William H. Green, "Book of Job," Biblical Repertory and Princeton Review 29.2 (1857) 281-327.

ART. VI.—*Commentar über das Buch Hiob, von* H. A. HAHN u. s. w. Berlin, 1850. 8vo. pp. 337.

Das Buch Hiob, verdeutscht und erläutert von LIC. KONSTANTIN SCHLOTTMANN. Berlin, 1851. 8vo. pp. 507.

The Book of Job; a Translation from the original Hebrew, on the basis of the common and earlier English versions. For the American Bible Union, by THOMAS J. CONANT, D. D. New York, 1856. Part First, The Common English Version, the Hebrew Text, and the Revised Version, with Critical and Philological Notes. 4to. pp. 165. Part Second, The Revised Version, with Explanatory Notes for the English reader. 4to. pp. 85. Part Third, Revised Version. 4to. pp. 52.

THE poetical books of the Old Testament fall naturally into two divisions of three each. These are distinguished both by their subject and by the style of their poetry. The first class embraces in addition to the Psalms two brief books, which from their character might naturally have been included in the same collection, had not their length and importance been such as to justify the assigning to them an independent position. The Song of Solomon is an extended 45th Psalm. And the Lamentations of Jeremiah find counterparts in the Psalms, as well in their theme (Comp. Ps. lxxix. lxxx.) as in their alphabetic structure. These are all purely lyrical, and express the devout feelings of the heart, in the contemplation of the character of God, the truths of his word, or the dispensations of his providence.

The other three books constituting the second class, are Job, the Proverbs, and Ecclesiastes. Their common theme may be suggested to us by the use which they make of one characteristic word, "wisdom." Their aim is to show that piety is wisdom; that it is the one course promotive of man's true and highest welfare. They seek in other words to exhibit the consistency between the truths of God's revelation and the lessons of his providence, by making it appear that what the former sanctions as right, is attested by the latter as good. The book of Proverbs presents the harmony of the divine law and of the actual experience of the world as a general fact. It contains

a great number of maxims bearing upon every department of human life, and embodying the results of long continued and careful observation, which prove conclusively that piety conduces to human welfare, and that wickedness is opposed to it. Such is the present constitution of things on the whole; such is the native tendency of these respective courses, unless obstructed by casual and outside influences. General rules are, however, liable to exceptions: this is the case with many of these inspired maxims. The conclusion as to the usual course of things cannot, it is true, be invalidated in this way; but anxious questionings and perplexing doubts may be awakened, which demand a satisfactory solution, if one can be furnished. If the identity of piety and wisdom is not only a general truth with occasional exceptions, but a universal truth with no exceptions, it is important that this should be shown, and the apparent interruptions of the general law explained in such a way as to show that it is at no time suspended or reversed. It is to this that the books of Job and Ecclesiastes are directed. There are but two possible cases which could be regarded as exceptions to the general rule, and these in various forms and degrees are perpetually presenting themselves in the actual life of the world. These are, first, piety without prosperity; and, second, prosperity without piety. The first is discussed in Job, the second in Ecclesiastes. In both, to make the argument perfectly conclusive, the difficulty is presented in its extreme form. In Job, a man without his equal for piety in the world, is overwhelmed by a sudden and most extraordinary accumulation of disasters; he is stripped of his possessions, bereaved of his family, afflicted by sore disease, despised and shunned by his acquaintance, and made the victim of cruel suspicions and censures, until life became a burden; and yet in it all it is shown that God was not unfaithful, and piety did not fail of its reward. On the other hand, the book of Ecclesiastes exhibits the spectacle of a man, who is raised to the summit of earthly felicity, who has surrounded himself with every source of gratification that power or wealth can command, or his heart desire; who leaves no project unfulfilled, no wish ungratified, and gives himself of set purpose to extract solid satisfaction from the world, conducting his efforts with a sagacity and a wisdom such as no other man

has possessed before or since; and the result of all was disappointment and failure, vanity and vexation of spirit; and the conclusion to which he came after the baffling experiments of a life-time was, that the world without God can yield no solid good. Or as he states the issue himself, Eccl. xii. 13: "Fear God, and keep his commandments; for this is the whole of man;" this sums up at once his duty and his happiness.

These three books, forming thus a complete cycle, and covering together the entire range of the subject to whose illustration they are devoted, belong to one common style of poetry, the gnomic or aphoristic. This style, with its brief sententious apophthegms, seems specially suited to bring out clearly and forcibly the truths of experience, embodying them in such a shape as shall strongly affect the mind, and lodge firmly in the memory. It appears in its purest and most unmixed form in the Proverbs; less so in Ecclesiastes, as the nature of the discussion demanded; least of all in Job, where the lyrical element rises to greater prominence than in either of the others, although the aphoristic is not discarded.

According to a subscription added to this book in the Septuagint, Uz lay upon the borders of Idumea and Arabia; and Job was the grandson of Esau, the same with Jobab (Gen. xxxvi. 33) one of the kings of Edom. Though little reliance is to be placed upon this latter statement, the correctness of the former is generally conceded. The authority of the translator is itself something, as it is not improbable that the land may still have been known by its original name in his day. It seems to be even mentioned by Ptolemy. And all the indications in the book itself, and in other passages of Scripture where the name occurs, conspire to fix it somewhere in that region. Whether it was so called from the descendant of Seir, (Gen. xxxvi. 28) or the son of Nahor, (xxii. 21) or of Aram, (x. 23,) this location of it would not be unlikely. It is favoured by the fact that Job is called a son of the East, (i. 3,) that his property was exposed to incursions of the Sabeans and the Chaldeans, that his friends were from Teman, Shuah, (Gen. xxv. 2,) and Naamah, (possibly that mentioned Josh. xv. 41,) that in Lamentations iv. 21, Uz is associated with Edom, and in Jer. xxv. 20, is distinguished from it.

That Job was a real person, and his history is a record of actual events, may be inferred from the fact that the localities are real, that the names are not significant, (except Job, which may mean the one assailed or treated with hostility,) that there is no analogy in ancient writers, and particularly in the Bible, for such a purely fictitious tale. The question is settled, however, by the allusions to Job as an historical person in Ezek. xiv. 14, &c., James v. 11. This does not render it necessary to assume that everything occurred precisely as is here narrated, that the speeches are reported *verbatim*, that the Lord pronounced a long discourse, or that Satan literally appeared in heaven among the sons of God. Still less can the round numbers in which Job's possessions are stated, and their exact duplication afterwards occasion any embarrassment. The history is given substantially as it occurred, not with an eye to precision in trivial details, but with the view of developing in their full extent the important lessons which it was adapted to convey.

The period when Job lived is nowhere expressly stated. But his great longevity, the patriarchal simplicity of the worship, as well as of the life and manners, reflected in this book, the absence of all allusion to the miracles or revelations which marked the period of the exodus, the fact of such piety existing out of the line of the covenant people, incline to the belief that he was not subsequent to the time of Moses. And the mention of names (ii. 11; vi. 19; xxxii. 2,) which occur among the descendants of Nahor, Keturah, Ishmael, and Esau, render it probable that he did live very long before this time.

