

Literary.

For the Wesleyan.
Mental Science.
NO. XIII.

THE EXISTENCE OF THE HUMAN MIND.

It is impossible for nature to entertain abstracted and general ideas, such as many in our minds are. Were it capable of reflecting upon what passes within itself, it possibly could find there nothing but material and particular impressions. Abstractions and metaphysical ideas could not be impressed upon it. And how could matter abstract from mere matter? The internal thinking capacity which we possess, and the distinct perceptions which we have of those abstractions, give us all the evidence that the nature of the subject is capable of admitting, that there must be an immaterial and immortal principle in man, distinct from matter, and every particle of it.

From what we know of matter, we are assured, that in and of itself, it is only a lifeless, inert and passive substance. It is only acted upon according to the laws of motion and gravitation. Passiveness seems to be essential to it. But from what we know of ourselves, we are fully assured, that we are conscious of our own existence and volitions. We know, are conscious, that we live; that we have a certain degree of liberty; can move ourselves spontaneously; and, in many instances, take off the effect of gravitation, impress new motives upon our spirits, or give them new directions, only by a thought. To make matter accomplish all this is to change its nature; to change death into life, matter into mind, incapacity of thinking into that which has a capacity for thought, reason and action; to change necessity into liberty, and the identity of one substance, by converting it into another.—But this cannot be possible. All matter, however refined or organized, is but matter still. Nor can any refinement divest it of any one property which is essential to its nature; or add any one essential property to it.

Again: it is inquired, *May not a faculty or quality of thinking be superadded by God to certain systems of matter?* This, we conceive, is the abandonment of materialism, or that thinking is the result of some particular organization and motion of matter, and virtually the reception of another substance, distinct from matter, which has a capacity for thinking. There cannot be a quality of thinking without a thinking being. A mere quality cannot have an abstract existence.—If we suppose a quality of thinking be added to matter, we must admit the pre-existence of matter; for that which is the recipient of a quality must have existed prior to such reception. The quality itself must also have had a previous existence. But *substance and quality* must have existed prior to their union. If a thinking quality existed previously to its being added to matter, and if matter itself existed prior to its receiving this quality; the superaddition of this quality to matter is nothing more than the union of an immaterial principle to a system of matter, we demand no more. This is granting the whole question.

Nor will a mere faculty of thinking constitute the idea of a human soul, because it is endowed with many faculties. It can comprehend, reflect, compare, judge, make deductions, reason, will, put the body in motion, continue the animal functions by presence, and give life. Whatever, therefore, it is that is superadded, it must be something which is endowed with all these other faculties. Can it be possible that this superaddition is only a thinking faculty, and these other faculties are merely faculties of a faculty? Must they not all be rather the faculties of some substance, different from matter, which by the concessions of materialists, has been superadded to it? If we seriously examine ourselves, the soul does not appear to us as a faculty of the body, or a kind of appurtenance to it, but rather as some substance distinct from matter, designedly placed in it, not only to use it as an instrument, or to act by it, but also to govern it, or at least parts of it, according to the dictates of its own reason. The mind, though it acts under great limitation, does, in many instances, govern the body arbitrarily. It

would be monstrous to suppose that this governor is nothing but some fit disposition or accident, superadded, of that matter which is governed. It is not the disposition, or formation of the ship, that governs it; but the man, that other substance, who sits at the helm. It is a system of materials fitly disposed; but the capacity of being governed or used, can never be the governor. So with the human body. It is fitly prepared for use; but there must be something at the helm, distinct from its material nature, that commands it. Without this intellectual commander, the material vessel would run adrift or rather sink.

The inference, therefore, is, that matter does not possess an inherent property for thinking; that thinking is not the result of any particular modification or motion of matter; that it cannot be a superaddition, on the principles of materialists, because that would involve a distinct, immaterial, and immortal, being; that matter cannot think, and cannot be made to think; consequently, that substance in man, which thinks, wills, and acts, was infused into him, by the great Author of life, after he had prepared a material vehicle for its reception.

