

# LECTURE XXIV.

## ANGELS.

### SYLLABUS.

1. Prove the existence and personality of Angels; and show the probable time of their creation.  
Turretin, Loc. vii, Qu. 2, 3, 5, 6, 7. Calvin's Inst., bk. i, ch. 14. Dick, Lect. 38. Knapp, § 58, 59.
2. What is revealed of their numbers, nature, powers and ranks?  
Turretin, as above. Dick and Calvin, as above. Knapp, as above, and § 61.
3. In what moral state were they created, and under what covenant were they placed? How did this probation result?  
Turretin, Loc. vii, Qu. 4, Loc. ix, Qu. 5, Loc. iv, Qu. 8, § 1-8. Dick, Lect. 39. Calvin, as above.
4. What are the offices of the good angels? Have the saints individual guardian angels?  
Turretin, Loc. vii, Qu. 8. Dick, Lect. 38. Calvin, as above, Knapp, § 60.
5. Prove the personality and headship of Satan, and the personal existence of his angels.  
Calvin as above. Dick as above. Knapp, § 62, 63.
6. What do the Scriptures teach as to the powers of evil angels over natural elements and animal bodies; over the minds and hearts of men: in demoniacal possessions of ancient and modern times; in witchcraft and magic, and of the grade of guilt of wizards, &c.?  
Turretin, Loc. vii, Qu. 5, Loc. ix, Qu. 5, Loc. iv, Qu. 8, § 18. Calvin's Inst., bk. i, ch. 14, § 13-20. Ridgeley, Qu. 19. Knapp, § 64 to 66. Commentaries.
7. What personal Christian duties result from this exposure to the assaults of evil angels?

**A**gainst ancient Sadducees, who taught neither resurrection, angel, nor spirit, (Acts xxiii: 8) and made the angels only good thoughts and motions visiting human breasts; and our modern Sadducees, among Rationalists, Socinians and Universalists, who teach that they are impersonations of divine energies, or of good and bad principles, or of diseases and natural influences; we prove the real, personal existence of angels thus: The Scriptures speak of them as having all the acts and properties, which can characterize real persons. They were created, by God, through the agency of the Son. Col. i: 16; Gen. ii: 1; Exod. xx: 11. Have a nature, for Christ did not assume it, Heb. ii: 16. Are holy or unholy, Rev. xiv: 10. Love and rejoice, Luke xv: 10. Desire, 1 Pet. i: 12. Contend, Rev. xii: 7. Worship, Heb. i: 6. Go and come, Gen. xix: 1; Luke ix: 26. Talk, Zech. i: 9; Luke i: 13. Have knowledge and wisdom, (finite) 2 Sam. xiv: 20; Matt. xxiv: 36. Minister in various acts, Matt. xiii: 29, 49; Luke xvi: 22; Acts v: 19. Dwell with saints, who resemble them, in heaven, Matt. xxii: 30, &c. If all this language was not intended to assure us of their personal existence, then there is no dependence to be placed on the word of God, or the laws of its interpretation.

The name angel (messenger) is indeed applied to ordinary messengers, Job i: 14; Luke vii: 24; to prophets, Is. xlii: 19; Mal. iii: 1; to priests, Mal. ii: 7; to ministers of the Church, Rev. i: 20, and to the Messiah, Mal. iii: 1; Is. lxiii: 9, &c., &c. But the other sense of personal and spiritual existences, is none the less perspicuous. They are called angels generally, because they fulfill missions for God.

The invisible and spiritual nature of these beings does not make their existence less credible, to any, except atheists and materialists. True, we have no sensible experience of their existence. Neither have we, directly, of our own souls, nor of God. If the existence of pure, finite spirits is impossible, then man cannot be immortal; but the death of the body is the death of the being. Indeed, analogy would rather lead us to infer the existence of angels, from the almost numberless gradations of beings below man. Is all the vast gap between him and God a blank?