The mystery which invests the origin of this book, as well as that of some others belonging to the Old Testament, will probably never be dispelled. Our ignorance of its author, however, does not prejudice its canonicity, for we may safely acquiesce in the decision which admitted it to its present rank while the evidence of its inspiration was still in being, attested as it is by the infallible sanction of our Lord and his apostles, given to the integrity of the Jewish Scriptures, and by repeated citations in the New Testament from this individual book. The opinion that Job was written in the later times of the kingdom of Judah, or even during or after the Babylonish exile, has little

in its favour. It is less easy to decide between two other epochs, to which it has been assigned, viz. that of Moses, and that of David and Solomon. The ablest continental scholars appear to be settling down in favour of the latter, which is maintained not only by Hahn and Schlottmann, but by Hengstenberg, Hävernick, Delitzsch, Vaihinger, Hofmann, (in his later publications,) Welte and others. We are pleased to see that Professor Conant advocates the former, not so much because we have any settled conviction upon the point, as because no sufficient reason has yet been given for abandoning the old traditional opinion.

The highly artistic structure of this book and the exquisite finish of its poetry, are urged as showing that the poetic art must have been long cultivated, and brought to a great degree of perfection; and that some such golden period of the sacred muse as the age of David must be pre-supposed, before such a production as this could have been conceived or executed. But the finest specimens of a people's poetry stand sometimes among the earliest monuments of their literature. The epics of Homer furnish an irrefragable answer to every objection from this quarter directed against the antiquity of Job. Poetic genius was needed for its production, rather than any formal rules of art; and it is impossible to determine upon any general principles the time when such a genius must have appeared.

It has been argued from the relation in which this book stands to the law as an enlargement of its teachings relative to divine retribution, that the law as the foundation must have been first, and then Job as the superstructure, must have been built upon it. The law says, Fear God, and be blessed. Job shows that the truth of the law is still preserved, even when the righteous do not externally prosper. The law, it is alleged, must have been promulgated, before the question as to its consistency with the facts of experience could have arisen. But as this declaration of the law is a direct consequence of the divine rectitude, it was equally a tenet of the patriarchs by whom this attribute of God was known. And at a time when the piety of men, like Abraham and Isaac, was reflected in their fortunes, such a question as this in the case of Job would be peculiarly liable to arise and to occasion the most painful misgivings.

And if, as is alleged by those who would bring its composition down to the time of the exile, a period of national distress would make the subject here discussed one of wider interest and importance, would not its consolations be especially needed when Israel was groaning beneath the cruel and undeserved oppression of Egypt, or was pining in the wilderness, while abominable idolaters held possession of the promised land? Why may not the great legislator have been commissioned under these circumstances to expound, in what sense the promises of prosperity and blessing given of God were meant?

The striking resemblance which undoubtedly exists between several passages in this book, and such as occur in the Psalms and Proverbs, is quite as consistent with its priority as with that of the latter. It was naturally to be expected that a work of such originality and power should leave its traces on all the subsequent poetry of the nation. And if we find phrases, words or turns of thought common to it with other books, the presumption is, until the contrary is shown, that Job was imitated, not the imitator. This is admitted in the case of Ezekiel, Jeremiah, Isaiah, Amos; why not in that of David and Solomon?

That the whole air of this book is patriarchal, and that it never refers to any event subsequent to the time of Moses, might be explained on the hypothesis of the later origin of the book, by the assumption that the writer whose subject lay in the olden time, strictly observed the proprieties of time and place; though it would evidence extraordinary skill that he has not by the slightest expression betrayed that his assumed differed from his real position. The natural impression, however, antecedent to proof of the contrary, must be that the book was written in or near the times and scenes which it so admirably portrays. It is a remarkable coincidence, even if it be a casual one, that so many of the things that we expect to find in the writer, meet in Moses. His long sojourn in Midian explains his acquaintance with the facts, while his personal experience and that of his suffering people impressed their lessons on his heart. This too may furnish a solution of the Arabisms of the book. The writer's familiarity with Egyptian objects (which is such that Schlottmann insists that he must have seen what he describes,)

and the knowledge which he displays of nature and of the arts, will also be readily accounted for, since Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians. That Ophir (xxii. 24, xxviii. 16,) was not known to the Hebrews before the days of Solomon is asserted by Hahn; but it might be difficult to prove that Egyptian conquests or Egyptian trade had not extended there. The powerful and versatile genius of Moses none can dispute; a specimen of the various and exquisite poetry he was capable of producing, is furnished Ex. xv. Deut. xxxii. and xxxiii. and Ps. xc.

We do not venture to say that Moses did write this book, nor that it was written in his time; but only that the contrary is not proven. The chief repugnance, which we confess to having it assigned to a later period, arises from the manifest disposition in those who do so, though it is by no means a necessary consequence, to entertain lax notions of its historical character. Schlottmann distinguishes between the event itself and the tradition of it as it came to the writer. And Hengstenberg, after maintaining (Kitto's Cyc. II. p. 121) that there might be some intangible historical basis for what is recorded of Job, has at length (Lecture before the Evangelical Union in Berlin, pp. 12, 13) reached the conclusion that there is none whatever, and that all which the allusions of Ezekiel and James compel us to assume, is that the lesson of the book is true and that the writer had passed through some such conflict in his own experience.

The different views which have been held of the design and teachings of this book, have mostly arisen from not taking a sufficiently comprehensive view of the whole, confining the attention mainly or exclusively to one portion, and exalting it to an undue prominence. This is also the secret of the disposition manifested by several critics to dispute the genuineness of one section or of another, which they find incompatible with what they have arbitrarily assumed to be the governing idea. It is decisive against any view of the book at the outset, if such forcible measures are necessary in order to carry it through. No theory can be admitted which will not furnish the solution of it in all its parts just as it exists, without the necessity of its being mutilated or altered; in which it shall not appear that there is nothing wanting, and nothing superfluous, but that all

harmonizes and conspires together in its just proportion to produce the contemplated end.

The supposition that it is the design of this book to develope the idea of true wisdom, takes its shape from chap. xxviii. and makes that the key of the whole. Baumgarten-Crusius, who maintains this view, thinks that the different speakers represent the different stages in the progress of this idea. Job personates a simple, unsophisticated piety; the three friends a legal mind; Elihu a loftier and more comprehensive intelligence; while a thoroughly instructed religion and wisdom in its highest form are embodied in the discourse of the Lord. But besides that this is not a just view of the parts sustained by the respective speakers, the discussions relate not to wisdom in the abstract, nor in the general, but in its bearings upon one particular case.