The existence of the human mind also appears from perception, which is one of its primary attributes. Perception is the attention which the mind gives to impressions made upon it; and, by this faculty it requires sensation and ideas. It is, in some degree, different from consciousness. Perception is the faculty, by which through the medium of the senses, we have the cognizance of objects without us, or distinct and apart from ourselves; whereas consciousness arises from the internal energies or operations of our own minds, of what is within us. The objects of the one are external, and can only be perceived through the organs of sense: the objects of the other are internal, and are known by the attention of our own minds to that which passes within ourselves. Perception is appropriately designated the primary attribute of the soul; and is of the utmost importance to the human mind. Without it we could neither acquire sensations or ideas. Sensations are impressions made upon the mind by objects actually present; and ideas are revived impressions in the absence of objects. For these we are indebted to perception; and the sources of perception are the five senses. Deprive the mind of these inlets to knowledge, and what would be its information? Divest it of sight, hearing, taste, smell, and feeling, and what would it know of external objects? or what would constitute its materials for thought? There could, doubtless, be existence without knowledge; and its ignorance, so far as we can judge, would remain until it was separated from its material prison. But the wise Creator saw, "that the soul to be without knowledge, is not good"; therefore he placed in the body, for its use, what we denominate the organs of sense. Through them it attains sufficient information for its present state of existence, and to prepare it for a future world. It should, however, be borne in mind that the eye does not see. It is only the window, through which the soul looks. The ear does not take cognizance of sounds; it is but the medium through which sounds are conveyed to the mind. And so with the rest of the senses. These very senses, and the uses made of them, as well as the effects produced by them, demonstrate that there is, in man, a substance, which is not matter, which is superior to matter; or any particular organization of matter. By perception, then, we are sensible that there is an inward, living, principle, implanted in us, perfectly distinct from mere matter.

GEORGE JOHNSON.

Point de Bute, October 7, 1851.

Correspondence.

For the Wesleyan.

Micmac Translation.

MR. EDITOR.—At a recent meeting of the Committee of the Micmac Missionary Society, I was requested to publish their decision in reference to the translation or transference of *Baptizo* and *Baptisma* for the information of the public. I have been prevented by other engagements from doing this sooner. By giving a place in your

columns to the following extracts, you will confer a favour on the Committee making this request, through their Secretary.

At a meeting of the Committee held on the 24th ult., after a free and friendly conference, at which the views of all parties were fully expressed.

It was moved by Rev. A. Forrester, seconded by S. L. Shannon, Esq.,

"That in the event of a translation of the Holy Scriptures, or of portions thereof being laid before the Committee for approval, with a view to publication, the Greek words, rendered in the authorized version by *Baptizo* and *Baptisma*, shall be in like manner, simply transferred in the Micmac version."

This resolution being passed by a majority, a paper, of which the following is a copy, was handed in, and read by the Secretary, and ordered to be inserted on the minutes.

"In complying with the above resolution we wish to say that we do it in the way of concession to the majority, not as judging the transfer of the words referred to, to be the most correct translation—a concession, however, which we make most cheerfully, because we judge it infinitely better that the Micmacs should have a translation of the Scriptures, though not in all respects what we might wish it to be, rather than remain, as they now are, without any; and more especially as it is the understanding that Mr. Rand is at full liberty to translate according to his own conviction; and when the translation shall be presented for their approbation, the Committee will make any alteration of the words in question upon their own responsibility, should such alteration be necessary."

E. A. CRAWLEY,
S. F. RAND,
JOHN MILLER,
A. F. SAWERS.

Published by order of the Committee,
P. G. MCGREGOR,
Rec. Secretary.

Halifax, October 16, 1851.

THE WESLEYAN.

Halifax, Saturday Morning, October 18, 1851.

A RIPPLE ON THE STREAM.

