

CURIOUS ANALOGY.

Archbishop Whately, in his edition of Bacon's *Essays*, with *Annotations*, brings forward a very suggestive piece of natural history, "which," says he, "has often occurred to my mind while meditating on the subject of preparedness for a future state, as presenting a curious analogy." It is in the Annotations on the *Essay "Of Death;"* and may aptly be cited as one of the thousand instances that naturally raise the question, whether the disclosures of the telescope or of the microscope be the more wonderful.

It is well known that the Greek word for a butterfly is *psyche*, which also signifies the soul; and that every butterfly comes from a grub or caterpillar. The technical name for the caterpillar is *larva*, literally *mask*; so used because the caterpillar is a sort of covering or disguise of the future butterfly: for the microscope reveals that a distinct butterfly, only undeveloped, is contained within the body of the caterpillar; and that the latter has a set of organs suitable to its larva-life, quite independent of the embryo butterfly which it encloses. When the insect is to close this first stage of its life, it becomes what is called a pupa, enclosed in a chrysalis or cocoon, from which in due time it issues a perfect butterfly. But this result is sometimes defeated, and in the following manner, as related by the learned Archbishop:

"There is a numerous tribe of insects well known to naturalists, called Ichneumon flies, which in their larva-state are *parasitical*; that is, they inhabit and feed on other larvæ. The ichneumon-fly, being provided with a long sharp sting, which is in fact an *ovipositor* (egg-layer), pierces with this the body of the caterpillar in several places, and deposits her eggs, which are there hatched, and feed as grubs (larvæ) on the inward parts of their victim. A caterpillar which has been thus attacked goes on feeding, and apparently thriving quite as well, during the whole of its larva life, as those that have escaped. For, by a wonderful provision of instinct, the ichneumon-grubs within do not injure any of the organs of the larva, but feed only on the future butterfly enclosed within it. But when the period arrives for the close of the larva-life, the difference appears. You may often observe the common cabbage-caterpillars retiring to undergo their change, into some sheltered spot, such as the wall of a summer-house; and some of them—those that have escaped the parasites—assuming the pupa-state, from which they emerge butterflies. Of the unfortunate caterpillar that has been preyed upon, nothing remains but an empty skin. The hidden butterfly has been secretly consumed.

Now, is there not something analogous to this wonderful phenomenon in the condition of some of our race? May not a man have a kind of secret enemy within his own bosom, destroying his soul,—*psyche*,—though without interfering with his well-being during the present stage of his existence; and whose presence may never be detected till the time arrives when the last great change shall take place?"