Ewald thinks that the aim of the book is to teach the immortality of the soul, and by means of the hope of a future state to reconcile to the inequalities of the present. This is taking the key from chapter xix; a chapter which plays an important part in the economy of the book, as will appear hereafter, but which is not entitled to the predominance here given it. It is there shown how the man of God can rise to an assured triumph even in the most desperate case, by holding firmly to his faith that the God whom he serves is his friend in spite of everything that seems to establish the contrary, and that he will surely make this appear, if not on this side of the grave, yet beyond it. But this is not the solution given to the problem of suffering righteousness. It is possible to vindicate the present as well as to make an appeal to the future. Accordingly the subsequent speeches of Job show that, notwithstanding the triumphant assurance which he had gained respecting his actually existing relation to God, and the certain manifestation of it in the future, yet the distressing enigma of its present obscuration, remained to him as insoluble as before. And in the discourses of Elihu and of the Lord, where we look for the final settlement of the matter at issue, man's immortality is not once referred to. Whatever place this may have, therefore, in the complete view of the question, it is not its ultimate solution.

According to others, the design of the book is to inculcate unconditional submission to the will of the infinite God. His ways are inscrutable. Man's duty is, without murmuring, to submit humbly to his dispensations. But instead of solving the enigma, this would be to dismiss it as insolvable. The book of Job goes far beyond this. The infinite perfections of God are presented as a sure ground of confidence, even in his darkest dispensations, while his gracious purpose in affliction, and its happy issue, are distinctly brought to view. The resignation of the truly pious, on such grounds as these, is at a world-wide remove from the submission of the Stoic to inexorable fate. This view has led several of its advocates to rid themselves of the difficulties which the historical introduction and conclusion lay in their way, by denying their genuineness. But the alleged discrepancies between these and the body of the book are of no account. The grounds assigned for Job's sufferings in the introduction, and the issue to which they are conducted in the conclusion, teach nothing incompatible with the intermediate portion of the book, if this be only properly understood. That Job was a man of eminent holiness, and bore his calamities with becoming resignation, is not falsified by the subsequent language of impatience and despair, wrung from him by their long continued intensity, and by the cruel censures of his friends. The Lord's rebuke of Job, xxxviii. 2, xl. 2, involves no such approval of his friends, as would conflict with xlii. 7. Chapters xix. 17, and xxxi. 8, are not at variance with the account of the death of Job's children, i. 18, 19. Professor Conant translates the second passage correctly, "Let my *products* be rooted up." And the first he renders, "I am offensive to the sons of the same womb;" whatever question there may be as to the first part of this clause, there can be little as to the last; the allusion is not to Job's children, but to his brethren, xlii. 11. The death of his children is in fact alluded to in the body of the book itself, viii. 4, xxix. 5. That the introduction and conclusion are in prose, (as historical sections always are,) that they speak of sacrifices, while no mention is made of them in the rest of the book (for the reason that there was no occasion for it,) that they use the divine name Jehovah, (though not exclusively,) while in the rest of the book the

divine name employed is Eloah, God, (yet see xii. 9, xxxviii. 1, xl. 1, 3, 6, xlii. 1,) can scarcely be considered serious arguments. On the other hand, the positive and invincible argument of genuineness is, that the beginning and the end of the book are essential to the understanding of it. Apart from these, there is no intimation who the parties are who are here speaking, nor what is the occasion of their discussion. It is especially necessary that the reader should be made aware of Job's character at the outset, or how could it be known that there was any enigma in his suffering, or that the suspicions of his friends were unjust, and that he was not merely pretending to an innocence which he did not possess: and the book would be manifestly unfinished, if it were to stop where the poetic portion ends; that is no suitable conclusion. This is so clearly the case, that some who deny the genuineness of the present introduction and conclusion, assert that it must have had others in their stead originally, and that these were removed to make way for those we now possess. But this is bringing hypothesis to support hypothesis, and only involves the matter in still greater difficulties. What has become of that original preface and termination? What motive was there for expunging them to introduce new ones? And how was it possible that such a forgery in so remarkable a book as this, and one, too, included in the sacred canon, could succeed? Not to speak of the fresh obstruction interposed by the authority of the New Testament, for the allusion in James v. 11, is to the historical conclusion.

Others think the book designed to show the inadequacy of the Mosaic doctrine of a temporal retribution. Their notion is, that, according to the law of Moses, righteousness is to be invariably rewarded and sin punished in the present life, in proportion to their deserts; and that the writer of Job meant to prove on the contrary that men are not treated in this world according to their characters. But, 1. It would be inconceivable that a book whose design was to contradict the Mosaic law, should be written by a pious member of the theocracy, or that it should be admitted to the canon if it was. The law of Moses was sacred in the eyes of every Israelite, and antagonism to it would not have been tolerated. Those passages in the prophets, which have been alleged to be antagonistic to the law, in

which they speak of ceremonial observances as inferior to spiritual religion, are not in reality such, for this is the very spirit of the law itself. If this book, therefore, takes ground opposed to the law, it is without analogy in the whole Old Testament. 2. The defenders of this view identify the position taken by the friends of Job with the statements of the law, and regard the censure passed upon the former as falling equally upon the latter. But this is not correct. It is not the law, but partial or erroneous conclusions drawn from its teachings, which are here condemned. Just as in his sermon on the mount, our Lord rebuked not the law itself, but the false glosses and interpretations which the Jews had put upon it. Because life and prosperity are promised to the righteous, and calamities are threatened to the wicked, the friends inferred that the external prosperity of the good must be uninterrupted, and that severe calamities always evidence gross wickedness. This book does not oppose the law, but confirms it, by freeing it from the burden of these erroneous inferences. It shows that a man of eminent piety may, for reasons inferring no antecedent crime on his part, be cast down from his prosperity, and involved in the greatest misfortunes. It shows moreover that the promises of God were after all fulfilled in the case of Job, and the mystery which overhung the ways of Providence is dispelled by raising him in the end to a higher prosperity than ever; thus revealing that temporary sorrows may be conducive to a future higher good, and may be themselves blessings in disguise. It is to be observed likewise that the discourses of the three friends are not to be condemned *in toto*. Many of their sentiments are correct, and much that they say is just and proper. In fact, even where they are wrong, their error is often not so much in what they say as in what they intimate. Taken as abstract propositions, what they oppose to Job is commonly true; it is only the application of it which they design, that is false. Their statements, though capable for the most part of being understood in a sense that is correct, are rendered incorrect by their being adduced as the full explanation of a case which they do not really meet, and to which they could only be applied by the most unjust and unfounded assumptions of the guilt of Job. 3. The law of Moses, in teaching the righteousness of God's

