the elementary and unchangeable, constituent particles. Nay more, all such words as reproduction, reorganization, restoration involve a logical absurdity; and not only so, but the very terms "identical with" are nonsensical, for, inasmuch as in every proposition, which conveys any meaning, the predicate must be conceived in some respect diverse from the subject, to assert that the one is "identical with" the other is a downright and palpable self-contradiction!

But our author cannot have used the terms in any such super-refined sense, for then his whole argument should have assumed a purely metaphysical character, and all his elaborate, physical reasonings and illustrations are a perfect *hors d'oeuvre*. And moreover he will have uttered unadulterated nonsense in asserting that the reorganization of this "identical" body from its gaseous elements is any more manifestly impossible than would be its reorganization from scattered particles of elementary "dust."

Here we are met with the exhortation: "Let those who would answer by the power of God reflect but a moment and they must see that this very power would forbid such a state of things, for it can never act in *contradiction* to itself." We simply answer that, in reconstructing the body from the elementary principles into which it may have been resolved, omnipotence will not be acting in *contradiction* to itself. Such a work is no more inconceivable in itself than the ordinary processes of growth, dissolution, renovation, which, with every changing year, we see all around us. Or, if the mere fact of

its being *diverse* in some respects from the known and actual course of nature and physical laws, be the point objected to as contradictory; then, we reply that, on that ground, it is no more contradictory than any miraculous interposition whatever; than *the resurrection of Christ, or of Lazarus*, for example; or than *the act of creation itself*, than which no act can be conceived more utterly diverse from and even contrary to the whole system of natural laws as learned from the inductions of empirical philosophy. We wish distinctly to know whether or not our author here intends to assert the absolute impossibility of all miracles and of an act of creation among the rest. If he does not, we send back his argument to be amended; if he do, we have no answer at present to offer, as it would require a greater sweep of discussion than we can now undertake.

But, says our author: "In reply to the question, Does the body rise again? I answer, no! It is impossible, wholly and utterly impossible, and incompatible with all that we see and know of the works of God." Here is a sufficiently positive assertion; if that can settle the question. But a reason for the assertion follows; and what is it? "It is impossible on the ground that it is contrary to the wisdom that God ever displays." Of course that is irrefragable proof. A man thinks that it would not be wise in God to raise the dead, therefore it is *impossible* he should do it; even though he may himself have assured us by a special revelation that he shall! So much for the impossibility. Now for the incompatibility. "It is incompatible, because, if it took place, it must necessarily produce a state of things wholly inconsistent with the character of the infinite, and at variance with all the laws by which he governs the world." That is to say, "It is incompatible with all that we see and know of the works of God" *because* its results would be "wholly at variance with all the laws by which God governs the world; [a very perfect circle, surely;] *because*, also, those results would be "inconsistent with the character of the infinite!" This is the way of determining the unknown by means of the known! This is what is called "defining things permanently and giving them a tangible, fixed and definite form and position!" But let us not wrong the argument which we would refute. It may be that those general propositions are intended to find their real support, not in their own "self-evidence" or in any assumed knowledge of the "character of the infinite," but in the evidence which results from the subsequent sentence. That sentence is as follows:

"According to computation on the subject, there has already ex-

isted upon the earth a sufficient number of inhabitants to constitute a bulk of matter approximating in amount to the whole contents of this globe, which amount will increase as time rolls on, until it may exceed it by ten thousand fold."

Here we have no longer any lofty speculations about the "character of the infinite;" no more metaphysical refinements about "elementary principles" or absolute "identity;" no more "indistinct pictures, vague imaginings, dreamy and indistinct sensations;" we have a "tangible, definite," intelligible proposition. Here is a question of facts and numbers. Now facts are stubborn things, and numbers will not lie. In this case, therefore, we may be pretty sure of "what is and what is not." We propose to subject our author's statement to a patient and rigorous examination.

We take the following six points as our data:

1. Let the mean diameter of the earth be 8000 miles.
2. Let the specific gravity of the earth's mass be five times that of water.
3. Let a pint of water weigh one pound; from which, there being 231 cubic inches in a wine gallon, it will follow that one cubic foot of water will weigh 60 pounds nearly.
4. Let the average weight of each person at death be 100 pounds.
5. Let the average duration of human life be 80 years.
6. Let the average, constant population of the globe be 1000 millions; consequently the whole number of mankind in 6000 years will be 200,000 millions.