To fix the date of the creation of angels is more difficult. The old opinion of the orthodox Reformers was, that their creation was a part of the first day's work. (a.) Because they, being inhabitants, or hosts (see Ps. ciii: 21; cxlviii: 2) of heaven, were created when the heavens were. But see Gen. i: 1; ii: 1; Exod. xx: 11. (b.) Because Scripture seems to speak of all the past eternity "before the foundation of the world" as an unbroken infinity, in which nothing existed except the uncreated; so that to speak of a being as existing before that, is in their language, to represent him as uncreated. See Prov. viii: 22; Ps. xc: 2; Jno. i: 1. Now I concede that the including of the angels with the heavens, under the term hosts of them, is correct. But first, the angels were certainly already in existence when this earth was begun. See Job xxxviii: 7. Second: the "beginning" in which God made the heavens and the earth, Gen. i: 1, is by no means necessarily the first of the six creative days. Nor does Gen. ii: 1, ("Thus were finished," is an unnecessarily strong rendering of **וַיִּבְרָא**) prove it. Hence, third, it may be granted that the beginning of the creation of God's created universe may mark the dividing point between unsuccessive eternity, and successive time, and between the existence of the uncreated alone, and of the creature; and yet it does not follow that this point was the first of the Mosaic days. Hence, it is best to say, with Calvin, that the age of the angels is unrevealed, except that they are older than the world and man.

The angels are exceedingly numerous. Gen. xxxii: 2; Dan. vii: 10; Luke ii: 13; viii: 30; Matt. xxvi: 53; Heb. xii: 22. Their nature is undoubtedly spiritual, belonging generally to that class of substances to which man's

2. Qualities of the Angels; Incorporeal? Whence the forms of their apparitions?

rational soul belongs, They are called *Πνεύματα*. Heb. i: 13, 14, 7; Luke xx: 36; xxiv: 39; Col. i: 16. This also follows from what we learn of their traits, as intelligent and voluntary beings, as invisible, except when they assume bodies temporarily, as inexpressibly quick in motion; and as penetrable, so that they occupy the same space with matter, without displacing or being displaced by it. Several supposed objections to their mere spirituality have been mooted. One is, that they have, as we shall see, so much physical power. The answer is, that the ultimate source of all force is in spirits; our limbs only have it, as moved by our spirit's volitions. Another is, that if pure spirits, they would be ubiquitous, because to suppose any substance possessed of locality must imply that it is defined by extension and local limits. But extension cannot be an attribute of spirit. I reply, that it must be possible for a spirit to have locality "definitely," though not "circumscriptively," because our consciousness assures us that our spirits are within the superficies of our body, in some true sense in which they are not elsewhere; yet it is equally impossible for us to attribute dimension, either to our spirits or their thoughts. And just as really as our spirits pass through space, when our bodies move, so really angels change their locality, though far more swiftly, by an actual motion, through extension; though not implying extension in the thing moved. Again, it is objected: angels are spoken of as having wings, figure, and often, human shape, in which they were sometimes, not merely visible, but tangible, and performed the characteristic material acts of eating and drinking. See Gen. xviii: 2, 5, 8; xix: 10, 16. On this it may be remarked that Scripture expressly assigns wings to no orders but cherubim and seraphim. We see Dan. ix: 21, and Rev. xiv: 6, speaking of angels, not cherubim and seraphim, as "flying." But this may be in the general sense of rapid motion; not motion with wings. The purpose of these appearances is obvious, to bring the presence and functions of the angelic visitant under the scope of the senses of God's servants, for some particular purpose of mercy. Angelic apparitions seem to have appeared under three circumstances—in dreams—in states of inspired ecstasy, and when the observer was in the usual exercise of his senses. Only the latter need any explanation; for the former cases are accounted for by the ideal impression made on the conception of the dreaming or ecstatic mind by God. But in such cases as that of Gen. xviii and xix, we are bound to believe that these heavenly spirits occupied for the time, real, material bodies. Any other opinion does violence at once to the laws of exegesis of Scripture language, and to the validity of our senses as inlets of certain and truthful perceptions. Whence then, those bodies? Say some, they were the actual bodies of living men, which the angels occupied, suppressing, for the nonce, the consciousness and personality of the human

soul to which the body belonged. Some, that they are material, but glorified substances, kept in heaven, ready for the occasional occupancy of angels on their missions; as we keep a Sunday-coat in our wardrobes. Some, that they were aerial bodies, composed of compacted atmosphere, formed thus for their temporary occupancy, by divine power, and then dissolved into air again. And still others, that they were created by God for them, out of matter, as Adam's body was, and then laid aside. Where God has not seen fit to inform us, I think it best to have no opinion on this mysterious subject. The Scriptures plainly show us, that this incorporation is temporary.