dispensations in the present life, is most strictly true, and is in entire accordance with the doctrine of the New Testament on this same subject. Piety has its temporal as well as its eternal rewards. Our Saviour (Matt. v. 5) blesses the meek; for they shall inherit the earth. In Mark x. 29, 30, he says that whoever has left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for his sake and the gospel's, shall receive an hundred-fold now in this time, and in the world to come eternal life. The apostle Paul tells us (1 Tim. iv. 8) that godliness has the promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come. The essential righteousness of God in fact secures the righteousness of all his dispensations in this world, as much as in the future state. The retributions of the world to come are not to be regarded as a compensation for present inequality and injustice. He who admits that men are not dealt with justly here, and treated according to their characters, cuts the nerves of the argument for a future retribution, instead of strengthening it. For if God is not just now, what assurance can we have that he ever will be? But in claiming for the righteous the favour and blessing of God here, it must be distinctly understood what that means. For external worldly prosperity is no certain gauge even of present happiness, much less of men's true welfare. God consults for the highest interests of his people. He sends upon them what he sees to be most for their good. Affliction thus sent is not an evil, but a benefit; while worldly prosperity without the divine favour is a curse instead of a blessing. Besides it must be borne in mind, and this is one of the truths insisted upon in the book before us, that even the holiest of men are not free from sin. Conscious, therefore, of ill-desert, they should receive with humility and resignation whatever sufferings are sent upon them. These sufferings have a direct connection with their sin. They may not be penal, indeed, but they are disciplinary. They are needed and designed to purge from sin. Their proper effect was produced upon Job as soon as he said, (xlii. 6,) "I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes." When that state of mind was produced, the discipline had gained its end, and was at once removed.

This book has also been regarded as an allegory, designed to

set forth the fortunes of the Jewish people. According to Bishop Warburton, Job represents the nation of the Jews, and his sufferings the calamities which befel them, including their captivity; the three friends were those who obstructed the rebuilding of Jerusalem and the temple, particularly, Neh. vi. 1, Sanballat, Tobiah and Geshem; Elihu represents the writer of the book himself. Others make the three friends stand for the prophets; others explain them differently still. But without going into the details of any of these schemes, it will be sufficient to show them to be impracticable in regard to their chief character, in which alone they all agree. Job cannot possibly represent the Jewish nation, for the whole mystery of his sufferings lies in their arising from no fault on his part, whereas those which befel the Jews are always represented as the penalty of their transgressions. And there is no allusion in the whole book to the circumstances of the people at the time of the exile, and nothing whatever from which an intimation can be gained that it is to be allegorically understood. Everything indicates the subject to be a case of individual not of national suffering. This view too would require the assumption that the book was written in or after the exile; it is contradicted likewise by the historical character of Job already proved.

The real theme of this book is, as it has been well expressed, "the mystery of the cross." It is intended to throw light upon that perplexing enigma, so trying oftentimes to faith, of the sufferings of the righteous. How are they to be reconciled with the justice of God, or with the declaration of his law, "Do this, and thou shalt live?" This purpose is accomplished by adducing the case of a man, in whose history the truth to be taught is strikingly illustrated. God himself testifies regarding Job, that "there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God and escheweth evil." This man, not for any special transgression, but at the solicitation of Satan, is suddenly cast down from his prosperity, and made to endure the severest inflictions in his property, his family, and his person, in order to try the strength of his piety, and that his steadfastness may be exhibited to the confusion of the tempter. The secret of Job's sufferings is thus far explained

to the reader, before the discussion begins; but it is a mistake, however common, to suppose that this is the whole mystery. So Delitzsch, (Herzog's Encyklop. art. Hiob,) after enumerating the four kinds of suffering to which men may be subjected, viz. punishment, chastisement, trial, and martyrdom, insists upon it that the third is the only one applicable to this case, in which "there is not the remotest connection between the suffering and the sinfulness of the sufferer." This initial error leads him, as we shall see hereafter, to deny the genuineness of an important section of the book. Others who are not prepared for this extreme, go at least to the length of declaring that it contributes nothing toward the proper settlement of the question at issue. Even Professor Conant says of the section referred to, "Elihu has contributed his suggestions, without advancing a step towards the solution of the problem. For there is no place in his theory, any more than in that of the three friends, for the actual case presented." It will be sufficient to say here, that it is not the design of the introduction to dispose of the case, but simply to place it before the reader. It prepares the way for the discussion, but without anticipating its result. It acquaints the reader with the fact, concealed from the human speakers, of Satan's agency in these inflictions. But it does not profess to give in full the reasons by which the Lord was moved in allowing Satan to deal with Job as he did. No haste is exhibited anywhere in this book to disclose the hidden purposes of God. They are suffered to unfold themselves in his actual providence, and their ripened issue is their ample justification. In fact, a similar course is pursued with most of the great lessons here inculcated, and herein lies one of the evidences of the wonderful skill of the writer. These lessons are strongly brought out, and the impression which they leave is perfectly distinct and clear; but this is effected less by precise and formal statements, than by the combined effect of the whole course of the history and the discussion.

That Satan was used to accomplish results on behalf of this pious man, very different from any that he designed or imagined, is suggested by the representation of his appearing statedly among the sons of God, when they came to present themselves before the Lord. Satan is like them, God's servant, employed

in ministrations to men which are directed (or controlled) by God's sovereign will, and of his performance of which he comes like the rest to render his report. It is not given to this malicious spirit to torture men as he may please. His office is to spy out the faults of good men, and to tempt them to sin, labouring to crush where he cannot seduce them. But this is an agency, which God employs for ends of his own. He does not originate the evil, but he uses it. So too, when Satan misleads the wicked to their ruin, as we are taught in 1 Kings xxii. 19–23, a passage strikingly similar to that before us, it is by the same divine permission and in just judgment for their sins. This subordination of evil to the designs of the Most High is a leading lesson impressed upon the very front of Job's history. Perhaps it may be called one of the original conditions of the problem. What those designs were, or how evil can be employed to effect them, we must be content to learn as the progress of events shall disclose them.

One purpose which God had in view, as shown by the event particularly of the first trial (i. 22, ii. 3,) was, as has been stated already, to test the fidelity of Job, not of course for the satisfaction of the Lord, who had previously given his unerring judgment of his character, but to confound the tempter and to present an example of the sustaining power of faith to men. But it is nowhere intimated that this was his sole design. From subsequent developments we learn that he had another purpose quite compatible with the former, but additional to it and distinct from it. The fire was designed not only to prove the existence of the gold, but to purge away its dross. The trial was a chastisement likewise, not for overt acts of sin, but for the yet unsubdued corruption of the heart. God would not have subjected a perfectly sinless being even temporarily to Satan's power, however gloriously his steadfastness might thereby be made to appear. If there had been no discipline in them for Job himself, permission would not have been given for these inflictions. This antecedent presumption is confirmed by the fact that latent sin is detected in Job and brought to light under the terrible pressure of his sorrows. There is an unmistakable leaven of self-righteousness in his vindications of himself and in his complaints of God. Job would never have sus-

pected himself of this, nor have sought its correction, but for this affliction. This element of corruption in his soul it is the evident aim of the writer to depict with a strong hand. And this explains the puzzle, that so eminently good a man, as Job is known from divine testimony to have been, could speak so presumptuously as he sometimes does. He had been touched with divine skill precisely upon his tender point, and this previously undeveloped evil sprang up at once in full power. And his speeches are so framed as to allow us to look directly in upon the struggles of his heart, which is here laid open without disguise. The bare discussion of the problem would not call for these culpable expressions on the part of Job. But they were necessary to bring out the lesson that there is evil in the best of men, which the searching test of affliction may discover. Additional confirmation is given to this view by the speech of Elihu, who is an interpreter of the will of God, and who makes the correction of men's inward pride one of the grand aims of affliction. The fact too that Job is ultimately brought to penitence, and that this is the condition of the removal of his affliction, warrants the conclusion that this was one of the things to be accomplished by sending it. While, therefore, Satan sought Job's ruin, God designed both to exhibit the sincerity of his piety, and to elevate that piety, thus preparing him for a higher measure of happiness.