Before proceeding to our "computation" from these data, let it be observed that if, for the sake of round numbers, we have in some cases assumed a fraction in our favor, we have far more than counterbalanced it by what we have granted in other cases. For, the greatest population of the globe is rarely set at so high an estimate as we have allowed, and we have assumed it to have been just as great immediately after the creation and the flood—events which are commonly recognized among Christians—as at any other time. And, since it is estimated that one half of mankind die in infancy, and since the rest die at various ages and ordinarily after some degree of emaciation, 75 pounds would probably be nearer than 100 pounds to the average weight of each individual at the moment of death.

Now, if the mean diameter of the earth be 8000 miles, its surface will be equal to more than 5,000,000,000,000,000 square feet; and its cubical contents will be equal to more than 170,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000 cubic feet of *water*; which is more than

10,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000 pounds; which is equal to 100,000,000,000,000,000,000,000 of human bodies; or to 500,000,000,000,000 times the mass of all the human bodies which will have existed on the earth at the end of 6000 years from Adam.

Thus, in the sense in which it is true that one is an "approximation" to five hundred thousand millions, in the same sense does it appear by "computation" that "there has already existed upon the earth a sufficient number of inhabitants to constitute a bulk of matter approximating in amount to the whole contents of this globe." The imagination is staggered in the effort to conceive the *nearness* of such an "approximation."

It may put the subject in a clearer light to say, that one half of a cubic mile of the earth's mass contains a greater quantity of matter than all the bodies of all the generations of mankind (195) which have actually existed on earth since the creation of Adam. Or, to illustrate the subject in still another form; there are 7000 grains in a pound avoirdupois; consequently in one body weighing 100 pounds there are 700,000 grains. Now if we take one such body and divide it into grains; and then take one of those grains and divide it into as many parts as there were grains in the whole body; the ratio of one of these last infinitesimal portions to the mass of that one human body, is nearly the same as the ratio of the entire mass of the bodies of all mankind hitherto to the contents of this globe; and this is what is called an "approximation!"

But our author anticipates that, "as time rolls on," that approximate quantity will go on increasing until it shall exceed that with which it is compared "by ten thousand fold." By our computation it appears that, before such a result shall have taken place, more than thirty millions of millions of millions of years will have rolled away. The German astronomer who has computed that, in some twenty millions of years, our sun will have completed one revolution around the newly discovered centre of our stellar system, is generally thought to have stretched the imagination far enough into the abysses of futurity. But what is *that* to anticipating a time when more than a million of millions of those inconceivable cycles shall have been completed? We may safely assume that none who believe in the resurrection of the body *take for granted* that it will be deferred so long. Will those who disbelieve undertake to *prove* such a delay?

But says our author a little further on: "If a resurrection of all who have lived should take place . . . . their numbers would cover the whole surface of the earth in one solid mass to a depth or height of miles in thickness."

If this statement were literally true, we see not what difficulty could arise from it; "For, (says the apostle Paul,) if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God; and the dead in Christ *shall rise first*; then we which are alive and remain shall *be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air*: and so shall we ever be with the Lord." 1 Thessa. 4: 14—17.<sup>1</sup> So that it will not be necessary that the whole multitude should be piled or even stand on the surface of the earth. But even supposing it were necessary, let us see if there would be such a lack of room as our author supposes.

Taking the area of the surface of the earth and the number of all who have lived upon it as before given, it will appear that, allowing 21—2 square feet to each individual, more than 10,000 times the whole number of past and present generations could be accommodated upon the earth's surface. In other words, the whole multitude could stand comfortably side by side, with three square feet each, on one third of the surface of the state of Virginia; and, so far from there being any necessity of piling them in solid mass miles high upon the whole surface of the terraqueous globe, a single shower of rain over the state of Virginia, measuring two inches and three tenths of an inch by the rain gauge, would be equal in mass to all the matter contained in the bodies of the entire multitude.

We are utterly amazed that one who is so fully aware of the importance of "reasoning on fixed principles," and avoiding "vague imaginings and dreamy and indistinct sensations," should have allowed himself in statements so wild and loose. We can hardly trust our senses as we compare those statements with the results of our

<sup>1</sup> The first verse of the above quotation is to our mind one of the most exquisitely touching passages of Scripture; and we almost feel as if we had desecrated it by introducing it in such a connection.

