

philosophy unites harmoniously with Scripture in asserting the untenableness of the above conclusion, and the fallaciousness of the grounds on which it is sought to be based.

The best analysis, in our view, of the facts of human consciousness, is that, according to which, mental phenomena are arranged into three distinct classes—those namely of intelligence, of feeling and of will. "The intelligence" as an eminent writer expresses it, "creates conceptions, laws, rules of action. Feeling, or sensibility, supplies inducements and impulses. Will creates effort, activity, the emission of voluntary power."—It may be of use to keep this analysis in view, while endeavouring to follow the author in his argument, though the conclusiveness of the argument, it must be observed, is not dependent upon the correctness of that analysis. If any, for example, prefer the theory which identifies *will* with *desire*, instead of that which regards them as essentially distinct, the preference may be retained without injury to a single step of the reasoning.—It is evident, however, that the Lecturer has chosen to proceed upon the classification just noticed, and that the arrangement of his subject has so far been determined by it.

In the first place then, it is shown, that the theory which makes belief a *necessary* result of the view which the mind takes of the evidence presented to it, is defective, inasmuch as it overlooks an important element, which contributes to the origin of belief, and an element to which the idea of responsibility must be attached.—The element more particularly alluded to here, is that which falls chiefly, at least, under the head of "feeling," or the second class of mental phenomena noticed above.

An important distinction is here drawn between assent to evidence which adduces itself to the reason alone, and assent to evidence which addresses itself to the emotional, as well as to the rational element: belief of the former sort is devoid of any moral quality, simply because the moral nature has nothing to do with its origin, nor do the truths to which such assent is given, involve any moral obligation; belief of the latter kind, however, does possess a moral quality, because there can be no *full* belief of this sort without the concurrence of the emotional with the rational element. The following extracts may give some idea of the way in which the author elucidates this point—

"First, we apprehend there could be no conception, even, much less belief in respect of moral and religious subjects, without the presence and movement in the mind of this emotional or moral element. It seems a simple impossibility, that a being without affection—without love or hatred, benevolence or justice, could conceive of such affections and sentiments; or that one without conscience could conceive of the distinction between right and wrong, virtue and vice, or of the feelings of approval and disapproval, always involved in the apprehension of that distinction. It seems impossible, in a word, that a being without emotions could entertain any of the radical ideas which enter necessarily into every conception, as well as belief in moral and religious subjects. As well might a man, born blind, be supposed to conceive of color, or one born deaf, of sound. Indeed, only suppose the conception of love or

hatred, benevolence or justice, approval or disapproval, and the very conception implies either the past or present consciousness of these feelings in the mind. Without this, conception would plainly want its vital element."

"Secondly, we remark, that from the nature of the object before the mind, when contemplating moral and religious subjects, the moral element in the mind cannot possibly be in a state of indifference."

We select the following as a short specimen of the illustration given of this particular.—

"As certainly as the intellect is affected one way or another by the presentation of intellectual truth, so must the moral nature be affected one way or another by the presentation of moral and religious truth. Just as the intellect assents or dissent, so must the moral nature like or dislike, approve or disapprove, embrace or spurn. Constituted as man is, it is impossible that the moral element in his bosom will not be at work, according to its peculiar properties, in dealing with such questions as these—with the question, for instance, which, in a mercantile community like this, may often suggest itself—whether a merchant, pressed by business, may, without violating the sanctity of the Sabbath, work up his accounts or read his business letters on that holy day; or with the question, now agitating the neighbouring Union—whether the Fugitive Slave Law is reconcilable with the principles of immutable justice; or with the question of wider importance and eternal interest—whether the way of justification revealed in the Bible is by faith alone; or with the question which has made such havoc of the peace of the churches—whether the doctrine of election is a doctrine of God. Whatever may have been a man's previous training, the simple presentation of such questions to his mind, will set in motion the moral elements in his bosom, and, consciously or unconsciously, there will be a moral bias inclining to one side or the other. And not only so, but in deciding upon them, not merely the intellect but the moral nature also, will, so to speak, sit in judgment. Nor will it be possible for him to come to a decision on either side, involving full, that is, settled and operative belief, which does not carry with it the assent of the moral nature,—the approval of the heart."

The argument presented under the first general division of the subject must, of course, be regarded as incomplete, unless it be admitted that a vitiated state of feeling or the emotional element is in itself, and apart from all connection with the will, a thing justly blameworthy. The author, accordingly, does not omit to qualify his assent to the axiom, that "nothing is moral or immoral which is not voluntary." "If the principle," he remarks, "be applied to actions alone, we fully concur in it; in this sense it is only a familiar axiom universally recognised and acted upon in the world. But if it be extended so as to include the emotions, or what some writers term the pathological or pathmatic elements of our nature, we hold it to be unsound and untenable."

We cannot help thinking, that the acceptance by Dr. Chalmers, of the above maxim in its unqualified form, adds only another to the many illustrations of the faculty with which one error may lead to another. We would not hesitate to admit the presence of a virtuous element in an inclination toward good, however weak it might be, and however much overborne by a stronger and an imposing inclination to evil, just as we would not hesitate to admit the presence of a vicious element in an inclination toward evil,

however weak it might be, and however much overborne by a stronger and an imposing inclination to good. In neither case, as it seems to us, is the decision of the will necessary to qualify morally the desire; the virtuous quality exists in the one, and the vicious quality in the other, solely on the ground, that the one, so far as it goes, is agreeable to the standard of right, and the other in opposition to it.

Under the second general division of his subject, the author proceeds to demonstrate that the will itself is concerned in the formation of belief on moral and religious subjects, or that our beliefs on such subjects are as really voluntary, as are our overt acts. And this point is handled in a style no less able and satisfactory than that of the preceding one. Our space, however, will scarcely permit us to do more than simply to indicate the particulars insisted on. In the first place, it is observed that "the will is confessedly and necessarily concerned in the examination of the evidence of truth;" and secondly, "that the will invariably and necessarily accompanies, nay, incorporates itself with every act of belief."

We have only room for a very brief specimen of the reasoning under the latter of these heads:

"In moral and religious subjects, full belief—including the assent of the moral nature, as well as of the intellect—must always point to action, and must thus include the decision of the will in reference to such action. In dealing with a mere intellectual truth, as with an historical fact, or a geometrical demonstration, the belief formed may have no reference to action; and the will may thus be conceived to be at rest with regard to it; but in dealing with moral and religious truths, it cannot be so. Such truths not only invariably unfold direct practical obligations, but they necessarily require, for their full apprehension, a reference of the mind to the obligations thus unfolded, and to the idea of action, in harmony with, or opposed to these obligations. Let this aspect of these truths be overlooked, and then the whole truth is plainly not before the mind."

Under the third general division of the lecture, we have another argument advanced, which we look upon as an eminently decisive one, and one which can be all the more easily appreciated by the plainest capacity, from its being independent of all reference to mental analysis.

The author closes his discussion of the subject by briefly showing how the conclusion arrived at may be confirmed alike by the "testimony of conscience, the practical judgment of mankind, and the explicit statements of scripture."

We cannot bring our remarks to a close without again expressing our high and unqualified admiration of this masterly production; its circulation will be an extensive one, if only as great as its merits entitle it to.

THE SYNOD.

We call the attention of members of Synod to the notice on our first page respecting their accommodation. Friends in Kingston express the hope that they will be able to provide for all who may honour them with their presence. It is not the first time that their hospitalities have been generously extended on like occasions.

It is to be hoped that the meeting will be pleasant and profitable—that a spirit of love and mutual forbearance will pervade the assembly—and that the business may be despatched with promptness and decorum.