The angels are intelligent and voluntary beings, as is most manifest, from their functions of praising, worshipping, teaching the prophets, and ministering to saints, and from their very spirituality; for thought is the characteristic attribute of spirit. We naturally infer that as angels are incorporeal, they have neither senses, nor sensation, nor literal language. Since our senses are the inlets of all our objective knowledge, and the occasional causes of all mental action, we have no experience nor conception of a knowledge without senses. But it does not seem unreasonable to believe that our bodies obstruct the cognitions of our souls, somewhat as imprisoning one within solid walls does his communication with others; that our five senses are the windows, pierced through this barrier, to let in partial perceptions; and that consequently, the disembodied soul perceives and knows somehow, with vastly greater freedom and fulness, by direct spiritual apprehension. Yet all of the knowledge of angels is not direct intuition. No doubt much of it is mediate and deductive, as is so much of ours; for the opposite form of cognition can only be universal, in an infinite understanding. It is very clear also, that the knowledge of angels is finite and susceptible of increase. Mark. xiii : 32; Eph. iii : 10; 1 Pet. i : 12; Dan. viii : 16. Turretin's four classes of angelic knowledge—natural, experimental, supernatural, and revealed—might, I think, be better arranged as their concreated, their acquired, and their revealed knowledge. It is, in fine, clear that their knowledge and wisdom are great. They appear, Dan. and Rev., as man's teachers, they are glorious and splendid creatures, and they enjoy more favour and communion from God. See also, 2. Sam. xiv : 20.

They are also beings of great power; passing over vast spaces with almost incredible speed, Dan. ix : 23; exercising portentous physical powers, 2 Kings xix : 35; Zech. xii : 8; Acts xii : 7, 10; Matt. xxviii : 2, and they are often spoken of as mighty beings Ps. ciii : 20; Rev. x : 1; v : 2, and are spoken of as *δυναμεις*, principalities, &c., Eph. vi : 12; 2 Thess. i : 7. This power is undoubtedly always within God's control, and never truly super-

The Angels intelligent agents.

natural, although superhuman. It seems to have extended at times, by God's permission, to men's bodies, to diseases, to the atmosphere, and other elements.

The romantic distribution of the angels into a hierarchy of three classes and nine orders, borrowed by the Pseudo Dionysius from the Platonizing Jews, need not be refuted here. It is supposed by many Protestants, that there are differences of grade among angels, (though what, we know not,) from the fact—(a) That Paul uses several terms to describe them, Col. i : 16; (b) That there is at least one superior angel among the evil angels; (c) That we hear of an archangel, Michael; (d) That God's terrestrial works exhibit every where, gradations.

If, as some suppose, Michael is identical with the Angel of the Covenant, the third of these considerations is removed. Their reasons are, that he is called the Archangel, and is the only one to whom the title is given; that he is called the Prince, and great Prince, who stood for Israel, (Dan. x : 21; xii : 1,) and that he is seen, (Rev. xii : 7,) heading the heavenly war against Satan and his kingdom; a function suited to none so well as to the Messiah. But it is objected, with entire justice, that his name (Who is as God?) is not any more significant of the Messiah than that of Michaiah, and is several times the name of a man—that he is one, "one of the chief princes." Dan. x : 13. That in Jude, he was under authority in his dispute over Moses' body, and that he is plainly distinguished from Christ, (1 Thess. iv : 16,) where Christ descends from heaven with the voice of the archangel, and trump of God.