The whole passage, being expressly spoken "by the word of the Lord," may be considered as settling one or two other points. In the first place, that the resurrection, which the Apostle taught, of those who *are dead*, is not a past or present but a future resurrection, (or at least *was* so when he wrote.)—"the dead in Christ *shall rise*." In the second place, that that resurrection does not take place with each individual at the moment of death, but that the dead in Christ generally will be raised together at the great day of the glorious coming of the Lord. These two points cannot reasonably be supposed to be affected by the bold, figurative language in which the coming of the Lord is described.

own calculations. We have been tempted to believe there must be some error in our data, or some mistake or fallacy in our computations; we have carefully reviewed them and can find none. Neither can we conceive of any possible mistake in our interpretation of the statements themselves; unless the author may mean, when he speaks in them of the immense mass of the "inhabitants" of the earth, "of those *who* have lived" in it, and when he elsewhere refers to the "whole billions of millions *who* have lived from *Adam* downwards,"—that, in that mass and number should be included not only the bodies of men but those of all other animals. Yet, on reflection, that cannot be his meaning; for, in that case he would only have set up his own man of straw to knock him down again. Who maintains the doctrine that the bodies of all animals will be raised again? Our author has not shown, nor do we find that he has pretended to show, such an intimate connection between the bodies of men and the bodies of other animals, that God could not raise the former without also raising the latter. Moreover it is clear from the whole current of our author's remarks in and near the statements referred to, and in some instances from the grammatical construction of his sentences, that he had in mind only human bodies. And finally, every reader would understand him to refer exclusively to human bodies, and he must have known he would be so understood; therefore it would be charging him with gross dishonesty to suppose him to have meant otherwise; therefore he did not mean otherwise; and therefore, finally, either he or we have committed a gross blunder. If we have committed the blunder, we shall stand corrected. If he has committed the blunder, then the propositions which these statements were intended to support must be left to stand alone, as well as they can.

Those are all the arguments and facts, so far as we can discover, which our author has brought to establish his *minor proposition*; and we think our readers will agree with us that they fail to accomplish his purpose. Whether it be or be not impossible that this "identical" body should be raised, we submit that he has not proved such an impossibility. And whether it be or be not the doctrine of Scripture that there shall be such a resurrection, it is our firm conviction that its absolute impossibility can never be proved; although much stronger arguments may, perhaps, be adduced for it than any we have been called upon to consider at present.<sup>1</sup> But, finally, be

---

<sup>1</sup> There is one form of objection to the possibility of a resurrection of the "identical" body, which we do not understand our author specifically to urge,

that as it may; the assertion that "if the resurrection of the body takes place at all, it must be a resurrection of this identical body," i. e., of *this body precisely as it existed and was constituted at the moment of death*, (which we have called our author's *major proposition*.) we utterly deny. He has given no proof of it, and we will be as brief as possible in our remarks upon it.

Some of our author's axioms, in this connection, deserve, perhaps, a passing notice. "Things either *are* or *are not*, (says he,) they *must* be or they *must not* be." To the first of these axioms we need make no objection. Profound and startling as it may be, it will serve our

(though it may be involved in his general statements,) but which, to our apprehension, brings the idea of such a resurrection nearer to an apparent self-contradiction than any other form of objection we know of. It is this. The same particles may have constituted a part of several successive human bodies at the moment of their dissolution; therefore it is impossible that each of these bodies should be raised identical with that which was dissolved. There are at least two ways of answering this objection. 1. However likely the alleged fact may be, unless its absolute certainty can be demonstrated, there is room left for the possibility of the contrary. How can we know but that God so watches over the dust of every human body, and so guides it in all its transmigrations that it shall never be found to constitute a part of any other human body when that body dies? Thus the objection is answered by demanding proof of the alleged fact on which it is based. 2. As our bodies are constantly undergoing change while we live without being thereby destroyed, so "the identical body" being raised, it may undergo an instantaneous change to an unlimited extent. It may, therefore, be instantly divested of any particles which may be required for the reconstruction of another body; and this last being reconstructed, any needed particles may be transferred to a third; and so on to any extent. We have only to suppose, therefore, that the bodies of mankind shall be raised successively, in the order of their dissolution; (at intervals however small, infinitely small if you please, so that there shall be a practical simultaneousness;) and, though a certain particle should have been common to every one, having passed through the whole series in six or eight thousand years, yet it may be caused to circulate through the whole number again, as they may be successively raised, in less than a millionth part of the least assignable instant of time; for no limit can be set to the possible rapidity of motion. Thus the objection is answered, admitting the allegation on which it is based.

