

probably fit him for a higher degree of holiness and happiness than if he had never sinned; so as to make true the paradoxical sentiment of the poet,

“Death gives us more than was in Eden lost.”

Misimproved, this discipline would result in an infinite loss, far greater than if man never passed through it. But this is all the fault of man; while all the benefit of a state of probation is the result of God's infinite wisdom and benevolence.

In the fifth place, this theory relieves us from the absurdity of supposing that God was compelled to alter the plan of creation after man's apostacy.

The common theory does convey an idea not much different from this. It makes the impression that God was disappointed when man sinned, and being thereby thwarted in his original purpose, he did the best he could by changing his plan, just as men do when some unexpected occurrence interferes with their short-sighted contrivances. Now, such an anthropomorphic view of God is inexcusable in the nineteenth century. It was necessary to use such representations in the early ages of the world, when pure spiritual ideas were unknown; and hence the Bible describes God as repenting and grieved that he had made man. But with the light of the New Testament and of modern science, we ought to be able to enucleate the true spiritual idea from such descriptions. The theory under consideration does not reduce God to any after-thought expedients, but makes provision for every occurrence in his original plan; and, of course, shows that every event takes place as he would have it, when viewed in its relations to the great system of the universe.

In the sixth place, this theory sheds some light upon the important question, why God permitted the introduction of death into the world.

It is difficult for some persons to conceive why God, when he foresaw Adam's apostacy, did not change his plan of creation, and exclude so terrible an evil as death. But according to this theory, he permitted it, because it was a necessary part of a great system of restoration, by which the human race might, if not recreant to their true interests, be restored to more than their primeval blessedness. It was not introduced as a mere punishment, but as a necessary means of raising a