All this, however, is unknown to Job and to his friends. They are left to confront this mysterious dispensation, without any clue being afforded them as to its design. The friends of Job having no other idea than that of the invariably penal character of suffering, conceive the suspicion that he must have been guilty of some gross iniquity to account for such unexampled sorrows. Job, conscious of his own integrity, cannot admit the unjust aspersions of his friends; but is himself in utter perplexity as to the cause of what he suffers, and is strongly tempted to arraign the righteousness of God's providence. The answer given to this difficult problem consists substantially of two parts, viz. 1. Men must confide in God; not only because they must expect in the dealings of infinite wisdom much that transcends their finite understandings; but because his glorious perfections should be a sufficient guaranty

that all he does is right and good, however dark and unexplained. 2. Affliction has its uses. It not only tests the constancy of faith, but is a necessary discipline which will conduct those who properly receive it to higher holiness and happiness.

The structure of this book is eminently regular. It consists of three parts of unequal length—the historical preface and conclusion in prose, and the main body of the book in poetry. The first contains such statements of fact as are necessary to the right understanding of the problem to be discussed. In the second, this problem is largely treated and its proper solution shown. In the third, the history is brought to a close, and the providential issue of the whole matter exhibited; this last we regard, for reasons already hinted at, but which shall more fully appear presently, as really forming part of the solution.

The rest of the book after the historical preface, is also divisible into three parts: the discussion of the problem by Job and his three friends, and its twofold decision, first as rendered by the instrumentality of a man, Elihu, then as given immediately by the Lord himself. The discussion again consists of distinct sections. After the opening discourse of Job, in which the theme is, as it were, propounded, the discussion is continued in three successive rounds of debate, or three systems of discourses, in each of which there is a discourse from the three friends severally, in regular order, together with the rejoinders made by Job, except that in the last, for a particular reason, the third friend, Zophar, says nothing. We have consequently the following scheme:

Introduction,		Chaps. i. ii.
The Problem treated,		Chaps. iii.—xlii.
The Discussion,		Chaps. iii.—xxxi.
Job's opening discourse,	Chap. iii.	
First series of discourses,	Chap. iv.—xiv.	
Second series of discourses,	Chap. xv.—xxi.	
Third series of discourses,	Chap. xxii.—xxxi.	
Decision rendered by man, (Elihu)		Chaps. xxxii.—xxxvii.
Decision rendered by God,		Chaps. xxxviii.—xlii.

According to the view commonly entertained of this book, it is plainly not a drama, or can only be called one in a very

improper sense. If it is simply the discussion of a grave and solemn question, to which a decision is subsequently rendered, there is no more propriety in saying that it is a drama than there would be in saying the same of the philosophical dialogues of Cicero, or a report of Congressional debates. Action is essential to the drama, as is implied by its very name. To be successful, there must be a plot which becomes gradually complicated, the interest growing more intense as it proceeds, while the issue is kept in suspense until the final denouement, when all is explained. Schlottmann has presented an exceedingly ingenious and captivating view of this book, according to which it will be a proper drama, though of course not designed for scenic representation; for the Hebrews knew nothing of such shows, and it would be beneath the sacred dignity of this inspired composition if they did. It is not maintained that this presents a precise parallel to any of the dramatic compositions, whether of the ancient Greeks or of modern times, but simply that it possesses all that is essential to that species of poetry, having unity of action and a consistent, regularly developed plot, the progress of which is disclosed in the speeches of the actors; and that it bears a closer analogy to these than to any other productions of the muse. The action of this piece is not external and palpable to the senses, but inward and spiritual, and has place among the deepest experiences of the soul. Its subject he states to be The temptation of Job. The interest of the piece consists in watching the effect produced on Job by his aggravated sufferings, and seeing whether the tempter gains his end, which he pursues so unremittingly, of driving him to abjure his God. The alternate speeches of Job and his friends will then still contain a discussion of grave truths respecting the providence of God in relation to suffering; but it will not be as a mere discussion that they appear here. The part which they sustain in the plot, is that the stinging censures of his friends are taken into the service of the tempter; they are a fresh aggravation of Job's distress, and by exasperating him add to the strength of the temptation to give up his confidence in God and to renounce his worship. The speeches of Job himself on the other hand exhibit the tumult of his soul under the temptation, and show how far the tempter succeeded in

driving him to the use of expressions sometimes, which sound as though he were on the very point of giving up his trust in God, and his allegiance to him, and we almost dread to hear him open his lips again, lest the fatal word should be spoken and Satan gain his end. But though often on the verge of the precipice, Job holds fast his integrity, and the tempter is foiled. Then the discourses of Elihu, and of the Lord, may be regarded as the means employed by God to rescue his servant from this perilous position, to check his presumption and bring him to humble penitence and submissive faith; whereupon all the clouds are dispersed, the malice of Satan falls harmless at his feet, and when the curtain drops upon the scene, Job is possessed of a loftier and more secure felicity than ever.

Schlottmann has bestowed great pains upon the poetical structure of this book, and has certainly improved upon the previous attempts of Köster, Stickel, Ewald and others, to prove that it is throughout arranged in stanzas or strophes. The true theory of Hebrew verse has long been a matter of curious inquiry amongst scholars. Following the lead of Josephus, Philo, Eusebius, Jerome and other ancient testimonies, who speak of trimeters, pentameters, hexameters, etc., in the Old Testament, some made numerous and persevering attempts to discover there the different styles of Greek and Latin verse; others acting upon a suggestion of Sir William Jones, sought for Syriac and Arabic measures; others endeavoured to develope a peculiar system of prosody from the masoretic accents. All these efforts failed. It was found impracticable to carry out any one of these views without unwarrantable assumptions, arbitrary changes of the text, and the constant violation of the simplest and most obvious prosodial rules. It is in fact demonstrable that Hebrew verse could not have been regulated by the number or quantity of syllables, nor by any succession of feet, for the variety in the length or character of lines is palpably such as could be embraced within no conceivable rules of that description. Syllables were no doubt so disposed as to produce a rhythmical and harmonious flow; but that is all that can be maintained.