It may be said that these are violent suppositions. We may admit it, but at the same time we have four things to say with that admission. 1. Neither of those suppositions is, like the creation of matter from nothing, absolutely inconceivable to our minds. 2. If the objection alleged merely a high improbability instead of an absolute impossibility, we should not urge such suppositions in reply to it. 3. Those suppositions are made in answer to the objection taken on its own principles, and entirely *irrespective of what may be the actual doctrine of Scripture* on this question. 4. However violent the suppositions suggested may be, they will answer their present purpose, and it will be seen in the sequel that we shall have no need of them.

turn quite as well as his. But in regard to the latter axiom, we would respectfully suggest that either its English needs amendment or we shall be compelled to adopt in full the Hobbean doctrine of necessity. All things come to pass by necessity, said Hobbes. For example, "It must either rain or not rain to-morrow." Now as one or the other of these is necessary, that which actually comes to pass is of course that which was necessary. So of all other events. Here was a demonstration of the doctrine of necessity in a nut-shell. We trust it needs no refutation of ours. But whatever be its self-evidence or its fallacy, for us it may suffice here to give distinct warning, that, when we deny the proposition that, "if there be any resurrection of the body, it *must* be a resurrection of this identical body;" we do not therefore hold ourselves bound either to prove or to admit that other proposition, that, "if there be any resurrection of the body, it *must not* be a resurrection of this identical body." We merely insist upon it that there is no such necessity at all in the case, and that the question of fact is an open question.

It is obvious to remark that in proportion as our author might urge any metaphysical refinements upon the idea of identity to strengthen the evidence of his *minor proposition*, in the same proportion is the evidence of his *major proposition* enfeebled; so that nothing is thereby gained for his conclusion. And as we would not knowingly or carelessly "assert in one place what we deny in another," we wish distinctly to bear in mind *the conditions of identity* which we have all along supposed our author to assume. A body being dissolved into its elementary particles, we have supposed that if all those particles, without any addition or admixture of others were restored to their precise original positions, combinations and relationships, the "identical," original body would be restored; and not otherwise. We think that, even with these strict conditions of identification, the *minor proposition* has not been proved. If now, in order to strengthen the evidence for the *major proposition* a looser idea of identity is proposed, let it be remembered that the evidence for the *minor proposition* will become still weaker than before. We shall therefore demand that the same strictness of the conditions of identity shall be retained in interpreting the one proposition as were allowed in interpreting the other. When therefore it is asserted that "if the resurrection of the body takes place at all it must be a resurrection of this identical body," we understand the meaning to be, 1st, that the body raised must be identical with the body as it existed and was constituted at the moment of death; and, 2nd, that, in order to be thus

identical, it must consist of the very same particles exclusively and inclusively, arranged in the very same positions, combinations and relationships. And, so understood, we deny the proposition. We deny it, because, in order to a resurrection of the body in a true, proper, scriptural, and (as Guizot says) "human" sense, it is neither necessary, in the first place, that the body raised should be identical with *the precise body which expired the last breath*; nor, in the second place, that it should be *identical with any body whatever* in so strict a sense as that required.

The first point may be settled at once. Here is a man at the age of thirty years, in perfect health and soundness of body and mind. Before he dies, he may lose his arms or his legs, he may become a maniac, blind and deaf; he may die in utter decrepitude. Now, if, at the last day, the body given him should be identical with his present body instead of being identical with that decrepit frame with which he will have died, would there be no resurrection of the body, no resurrection of his own proper body? Would it be a "new-creation" instead of a resurrection, simply *because* the raised body would not be identical with the body precisely as it existed and was constituted at the moment of death? Does a man's body never become *his own* until he dies? Reason and common sense answer, No! And what becomes, then, of all the horror expressed by our author at the imagined reappearance "of the lame, the blind, those who have lost limbs, who were crippled, the maniac, the savage?" Pray, why did not he insist upon the resuscitation of the fevers and ague fits, the cancers, gouts and rheumatisms, and all the mortal diseases and ills the flesh was heir to at the moment of death? In short, why did he not maintain that if the body be raised at all it must be, when raised, *in the very act of dying again*? for, the internal states are as essential to identity as the external features!