A more difficult question is, what were the cherubim mentioned, Gen. iii : 24; Exod. xxv : 18; 1 Kings vi : 23; Ps. xviii : 10; Ezek. x : 5, 7, &c., and most probably, under the name of seraphim, in Is. vi : 2. It is very evident, also, that the "living creatures, described in Ezekiel's vision, ch. i : 5, as accompanying the wheels, and sustaining the divine throne, were the same. Dr. Fairbairn, the most quoted of modern interpreters of types and symbols, teaches that the cherubim are not existences at all, but mere ideal symbols, representing humanity redeemed and glorified. His chief argument, omitting many fanciful ones drawn from the fourfold nature, and their wings, &c., is: that they are manifestly identical with the *Zōa* of Rev. iv : 6-8, which evidently symbolize, ch. v : 8-10, somehow, the ransomed Church. The great objections are, that the identification is not certain, inasmuch as John's *Zōa* had but one face each; that there is no propriety in founding God's heavenly throne and providence on glorified humanity, as His immediate attendants; but chiefly, that while it might consist with prophetic vision to make them ideal symbols, it utterly outrages the plain narrative

of Gen. iii : 24. And the duty of the cherubim, there described, obstructing sinful man's approach to the tree of life, with a flaming sword, the symbol of justice, is one utterly unfitted to redeemed and glorified humanity. Hence, I believe, with the current of older divines, that the cherubim are not identical with John's "living creatures," but are angels, like all the others, real, spiritual, intelligent beings; and that when God was pleased to appear to Isaiah and Ezekiel in prophetic vision, they received temporarily these mixed forms, to be symbolical of certain traits of obedience, intelligence, strength, and swiftness, which they show as ministers of God's providence and worshippers of His upper sanctuary. (The etymology of the word is utterly obscure.)

That all these spiritual beings were created holy and happy, is evident from God's character, which is incapable of producing sin or misery; see Gen. i : 31; from the frequent use of the term holy angels, and from all that is revealed of their occupations and affections, which are pure, blessed and happy. The same truth is implied, in what is said, 2 Pet. ii : 4, of "angels that sinned," and so were not spared, but cast down to hell, and Jude 6, of "angels that kept not their first estate." This first estate was, no doubt, in all, an estate of holiness and happiness. As to the change which has taken place in it, we are indeed left mainly to inference, by God's word; but it is inference so well supported by His attributes, and the analogy of man's case, that I feel a good degree of confidence in drawing it. A holy, intelligent creature, would owe service to God, with love and worship, by its natural relation to Him. And while God would be under no obligations to such a creature, to preserve its being, or bestow a happy immortality, yet His own righteousness and benevolence would forbid His visiting external suffering on that creature, while holy. The natural relation then, between such a creature and God, would be this: God would bestow perfect happiness, just so long as the creature continued to render perfect obedience, and no longer. For both the natural and legal consequence of sin would be spiritual death. But it would seem that some of the angels are elect, and these are now confirmed in a state of everlasting holiness and bliss. For holiness is their peculiarity, their blessedness seems complete, and they are mentioned as sharing with man the heavenly mansions, whence we know glorified saints will never fall. On the other hand, another class of the angels have finally and irrevocably fallen into spiritual death. The inference from these facts would seem to be, that the angels, like the human race, have passed under the probation of a covenant of works. The elect kept it, the non-elect broke it; the difference between them being made, so far as God was the author of it, not by His efficacious active decree and grace,

3. The Angels' first estate, their probation, and issue thereof.

but by His permissive decree, in which both classes were wholly left to the freedom of their wills. God only determining by His Providence the circumstances surrounding them, which became the occasional causes of their different choices, and limiting their conduct. On those who kept their probation, through the efficacy of this permissive decree, God graciously bestowed confirmation in holiness, adoption, and inheritance in life everlasting. This, being more than a temporary obedience could earn, was of pure grace; yet not through a Mediator; because the angels, being innocent, needed none. When this probation began, what was its particular condition, and when it ended, we know not; except that the fall of Satan, and most probably that of his angels, preceded Adam's. Nor is the nature of the sin known. Some, from Mark iii : 29, suppose it was blasphemy against the Holy Ghost. Others, from 1 Tim. iii : 6, suppose it was pride; neither conclusively. Guessing is vain, where there is no key to a solution. It may very possibly be that pride was the sin, for it is one to which Satan's spiritual nature and exalted state might be liable. The great difficulty is how, in a will prevalently holy, and not even swayed by innocent bodily wants and appetites, and where there was not in the whole universe a single creature to entice to sin, the first wrong volition could have place. At the proper time I will attempt to throw on this what light is in my power.