The productions of the Hebrew muse took on quite a different form from that developed in other lands, though growing out of

the same ultimate idea. The ordinary flow of prose resembles a quiet stream, through which the thought pours itself in an even current until it is expended. Poetry, as the language of excited emotion, reflects the state of mind in which it takes its rise. It expresses itself in more brief and rapid utterances; whence it follows that the thought not expended in the first flow, gushes forth again, thus returning upon itself, and a relation of correspondence being established between the first movement and the second. Now in Greek verse, and in occidental poetry generally, the outward form took precedence of the inward conception. The correspondence of successive lines was indicated by a determinate arrangement of syllables and recurrence of feet, so that the reiterated movement was marked to the ear by the rhythmical effect. In Hebrew poetry, on the other hand, in which the primitive, unfettered simplicity was better preserved, the thought predominated over the form, and the correspondence established lay in the repetition or fuller expression of the idea in varied style; in other words, in the parallelism of clauses.

Parallelism being thus the governing principle of Hebrew verse, as it is fundamentally of all other, the question arises whether this is confined to clauses, or whether it has been extended likewise to paragraphs and sections. The same law of correspondence, which regulated the measure of successive lines in Greek verse, gave birth to strophes and antistrophes, in which, after a series of varying measures, the same were repeated again in precisely the same order. Is there anything similar to this in Hebrew poetry? The writers above alluded to maintain that there is; that every poem or leading section of a poem resolves itself into portions of corresponding length, containing the same or nearly the same number of verses, the predominance of the thought over the form being here maintained as before, and the transition from one thought to another marking the points of division between the strophes. There is nothing to be said against this theory but the difficulty of establishing its truth. In many cases there is a singular conformity in the length of the paragraphs or divisions, into which the various speeches of this book naturally fall. But it seems doubtful whether this conformity is due to any conscious design

of the writer, or is not a simple consequence of his presenting in their order several thoughts of nearly equal moment, so that he naturally dwells to a similar extent upon each. This explanation is rendered more probable by the fact that in many cases the conformity is not obvious, and can only be educed by arbitrary means. Schlottmann's divisions are highly ingenious; and sometimes, by a new grouping of verses, he succeeds in setting them in a different light, or in giving them additional force. But on the whole, his straining after strophes has been to the injury of his exposition, and has frequently led him to propose divisions which an unbiassed examination of the passage would certainly never dictate. Besides, his strophes are reached by masoretic verses; whereas, if there were anything in the theory, it is obvious that the only proper mode would be by clauses as indicated in the parallelisms.

The discussion between Job and his friends takes its point of departure from the opening discourse of the former, chap. iii. Weighed down by the intensity of his anguish, he complains of three things; that he was ever born, vs. 3–10, that he was suffered to live after his birth, vs. 11–19, that he is compelled to live on still in his misery, vs. 20–26. The following argument turns upon the question of Job's right thus to complain; the friends deny, Job affirms. Much of the art with which this discussion is managed, is lost by those who fail to observe how both the parties gradually shift their ground, or at least modify their tone, receding from each other and departing from their own early positions as they become warmed in the vehemence of debate. Wonderful skill is displayed by the writer in portraying in the speeches the growing vehemence of the speakers. It is not proper to impute to Job in all his discourses the same presumptuous chiding with God, which breaks forth in some of them. Nor must the friends be supposed to have begun the discussion with the same harsh suspicions of Job that they cherished afterwards. Their seven days' silence indicated no such suspicion; it was the natural impulse of profound sympathy in the presence of overwhelming grief, (ii. 13.) Job's opening speech implies no thought of his friends' unkindness; it is the piteous moaning of a man under intolerable sorrows. And the first speech of Eliphaz, though without the tenderness and

consideration that Job had reasonably expected, (vi. 15, etc.) and already betraying the radical error that the external condition of men invariably corresponds with their characters, yet assumes throughout that Job is a good man, and rebukes him for entertaining the thought that being such he could perish, (iv. 1–11,) charging him only with that general sinfulness which is common to all men.

In each of the three series of discourses Eliphaz is the leading speaker, not only preceding, but, as it were, guiding the others. They take their cue from him, reiterating in other forms what he had already substantially said. In the first series Job is treated with comparative leniency and each of the friends closes with an exhortation to Job to receive his sufferings submissively, promising him in that case a return and enlargement of his former prosperity. In the second series the tone of the friends is much harsher and more irritated. They are provoked that Job should continue, in spite of their arguments and exhortations, to maintain a position which they consider so indefensible and wrong. They now hold out no promises for the future, but dwell largely on the uniform and necessary connection of sin and suffering, intimating in no doubtful terms, what yet they do not declare in express words, that Job had brought his sufferings upon himself by his sins, and that nothing but ruin awaited him in the course he seemed determined to pursue. In the last series Eliphaz comes out distinctly with explicit charges of aggravated crime. That these cannot be substantiated, however, is intimated by Bildad's failing to repeat them; while the brevity of his speech and his falling back upon arguments which had been adduced at the very beginning of the discussion and which Job had answered long before, showed that he had nothing new to bring forward. Zophar's not replying at all is an admission that they have no more to say, and that they cannot answer Job.

The discourses of Job are divided into two portions by the triumphant confidence expressed in chap. xix. This chapter is both in form and in fact the centre of the whole. It occurs in the middle series in the answer to the second friend; and it is the turning point in the discussion. This is the culmination of all that precedes, for which it has been preparing the way, and

to which it has been tending by gradual and marked advances. What follows is of quite a different character. The prominent feature of the first portion is the struggle of Job's own mind against despair. The prominent feature of the second portion is the refutation of the position taken by his friends. What gave its chief poignancy to Job's distress was that God seemed to have become his enemy. It was because the principle urged by his friends led directly to this result, that their speeches stirred such a tumult in his soul. They could see nothing in suffering but the penalty of sin. As he was conscious of his freedom from crime and of the sincerity of his piety, the tendency of their language is to make him feel that God is treating him as a criminal without his being one, that he is employing his omnipotence to crush him for no cause, except that he has arbitrarily determined so to do. This idea of God as cruel and inexorable, as infinite power without regard to justice or mercy, bent on his destruction, is the phantom which is perpetually rising before him, and with which he has to contend. A fierce conflict is awakened in his soul between his faith in God's rectitude and love, and this phantom, which the sense of his misery and the arguments of his friends are ever afresh forcing upon him. On his first opening his mouth, chap. iii., we hear his groans under unutterable woe, and in his despair he piteously begs for death as a coveted relief from his sufferings. His replies to the first series of his friends' discourses show him to be still in unrelieved despair. They are divided between upbraidings of his friends for their hard-hearted aggravation of his woe, the justification of his complaint by the intensity of his misery, and the fresh utterance of it, coupled with remonstrances with God that he should so torment his frail and helpless creature. In the later speeches of this series, the replies to Bildad and Zophar, we meet the first dawnings of a thought, which is soon to overspread his soul with the clear effulgence of triumphant exultation; but as yet there is only glimmer enough to make the blackness blacker. In ix. 34, 35, he says, that if God would but lay aside his terrors and suffer him to meet him as he might an equal, he could vindicate himself; and in x. 7, that God without such a vindication, knew that he was not wicked. But this only aggravated his hopeless misery,