We turn to our second point, viz., that in order to a proper resurrection of the body, it is not necessary that the body raised should be identical with any former body *whatever*, in such a sense as that it must consist of precisely the same elementary particles, neither more nor less, arranged in precisely the same positions, combinations and relationships.

Now it is a well known fact, that not only does a great change take place in our bodies between the periods of infancy and old age, but, while we live, they are constantly in a process of change, so that the body which we have at one moment is not perfectly "identical" with that which we had at any preceding moment; and it is evident, from

a sentence which our author cites with approbation from Bishop Butler, that he fully recognizes this fact. But from this fact it follows that no person ever wakes with that "identical" body with which he went to sleep; and consequently it follows further, on our author's principles, that, as often as the body sleeps, it sleeps an eternal sleep, and the body with which a man wakes is always a "new creation"! for the body which wakes is never "identical" with that which was lulled to slumber. We think our author will find few to agree with him in insisting upon such a conclusion. We will suppose, therefore, the body which rises to differ from the body which lived before, *only to the same extent* as the body which wakes differs from the body which slept; would there then be a resurrection of the body in any proper sense? If so, then our proposition is established and our author's overthrown, without further ado. And, besides, a principle is thus gained which reaches much farther than is barely necessary to overthrow that proposition of his; for, if a slight difference is consistent with such a practical and substantial identity as is required for a proper resurrection of the body, will any one tell us precisely the limit of this difference; except, that there must be some organic or real connection, something in common, between the body which is raised and that which lived before? And so much we shall certainly maintain.

Let us amuse ourselves here for a moment in constructing an hypothesis.

The principle of animal life in man is presumed to be distinct from the intelligent and immortal spirit; but, as it is not itself a substance, when abstracted entirely from the body it ceases to be. Now we will suppose, on such premises, that, in the economy of human nature it is so ordered that, when the spirit leaves the body, this vital principle is neither lost and annihilated on the one hand, nor on the other able to keep up the functions of the animal system, but *lies dormant* in connection with so much of the present, natural body as constituted the seminal principle or essential germ of that body, and is to serve as a germ for the future, spiritual body; and this portion may be truly body, material substance, and yet elude all possible chemical tests and sensible observation, and all actual, physical dissolution.<sup>1</sup> On the reunion of the spirit at the appointed hour with this

---

<sup>1</sup> Johannes Müller, one of the greatest physiologists of the age, has given a well-known theory of the "vital principle." As it coincides so perfectly with the hypothesis described above, we venture to add it in this note. It is as follows: "Life is a principle, or imponderable matter, which is in action in the substance

dormant vital principle and its bodily germ, we may suppose an instantaneous development of the spiritual body, in whatever glorious form God shall see fit to assign it. Such a body, so produced, would involve a proper resurrection of the present body. The new body would be a continuation of the old, a proper development from it. The germinal essence is the same, the vital principle is the same, the conscious spirit is the same. The organic connection between the two is as real as that between my present body and the seminal principle from which it was first developed in the womb; as that between the blade of wheat and the bare grain from which it grew.

We throw out the above as a mere casual hypothesis. We do not pretend that it is a statement of ascertained or ascertainable facts. We do not even propose it as a *theory*. We offer it as *one among many possible hypotheses*. Its absolute impossibility, at least in its essential features,<sup>1</sup> we challenge any body to demonstrate; and its bare possibility is of such force as to demolish our author's argument *de fond en comble*. As a *positive doctrine* we do not hold ourselves bound to admit our own hypothesis or any particular parts of it; and if any one should seek to impose it upon us in that form, we should resist the imposition with all our might. We admit it only with the implied assumption that it involves a true and proper *resurrection of the body*; for this is a doctrine which we shall not willingly compromise or suffer to be compromised in any way.