The good angels are engaged, first, in the worship and adoration of God. Matt. xviii : 10; Rev. v : 11. Second, God employs them in administering His gracious and providential government over the world. Under this head we may notice: (a) That they aided in the giving of Revelation, as the Law. Acts vii : 53; Gal, iii : 19, and many prophetic messages and disclosures, as Dan. x. (b) They seem to have some concern in social and national events, procuring the execution of God's purposes. Dan. x : 13. (c) They are employed to punish His enemies, as instruments of His righteous vengeance. 2 Kings xix : 35; Acts xii : 23; 1 Chron. xxi : 16. (d) They are sent forth to minister to those who shall be heirs of salvation. Heb. i : 14; Acts xii : 7; Ps. xci : 10-12. (e) They guide the departing souls of Christians home to their mansions in heaven. Luke xvi : 22. Last. They are Christ's agents in the general judgment and resurrection. Matt. xiii : 39; xxiv : 31; 1 Thess. iv : 17, 18.

As to the exact nature of the agencies exerted for the How exercised? saints by the ministering angels, Christians are perhaps not very well instructed, nor agreed. A generation ago, it was currently believed that they communicated to their minds instructions important to their duty or welfare, by dreams, presentiments, or impressions. Of these, many Christians are now skeptical. It seems more cer-

tain that they exert an invisible superintendence over our welfare, in and under the laws of nature. Whether they influence our waking minds unconsciously by suggesting thoughts and feelings through our law of associated ideas, is much debated. I see in it nothing incredible. The pleasing and fanciful idea of guardian angels is grounded on the following scriptures: Dan. x : 13, 20; Matt. xviii : 10; Acts xii : 15. The most that these passages can prove is, that provinces and countries may have their affairs committed in some degree to the special care of some of the higher ranks of angels; and that superstitious Jews supposed that Peter had his own guardian angel, who might borrow Peter's body for the purpose of an apparition. The idea has more support in New Platonism than in Scripture.

The personality of Satan and his angels is to be established by an argument exactly similar to that employed for the good angels. Almost every possible act and attribute of personality is ascribed to them; so that we may say, the Scripture contains scarcely more proof of the existence of a personal God, than of a Devil. He speaks, goes, comes, reasons, hates, is judged, and is punished. See for instance, such passages as Matt. iv : 1-11; Jno. viii : 44; Job i : 6 to ii : 7.

There is no subject on which we may more properly remember that "There are more things in heaven and earth than are dreamed of in our philosophy."

Scriptures induce over whole Bible History the form of the two rival Kingdoms.

It is evidently the design of the Scriptures to make much of Satan and his work. From first to last, the favorite representation of the world's history is, that it is the arena for a struggle between two kingdoms—Christ's and Satan's. Christ leads the kingdom of the good, Satan that of the evil; though with different authorities and powers. The headship of Satan over his *dæmons* is implied where they are called "his angels." He is also called Prince of Devils. Eph. ii : 2; Matt. xxv : 41; ix : 34. Prince of the powers of the air, and Prince of darkness. Eph. vi : 12. This pre-eminence he doubtless acquired partly by seducing them at first, and probably confirmed by his superior powers. His dominion is compacted by fear and hatred of God, and common purposes of malice. It is by their concert of action that they seem to approach so near to ubiquity in their influences. That Satan is also the tyrant and head of sinful men is equally plain. This prevalent Bible picture of the two kingdoms may be seen carried out in these particulars. (a) Satan originated sin. Gen. iii : 1; Rev. xii : 9, 10; xx : 2, 10; 1 Jno. iii : 8; Jno. viii : 44; 2 Cor. xi : 3. (b) Satan remains the leader of the human and angelic hosts which he seduced into hostility, and employs them in desperate resistance to Christ and His Father. He is the "god

of this world." 2 Cor. iv : 4. "The Spirit that worketh in the children of this world." Eph. ii : 2. Wicked men are his captives. See above, and 2 Tim. ii : 26. He is "the Adversary" (Satan,) "the Accuser," (*Διαβόλος*;) "the Destroyer," (*Ἀπολλύων*). (c) The progress of Christ to the final overthrow of this kingdom is the one great business of all time; the history of the conflict is the history of man and redemption. Gen. iii : 15; Jno. xii : 31; 1 Jno. iii : 8-10; 1 Pet. v : 8; Eph. vi : 11; Jno. viii : 44; Mark. iii : 23-27; Rom. xvi : 20; Acts xxvi : 18; Luke x : 18. The single fact that ungodly men, until the end of the world, compose Satan's kingdom, proves that he has, and will have some power or influence over their souls.