that in spite of this knowledge of his integrity God had resolved upon his destruction. In xiii. 13–22, he expresses his conviction that if he could only succeed in bringing his case before God for judgment, and were permitted to argue it there, he could make his integrity appear, and would obtain sentence in his favour. In xiv. 13–15, he adds, that if death were only a temporary evil he could bear it. He could lie down in the grave resignedly, if a limit was set to the period of God's anger, and when that was past he could return once more to life and to the enjoyment of his favour. Gloomy as these words appear, and vain as are these wishes in the form in which they are expressed, they nevertheless contain the seeds of hope, which from this moment begins to kindle in his bosom. It is a desperate struggle; but his pious trust in God shall gain the victory.

The heightened intensity of Job's inward conflict is finely expressed by the fact that his complaint and remonstrance from being a single section, beside other sections of equal length, as in his previous speeches, swell in those that follow over almost the whole discourse. He now says little to his friends in the way of justifying his complaint to them. He merely, in a few verses at the beginning, begs them to be silent and to desist from their cruel treatment, and then turns from them to God; or even when his words are not in form addressed to him, his thoughts are occupied about his relation to him. The seeming proofs of God's hostility stare him in the face; and yet he is thrown back upon God as his only helper. His friends scorn him; he has no hope nor expectation from them. His tearful prayer is that God, the witness of his integrity, would take his part with God his seeming foe. In the most eloquent and impassioned language he makes his appeal from God to God himself, xvi. 17—xvii. 3. In spite of this present hostility, which he cannot understand, he reposes a trust in God which he cannot abandon. This tearful appeal is not unheard. The certainty takes possession of Job's bosom that God will vindicate his innocence, and is even now his friend, for whatever inexplicable reason he does not so appear, xix. 25–27. Every prospect of earthly good, he had already said, had vanished, xvii. 11–16. There was nothing for him to look for here, but the grave.

And yet he knows, notwithstanding all this, that his Redeemer lives, and he shall see him after death in that character, no longer his foe, but his Saviour and his Friend. Faith here rises to its loftiest triumph. To outward sense all is cheerless despair. No earthly hope remains. God still appears to be pursuing him as an implacable foe. The mystery of his sufferings is as unexplained, and as seemingly insolvable as ever. But let the worst come to the worst, Job still trusts in God. He may die under the cloud; but he knows that God is his Redeemer, and that he will certainly vindicate him yet. The struggle with despair is now over, and never reappears. He does not understand this dark dispensation any better than he had done before; but the question of his personal relation to God is settled, and that gives him comparative peace. The phantom of a cruel and inexorable Deity has given place to the vision of his Redeemer. And though for some mysterious reason, which he knows not how to comprehend, he does not act toward him in this character now, but in one that seems to be its opposite, he will sometime manifest himself as such.

In favour of the correctness of the view which has been taken of this important passage, and which finds in it the assurance of a divine vindication in a future state, may be argued—1. Its position as already exhibited in the plan of the book. It stands in the relation of climax to corresponding passages in Job's former speeches. It winds up that intense mental struggle in which he has been engaged from the outset, by one gigantic exercise of faith, clearing away those dark clouds of distressing doubt which had previously overhung his soul, so that henceforward we find him in a very different state of mind. The enigma remains, but his apprehensions of God's enmity do not reappear. All this shows that something extraordinary is to be expected here; something which rises far above the level of any of his previous declarations, and which could lift him, as nothing else had done, from the depths of despair to a triumphant hope. Such is the marked prominence, in fact, of this passage in the economy of the book, that Ewald, as already stated, considers it the key of the whole, and thinks that its grand lesson is concentrated at this point, viz. that the doctrine of the soul's immortality can reconcile the inequalities

of the present state. But it is manifest that the immortality of the soul is not presented as a solution of the enigma. That is as obscure as ever; though he can stand up in the face of it, now that he knows he shall be vindicated hereafter. But it is still a puzzle why God makes him suffer so in the present. Although this passage, therefore, does not solve the problem of the book, it is the focus in which the scattered rays of faith, which appear in Job's former speeches, are gathered and intensified. He had expressed before the confidence that if he could bring his cause before God, he would be justified; he had wished for another life after death, which might be blessed with God's returning favour; he had claimed God as the witness of his integrity, and had prayed that his blood, causelessly shed, might not be covered by the earth nor remain unexpiated. What more fitting climax could there be to these thoughts than that God would vindicate him and appear on his side in the future state?

2. This view is rendered necessary by the formality with which this passage is introduced, and the stress which is laid upon it, vs. 23, 24. That he should thus mark out these words, and put so broad a distinction between them and all else that he had uttered; that he should wish them engraved in the rock, to endure as his testimony to all future time, warrants us in expecting to find something in them which shall be worthy of so formal and impressive an introduction.

3. This view alone gives its natural and proper sense to the language which is here employed. We might not perhaps lay much stress upon the expression, "at the latter day," or its original equivalent, signifying "last," or "at the last," if it were by itself. For though it is the same word which stands in the designation of God as the first and the last, it might be claimed that it had here only the general sense of futurity. But the period intended is more clearly explained in what follows. Of the two clauses of ver. 25, the first states the character in which Job was by faith enabled to contemplate God, and the second, the time when he was assured that this character would be displayed by him on earth. These clauses are then expanded separately in the verses that follow, the second, in ver. 26, the first in ver. 27. The latter day referred to, accordingly finds its

explanation in the words, "And after my skin [which] they destroy, [even] this, and out of my flesh shall I see God." There is no need of supplying "worms" with the common English version as the subject of the verb "destroy;" it is in the third person plural indefinite, a frequent equivalent in Hebrew of the passive construction. The agents of the destruction are not named, perhaps not distinctly thought of. It is at any rate after the destruction of his present skin or body, that the vision of God as his Redeemer is to take place. This cannot mean less than after death; mere emaciation by disease not attended by dissolution could not be so described. The next expression, "out of my flesh," (Eng. ver. marg.) has the same ambiguity in the original as in the translation. It may mean either in the body or disembodied. It may describe the position to be occupied by the speaker, and out from which he would look to see God. In that case, taken in connection with the other expressions previously employed, it would mean, that after the destruction of his present body he would be clothed with it afresh at the resurrection, and from out of it he would see God, who had now hidden himself from view. It is more probable, however, that "out of my flesh," here means disembodied, separated from my flesh, in the future state. The two clauses of the verse being connected not by "yet," but by "and," the expressions "after my skin," and "out of my flesh," are not contrasted, but parallel, and are both alike descriptive of the period intended by "at the latter day," ver. 25.