For ourselves we do not pretend to say *how the dead are raised up*; nor do we feel bound to do so; although our author seems to think we are, when he says, "let those who still believe that the body is raised, fix in their own minds and define to themselves clearly if they can, how it is raised." We wonder that the author, when he wrote that, did not remember the reply which the apostle Paul makes to a man whom he represents as urging the same requisition. "But some one will say, how are the dead raised up? and with what body do they come? Thou fool!" We wonder the more at this oversight on the part of our author, because he actually quotes the words which the apostle proceeds to address to the fool, while he forgets to insert the address itself.

---

of the germ, enters into the composition of the matter of this germ, and imparts to organic combinations, properties which cease at death." He denies that there is any more obscurity in the physiological views of this subject than in the philosophical doctrines concerning light, heat, and electricity. — See an able article on "the Principle of Life," in the Whig Review for Oct. 1847.

<sup>1</sup> The part assigned to the "vital principle" may be omitted, if any so prefer.

He seems to us to have committed an oversight of much greater practical importance in his interpretation of the words he quotes: 1 Cor. 15: 36, 37, 38, 42, 43. The Apostle, as it seems to us, would *illustrate* the mysterious connection between the natural body and the spiritual body, and the identity in diversity which characterizes that connection, by pointing to the equally mysterious connection between the bare grain of wheat sown and the plant that grows from it. According to our author's interpretation, he points to the connection in the latter case to illustrate the fact that there is no connection in the former case at all! But if *what is raised* has no connection at all with *what is sown*, why talk about the *sowing* at all? the Apostle could certainly have made a simple statement of the fact, which would have needed no illustration, and which is quite obscured by the illustration he has given. "It is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption;" says the apostle; "it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body." What is sown? the body, not the spirit. What is raised? the body, not the spirit. If the Apostle is to be presumed to have any object in view which needed his illustration, the subject of the two verbs, though only implied in the original, must be logically *identical*; and yet our author adduces the passage in proof that Paul did not believe in a resurrection of the identical body! If the apostle Paul taught anything in regard to a resurrection of the dead, he certainly taught that *our vile body shall be changed*, that it may be fashioned like unto *Christ's glorious body*; that *this corruptible* shall put on incorruption and *this mortal* shall put on immortality. If such expressions do not assert a real connection between the spiritual body and the natural body, we are at a loss to conceive what language could assert it.

A wiser than St. Paul once solemnly declared: "The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live. . . . Marvel not at this: for *the hour is coming* in the which all that are *in their graves shall come forth*; they that have done good unto the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil unto the resurrection of damnation." John 5: 25, 28, 29.

Now if the 28th verse is to be taken in a "spiritual sense," what is to be made of it as contrasted with the 25th, where there is an acknowledged "spiritual sense?" And what metaphorical sense of any kind can any one reasonably attach to the terms of the 28th verse, uttered in such a connection and under such circumstances? We do not ask, what metaphorical sense he may feel compelled to attach to

them in order to save them from expressing what he looks upon as a self-contradiction and an absurdity; but we ask, what metaphorical sense *those who heard them could attach to them, or could be expected to attach to them by him who uttered them?* When Christ said, speaking of himself, "I am the vine," "I am the door;" or, speaking of a loaf of bread, "this is my body;" we suppose that those who heard him could not have been expected to understand him literally, judging from the natural and recognized laws of human language and human thought. But when he says, "all that are in *their graves shall come forth,*" what reason is there for supposing that those who heard him were expected to understand the words in any other than their plain, literal sense; in any other sense than that in which the Christian church has generally understood them?

In the case of Paul, our author admits that he did teach a "physical resurrection," as he chooses to call it, or seemed to teach it. And he gives this singular reason for the Apostle's teaching or seeming to teach what was so grossly inconsistent with what he really meant, viz., that it was out of condescension to the prejudices and scepticism of the gentile world! As though it were not notorious that many of the heathen *philosophers* believed, or half believed, in the immortality of the soul, *without being laughed at* by their neighbors; and that even the *popular* belief implied *some* continuance of existence after death. While no point in Paul's preaching excited more ridicule or incredulity among the philosophizing Greeks than his doctrine of the resurrection, whatever that doctrine may have been. *They* manifestly understood him to mean a resurrection of the body; nor do we see how they could reasonably have been expected to understand him otherwise; since it was his almost uniform custom — as in this 15th chapter of Corinthians and in the passage before cited from Thessalonians — to present the resurrection promised to Christians as inseparably connected with the resurrection of Christ, both as its type and as its indispensable condition. The Greeks may have held that the immortality of the soul was deficient or even destitute of proof, but they were not accustomed to look upon it as absurd or ridiculous. Yet Paul's doctrine of the resurrection seemed as absolutely irrational and impossible to them, as does the resurrection of the body to our author; and probably for similar if not "identical" reasons.