The powers of Satan and his angels are (a) always, and in all forms, strictly under the control of God and His permissive decree and providence.

Powers of bad Angels.

(b) They are often, perhaps, super-human, but never supernatural. If they do what man cannot, it is not by possession of omniscience or omnipotence, but by natural law: as a son of Anak could lift more than a common man, or a Davy or Brewster could control more of the powers of nature than a peasant.

There is a supposition, which seems to have plausible grounds, that as the plan of redemption advances, the scope of Satan's operations is progressively narrowed; just as the general who is defeated, is cut off from one and another of his resources, and hemmed in to a narrower theatre of war, until his final capture. It may be, then, that his power of afflicting human bodies, of moving the material elements, of communicating with wizzards, of producing mania by his possessions, has been, or will be successively retrenched; until at last the millennium shall take away his remaining power of ordinary temptation. See Luke x : 18; Mark iii : 27; Rev. xx : 3. But

Satan once had, and for anything that can be proved, may now have extensive powers over the atmosphere and elements. The first is (1) Over Nature. proved by Job, ch. 1 and 2. From this would naturally follow influence over the bodily health of men. No one can prove that some pestilences and droughts, tempests and earthquakes are not his work now.

He once had at least an occasional power of direct injection of conceptions and emotions, both independent of the man's senses and suggestions. See Matt. iv : 3, &c. This is the counterpart of the power of good angels, seen in Dan. ix : 22; Matt. ii : 13. It is this power which makes the crime of witchcraft possible. The wizzard was a man, and the witch a woman, who was supposed to communicate with an evil angel, and receive

(2) Over human minds.

from him, at the cost of some profane and damnable price, power to do superhuman things, or to reveal secrets beyond human ken. Its criminality was in its profanity, in the alliance with God's enemy, and its malignity in employing the arch-murderer, and always for wicked or malicious ends against others.

Witchcraft. In Exod. xxii : 18, witchcraft is made a capital sin; and in Gal. v : 20, it is still mentioned as a "work of the flesh." Yet some suppose that the sin never could be really committed. They account for Moses' statute by supposing that the class actually existed as impostors, and God justly punished them for their *animus*. This, I think, is hardly tenable. Others suppose the sin was anciently actual; but that now, according to the supposition of a gradual restriction, God no longer permits it; so that all modern wizzards are impostors. Doubtless there was, at all times, a large infusion of imposture. Others suppose that God still occasionally permits the sin, relaxing His curb on Satan in judicial anger against men, as in the age of Moses. There is nothing unscriptural in this. I do not admit the reality of any modern case of witchcraft, only because I have seen no evidence that stands a judicial examination.

Evil spirits had power over men's bodies and souls, by usurping a violent control over their suggestions, emotions and volitions, and thus violating their rational personality, and making the human members, for the time, their implements. This, no doubt, was attended with unutterable horror and agitation of consciousness,

(3) Possession. in the victim. This has been a favourite topic of neologic skepticism. They urge that the Evangelists did not really mean to teach actual possession; but their object being theological, and not medical or psychological, they used the customary language of their day, not meaning thereby to endorse it, as scientific or accurate; because any other language would have been pedantic and useless. They refer to Josh. x : 12. In Matt. iv : 24, lunatics (*σκιηνιαζόμενοι*) are named; but we do not suppose the author meant to assert they were moonstruck. They remind us of similar cases of mania now cured by opiates or blisters. They remind us that "possessions," like other superstitions, are limited to the dark ages. They argue that dæmons are said, Jude 6th, to be in chains, &c.

