

We do not claim that the full Christian idea of God is ever reached save by the aid of revelation, but that there is a Superior Being on whom we are dependent, and to whom we are responsible, is known by mankind, "because God hath showed it unto them."

This belief will stand the tests by which intuitive truths may be verified. It is a *necessary* and *universal* belief. These *criteria* need not be considered separately, for the universality, in the case of this belief, can only be accounted for by the fact that it is *intuitive*, or necessary. History abundantly testifies, that in all ages the belief in a Superior Being, on whom we are dependent and to whom we are responsible, has been characteristic of mankind, and observation establishes the same fact in reference to all nations in the present day. The idea of God is also impressed, so far as we are aware, on all languages. The belief in God is as distinctive of man, as reason, sight or hearing.

It is objected that tribes have been discovered by travellers and missionaries who had no idea of God, and that certain classes, such as the deaf and dumb, have been found, previous to instruction, in the same condition.

We reply (1), That isolated cases of this kind, if fully authenticated, no more prove that a belief in the existence of God is not a necessary and primary conviction of mankind, than isolated cases of idiocy and blindness prove that reason and sight are not characteristics of the race.

We answer (2), That it is by no means certain that the cases alleged are examples of the absence of the idea of God. They have not been sufficiently authenticated and enquired into to warrant us in reasoning from them. The Christian idea of God is so high, as compared with that cherished by degraded savages, that we can easily see how a traveller, with a defective knowledge of the language and a very cursory acquaintance with the people, might fail to discover anything which he could recognise as the idea of God.

It is objected also that there are many professed Atheists, and, therefore, the belief in God cannot be intuitive. But men also deny the reality of their own bodies, and the validity of the dis-