But we find ourselves becoming gradually involved in the Scripture argument, into which it was entirely contrary to our intention to enter at present. Indeed, we should hardly consider it worth while to enter into that argument at all; unless both parties were distinctly

agreed to seek the simple, natural meaning of the Scriptures, interpreting them according to the recognized laws of human language and human thought; with the honest intention of abiding by the result, as authoritative and absolutely decisive.

We wish our position to be distinctly understood. To prove the absolute impossibility of a resurrection of the body, we hold to be impossible. To show its *antecedent* probability or want of probability on mere natural principles, we hold to be, for Christians, irrelevant. The *fact* is to be determined solely by the authority of revelation. And, though, when that fact has been thus ascertained, it may be supported and illustrated by analogies drawn from the physical world, it can never be refuted by any want of antecedent probability drawn from such a quarter. Nothing short of a demonstrated impossibility will suffice for its refutation. Analogy may prove or at least confirm, but it can never disprove, *what rests upon its own direct and decisive evidence*. Analogy has merely a corroborative or apologetic character. It may serve to remove objections; but it cannot stand alone as *positive* evidence, especially when the subjects compared are of a widely different nature. As *negative* evidence it is good for nothing at all, except to show that a certain sort of confirmation is wanting. If nothing is to be received as a doctrine of Scripture, unless it can be shown to be probable by independent evidence drawn from the known laws and principles of nature, then, we see not but *the creation of the world, the incarnation of the Son of God, his glorious resurrection and ascension*, and many other doctrines which have been received by the church in all ages, must be put under the ban as well as the resurrection of the body. If the principle is received, it must be consistently applied. But if all prejudices of antecedent impossibility or improbability are fairly silenced and set aside, so that the mind comes to the interpretation of Scripture in a perfectly unbiassed state, we have no fears at all for the result. *Without* such a state of the premises, we should think it of very little consequence to discuss the Scripture argument for the resurrection of the body; and *with* such a state of the premises, we should not think it of much greater consequence, believing as we do, that no intelligent man, in such a state of mind, would honestly deny that that doctrine is taught in the New Testament. The trouble is, as we understand it, that men settle first in their minds that the thing is impossible or improbable, and then, honestly enough, endeavor to save their Christianity by interpreting the Scriptures accordingly. Yield your argument of impossibility and waive that of antecedent improbability, and you are

welcome to construct your Scripture doctrine as you may see reason. Our course is, therefore, first to refute the charge of impossibility, and, secondly, to hold the question of analogical probability in abeyance, until the *fact* has been determined by the appropriate, positive evidence, that of Scripture. That *fact* being ascertained or admitted, natural analogies will not be wanting to confirm it; although the whole process involved in it may never thereby be rendered perfectly plain and comprehensible.

We confess ourselves to belong to the class of those old-fashioned, and, if you will, old-womanish people, who, in the words of our author, "think it a commendable habit to acknowledge that such and such things are beyond our comprehension; we must leave them in his hands who does all things well." But he would fain shame us out of the supineness of such unmanly modesty; and continues in the following eloquent strain:

"If this had been the real intention of the Almighty, he would never have created man with mind, and endowed him with that high intelligence which is ever seeking to make itself acquainted with not only the material world, but also that world which lies beyond — not only with the visible, but the invisible; a mind whose ardent seekings long to comprehend the universe of God. Now those who are content to remain in ignorance of any great truth, do not discharge the duties they owe to God, themselves, and their fellows. There is a limit to man's power, because he is finite; but then where that limit is, who can tell? Has not his genius discovered and become familiar with things which those who lived before him never dreamed of, or thought wholly impossible? Has he not made the elements subserve his will, and matter subject to his pleasure? Does not the experience of every year teach us, as plainly as if it were written with a fire-beam on the roof of heaven, that man is rapidly advancing to a higher and higher state of being, bringing home to us all the bright and glorious truths, that God has indeed made "man a little lower than the angels, and has crowned him with glory and honor?" And do we not find that each discovery, each grand truth that is unfolded increases our reverence, our love and adoration for the God who made us? Who feels the greatest admiration, and comprehends most his power? the astronomer who sees a world in every star, many surpassing his own by a thousand fold in extent, and all rolling in beauty and order through space; or the simple and uninformed mind, who sees nothing in the stars but small lights to give light by night? The question requires no answer; and the experience of the past