The Archbishop of Canterbury has greatly excited the ire of the Puseyite clergy, by his *catholic* statement respecting the "Orders" of Foreign Protestant Ministers.—That our readers may the better understand the subject, we would state, that some time in June last, the Archbishop received a letter from a person signing himself "W. Francis," but whose real name is William Rees Francis Gawthorn, in which he avowed himself a convert from Dissent to the Established Church—but who had really succeeded from the latter to the Romish communion—and complained of the disrespectful manner in which the Bishop of London had spoken of "those excellent foreign clergymen," then visiting England, asking if the Archbishop also considered them as "mere laymen," and intimating, that if they were not recognized as "truly pastors," the writer must withdraw from the Establishment. The Archbishop, not suspecting deception in the case, replied in a note, marked "private," in which, among other things, he stated—"I hardly imagine that there are two bishops on the bench, or one clergyman in fifty throughout our Church, who would deny the validity of the orders of these clergy, solely on account of their wanting the imposition of Episcopal hands." This letter was shown in several quarters by a person named Gawthorn, with the object of inducing clergymen and others to abandon "such an episcopate and such a system," for the fold of Rome. This worthy representative of the immaculate Church subsequently confessed, in a letter to the Archbishop's chaplain, the really mean and gross and unjustifiable deception of which he had been guilty, but, with characteristic moral obliquity, endeavoured to shield himself under the mis-

erable plea of not *intending* evil. "If," said he, "it is thought that the course I pursued in this matter was unjustifiable, or 'doing evil that good may come,' I can only say that I did not think so, nor did others who are better able to judge!" But finding public sentiment utterly condemnatory of his jesuitical policy, Mr. Gawthorn has since presented the humiliating spectacle of publicly confessing that his "act" was "very wrong." We charitably hope he will obtain forgiveness, and learn caution for the future, not to trifle with truth.

Meanwhile, there stands the statement of the Archbishop of Canterbury.—The duplicity of Mr. Gawthorn cannot alter that. The chief ecclesiastic of the English Church admits the validity of presbyterian "orders!" The Puseyite clergy are scandalized—nay, they are indignant—they are furious. He has denied the "*Apostolical Succession*." He must "apologize" and "retract!" A "Protest against such an opinion" is getting up, "for the signatures of both the laity and clergy!" "J. S.," of Margaret's Bay, will rejoice to sign it, and support it with all the weight of his authority. Oh! how he must mourn over the low churchmanship of the Primate of all England! Tears, alas! cannot now wash out the stain. Truth will maintain its supremacy, despite the thunders of Tractarian bigotry. We honour the Archbishop of Canterbury for his *catholic* views.

But he stands not alone. He is sustained by some of the mightiest names which have graced the annals of the English Church. "He must needs be stone-blind," says *Bishop Andrews*, "that sees not Churches standing without it," that is *episcopacy*: "he must be made of iron and hard-hearted that denies them salvation."—"The more exclusive view of the subject," says the *Bishop of London*, in his Lent Sermon, 1842, "which peremptorily shuts out all such Christian communities from the true Church, and treats them as heretical and schismatical, I consider to be more in accordance with the intolerant arrogance which breathes in the decrees of the Council of Trent than with the wise and pious caution which pervaded the Synod of our own Church which framed her Articles of faith." Thus agreeing, in sentiment, with *Dr. J. White*, 1612, who says—"Whosoever the true faith contained in the Scriptures is professed and embraced, there is the whole and full nature of an apostolike church. For the external Succession we care not."

The furious opposition of the Tractarians will be in vain. The Archbishop stands on an immovable rock. Puseyism, with its mother, Romanism, must sooner or later yield to the force of scriptural truth. The present attack of Tractarianism is but a skirmish hastening on the grand battle, and the final victory of the Lord's militant host.

By the courtesy of the author, we have received a copy of a neatly printed pamphlet, entitled, "*The Halifax and Quebec Railway, considered with a view to its Cost, as well as the prospective business of the Road.*" By Wm. Pryor." The issue of this unpretending, but really valuable pamphlet, is timely, and will prove of great advantage to the Members of our Legislature, and to the public generally, by furnishing reliable data to guide them in forming an enlightened judgment on the all-important and engrossing subject of *The Railway*. To be had at MacKinlay's Book Store and at Morton's Drug Store.

The large and increasing circulation of *The Wesleyan* is worthy the attention of ADVERTISERS. We shall be glad to receive their favours.