In this case the theory is incompatible with the candour of the sacred writers. For : 1st. They distinguish between "possessions" and diseases of a physiological source, by mentioning both separately. See Mark i : 32; Luke vi : 17, 18; Matt. iv : 24, &c. 2d. The dæmons, as distinct from the possessed man, speak, and are spoken to, are addressed, commanded and rebuked by our Saviour, and deprecate His wrath. Mark i : 25, 34; ix : 25; Matt. viii : 32; xvii : 18. 3d. They have person-

ality after they go out of men; whereas the disease has no entity apart from the body of which it was an affection. See Luke viii: 32. 4th. A definite number of dæmons possessed one man, Mark v: 9, and one woman, Mark xvi: 9. 5th. Their moral quality is assigned. 6th. The victories of Christ and His Apostles over them, announced the triumph of a spiritual kingdom over Satan's. Mark iii: 27; Luke xi: 20.

Do "possessions" now exist? Many reply, No; some, on the supposition of a progressive restriction of Satan's license; others, supposing that in the age of miracles, Providence made special allowance of this malice, in order to give Christ and His missionaries special opportunity to evince the power of His kingdom, and show earnestness of its overthrow. The latter is one object of Christ's victories over these "possessions." See Mark iii: 27; Luke xi: 20: x: 17-20, (where we have a separate proof of the spiritual nature of these possessions, as above shown). Whether "possessions" occur now, I do not feel qualified to affirm or deny.

The fourth power of Satan and dæmons is doubtless ordinary, and will be until the millennium; that

4. Temptations. of tempting to sin. This they may still carry on by direct injection of conceptions, or affections of the sensibility, without using the natural laws of sensibility or suggestion; and which they certainly do practice through the natural co-operation of those laws. Thus: A given mental state has a natural power to suggest any other with which it is associated. So that of several associated states, either one might naturally arise in the mind by the next suggestion. Now, these evil spirits seem to have the power of giving a prevalent vividness (and thus power over the attention and emotions) to that one of the associated states which best suits their malignant purposes. Thus: shall the sight of the wine-cup suggest most vividly, the jollity and pleasure of the past, or the nausea and remorse that followed it? If the latter, the mind will tend to sobriety; but if the former, it is tempted to sin. Here is the subtlety, and hence the danger of these practices, that they are not distinguished in our consciousness from natural suggestions, because the Satanic agency is strictly through the natural channels.

The mutual influence of the physiological states of the nerves and acts of organs of sense, over the mind, and *vice versa*, is a very obscure subject. We know, at least, that there is a mass of important truth there, as yet partially explored. Many believe that a concept, for instance, actually colours the retina of the eye, as though the visual *spectrum* of the object was formed on it. All have experienced the influence of emotions over our sense-perceptions. Animal influences on the organs of sense and nerves influence both concepts and percepts. Now, if evil spirits can produce an animal effect on our functions of

May operate through body.

nervous sensibility, they have a mysterious mode of affecting our souls.

We must also consider the regular psychological law, that vivid suggestions recurring too often always evoke a morbid action of the soul. The same subject of anxiety, for instance, too frequently recalled, begets an exaggerated anxiety. The "One-idea-man" is a monomaniac. It thus becomes obvious, how Satan may now cause various grades of lunacy, and often does. (This is not to be confounded with actual "possessions.") Hence, in part, religious melancholies, the most frightful of mental diseases. The maniac even, has recessions of disease; or he has seasons of glee, which, if maniacal, are actual joy to his present consciousness. But the victim of religious melancholy has no respite; he is crushed by a perpetual *incubus*. You can see how Satan (especially if bodily disease co-operates) can help to propagate it by securing the too constant recurrence of subjects of spiritual doubt or anxiety. You will see also, that the only successful mode to deal with the victims of these attacks is by producing diversion of the habitual trains of thought and feeling.

7. How powerful is the motive to prayer, and gratitude for exemption from these calamitous spiritual assaults, for which we have no adequate defence in ourselves? The duty of watchfulness against temptations and their occasions, is plain. It becomes an obvious Christian duty to attempt to preserve the health of the nervous system, refraining from habits and stimulants which may have, we know not what influence on our nervous idiosyncrasy. It is also the duty of all to avoid over-coming and inordinate emotions about any object; and to abstain from a too constant pursuit of any carnal object, lest Satan should get his advantage of us thereby.

This discussion shows us how beneficent is the interruption of secular cares by the Sabbath's break.