tells us that we shall go forward, that our progress is onward and upward, and the revelation of every truth is a step higher in the order [?] of our existence. The investigation of no subject, however solemn, if done [?] in a proper spirit, but what [?] must be attended with more or less advantage; and to ascertain the attributes of our Maker, and our relationship to him, is our first and highest duty."

Now it may be that we honor science and philosophy as highly as our author himself; yet we must take the liberty to think that the moral and spiritual qualifications and means for a right and religious apprehension of the knowledge of God, are quite as important as any scientific or philosophical attainments. We have no doubt that Moses and Samuel and Peter and John, and many a simple, pious peasant in every age, have felt as great "reverence, love and admiration for the God who made them," as were ever felt by the infidel La Lande or the atheistical La Place,<sup>1</sup> with all their vast astronomical views and scientific acquisitions. We believe that a right apprehension and a heartfelt reception of the doctrine of a *crucified and risen Saviour* will do quite as much towards developing all right affections towards God, as the comprehension of the profoundest scientific analysis contained in the *Mécanique Céleste*.

But we do not profess ourselves to be friends of self-satisfied ignorance. We would gladly know all which can be known, and we fully recognize the duty of diligently improving all the powers and means of knowing, which God has given us, whether in our own reason, in his works, or in his word. But we are at a loss to know what our author means when he seems to charge those who profess to believe in the resurrection of the body and yet acknowledge it to surpass the comprehension of their minds, with being "content to remain in ignorance of a great truth." If the resurrection of the body is "a great truth," they certainly are not content to remain in ignorance of it. If either our author or any body else clearly comprehends all that is involved in that great truth," and can furnish them with any satisfactory explanations so as to render the mode and process of such a resurrection clearly comprehensible to their minds, we presume they will not reject any such assistance. For ourselves, we promise to accept all such helps with profound gratitude.

But, if our author means, in the passage just quoted, that, with such a glorious genius and such vast powers as we possess, what we

---

<sup>1</sup> If the epithets we have applied to these scientific giants do not belong to them, we shall be most happy to know and to acknowledge it. Our argument will not greatly suffer.

cannot comprehend, we have therefore a right to pronounce impossible; then he has confuted himself; for the very facts he alleges forbid such a conclusion. For, if the genius of man has already "discovered the truth of what those who lived before him thought wholly impossible," what right has *our* ignorance or *our* impotence to dictate to our successors? At all events, if *he* has a right to pronounce impossible what he cannot comprehend, he must allow *us* the same right; and we must confess that, though the whole passage which we have transcribed may be very, very fine writing, we cannot comprehend at all what logical connection it has with the proof or disproof of the resurrection of the body; ergo, it is impossible it should have any such connection.

---

## ARTICLE II.

### THE SIN-OFFERING.

Translated from "The Mosaic Offering" of J. H. Kurtz, Second Division, Chapter IV. pp. 155—196, by Rev. David B. Ford, Canton, Mass.

[THE volume from which the following Article is taken, is properly a review of the more extended work of Dr. Baehr: "The Symbology of the Mosaic Cultus." It is much to be lamented that a work of so profound and varied merit, should yet be defective and erroneous in regard to some important points which the evangelical church holds especially dear. It will be seen by the readers of the following pages that Baehr recognizes nothing of a penal or substitutionary character in the Mosaic offerings. In his view, the imposition of hands signified merely the offerer's ownership of the animal and his willingness to give it up to Jehovah in death, and this willingness was yet more strongly expressed by his slaying of the victim. In the offering, the death of the animal was not the essential act, but only incidental to the principal thing—the sprinkling of the blood. The sprinkling of the blood (the principle of life) on the altar symbolizes the giving away of the soul or life of the offerer, and was thus an act emblematical of repentance, faith and self-dedication to God. "As the presentation of the blood of the animal is a giving away of the life of the