4. This is the oldest, as it has always been the most prevalent interpretation. The Fathers in fact generally found in this passage an allusion not only to a future state, but to a corporeal resurrection. So Clemens Romanus, Origen, Cyril, and others. Jerome incorporated this idea in his Latin version, and was followed by the writers of the Western Church generally. It is likewise expressed in the Septuagint, notwithstanding Stickel's denial; for even if *ἀναστῆσαι τὸ δέρμα μου* might be explained of a raising up to health, the beginning of the apocryphal section at the close of the book, "It is written, that he shall rise again with those whom the Lord raises up," leaves no doubt as to its sense in the intention of the translator.

According to another view of this passage, the meaning is,

that Job expected a divine vindication in the present life; he felt assured that God would make his innocence appear by the removal of his present sufferings, and by restoring him to a state of prosperity. This explanation is first found in Chrysostom, and was adopted from him by some later writers in both the Greek and Latin churches. During the prevalence of rationalism in Germany, it became the reigning interpretation in that country. But, 1. This is opposed to the whole previous tenor of the book. Job always appears just on the verge of the grave, and invariably rejects the idea of any earthly expectation, whenever it is presented to him. 2. It is inconsistent with the position maintained by Job, in opposition to his friends. They assert that men are rewarded in this life according to their characters. Job denies it. If now the confidence he here expresses, is that of an earthly reward, he comes over to their ground. 3. It is inconsistent with the obvious meaning of the language, as that has been exhibited already. 4. There is nothing in such an earthly expectation to justify the solemn and imposing manner in which these words are introduced. The idea especially of graving upon rock, to endure for ever, a statement which was to meet its fulfilment during his own life, is grandiloquent if not absurd.

It has been said in recommendation of this view, that the doctrine of a future state is elsewhere denied or ignored in this book, e. g. vii. 9, xiv. 7–12. Even if this were so, to understand this passage of a vindication in the world to come, would involve no greater inconsistency than to refer it to a restoration in the present life, when the possibility of that had been over and over again denied. But, as a simple inspection of those passages will show, they merely declare the impossibility of another earthly life after the present, (see vii. 10.) To suppose a future state denied, would not only involve an unwarrantable rejection of the inspiration of this book, but would be inadmissible even on the assumption of its merely human origin. Although the Old Testament saints had less light than we have upon the nature of that existence upon which the soul enters at death, they were never ignorant of the fact of its continued existence. Had they been, they would have been behind the very heathen. The account of the original creation of man itself contains

enough to settle this question for ever, Gen. ii. 7. The two elements of our nature are there plainly distinguished, the body made of dust, and to return to dust again, and the immaterial, immortal part breathed by God into man's nostrils to make him a living soul. That the doctrine of immortality is not spoken of before in the book of Job, is simply because it was designedly reserved for this passage as the sublime utterance of a faith secure of the future, though without a visible prop in the present. It does not recur afterwards, because the aim of its introduction is now accomplished. Job's despair is stilled by it, but it is not the solution of the question to whose discussion the book is devoted. Hofmann, who (Schriftbeweis II. 2, p. 471) supposes an earthly restoration to be the thing intended in this passage, is peculiar in his attempt to show from that the writer's certain knowledge of a future state. He says that the very emphasizing of the present, involves a tacit opposition to the future.

We are amazed to find Hahn, who is usually so correct in his opinions, giving a view of this passage, which empties it still more of its meaning than that just opposed. According to him, no future vindication is referred to at all, by God or man, in this world or the next; all has relation to the present moment, and the statement is merely a repetition of what he had said several times before, that God was at that very time aware of his innocence, though he still allowed him to suffer. The process by which this sense is arrived at is as extraordinary as the sense itself. He translates thus: "I know that my Redeemer lives, and a proctor (this rendering of אחרון is about matched by his making ברק xx. 25, mean 'a stream of blood') stands above the earth (in heaven.) Even after my skin which is thus destroyed and bare of flesh (in my present emaciated condition) I see God" (I know what his judgment is of my character; he does not regard me as guilty.) There is the less need of spending words upon the refutation of this view, as it has since been abandoned by its author, who has reverted to the old and only tenable ground. And there is quite as little necessity of delaying to discuss such notions as that of Aben Ezra, that the Redeemer here spoken of, is some man then living, who would come forth after Job was dead, and vindicate his memory; or

of Hirzel, that Job entertained the fanatical expectation that God would instantaneously and visibly appear for him, and against his friends.

Job's own inward conflict being thus stilled, he no longer acts merely on the defensive, but proceeds in his remaining discourses to assail the position of his friends. And the first blow which he deals is really decisive of the conflict. In his reply to Zophar, chap. xxi. he demonstrates by undeniable facts that suffering is not invariably attendant upon sin, and graduated by it. With their first principle thus hopelessly demolished, only one course remains open to the friends, if they will continue to maintain the show of an argument; and this Eliphaz takes in his next discourse which opens the third and last series. The discussion can no longer be kept up as heretofore on general grounds. The universality of the connection between sin and punishment in the external lot of men, cannot be reasserted in the face of what Job has now said, and the facts of experience which he has adduced. The only thing that can be done, is to claim that in this particular case that connection has been observed. Eliphaz accordingly comes out with a direct and explicit attack upon the life and character of Job, maintaining that his enormous criminality sufficiently accounted for the extraordinary sufferings he was enduring. The question at issue was thus brought down to a very narrow compass. It was now a simple matter of fact, which could readily be ascertained. Was Job the guilty man, which he had been alleged to be, or was he not? In his reply he takes up the challenge thus thrown down. While he considers it beneath him to notice particularly these unfounded charges of specific crime, he solemnly appeals to the tribunal of the Searcher of hearts, as vouching for his innocence; and then proceeds to show more conclusively than before, that there were cases of aggravated suffering not the fruit of sin, and of aggravated sin not succeeded by suffering. This puts an end to this argument, upon which the friends have been ringing changes from the beginning, and which has been the main staple of their discourses. It has now been refuted both in the general and in its application to this case. There is nothing left for Bildad, therefore, but to present, which he feebly does, their other

standing argument; the infinite exaltation of God, before whom no man can pretend to absolute purity.

As the defeat of the friends is intimated by Zophar's failing to answer Job's next speech, so the victory of Job is intimated by the unusual length to which his closing speech is extended, and by his pausing twice as though he was waiting for a reply, which they do not make. This peculiarity of external form must not, however, be allowed too much effect upon the interpretation. It is not three speeches, but one speech in three distinct but closely related parts, and of gradually increasing length, and is to be regarded as a general reply to all that had been urged upon the other side, a summing up of the whole argument. In the first section, chap. xxvi., Job concedes the fact upon which one of the arguments of the friends, that just reiterated by Bildad, is built, viz. God's infinite greatness; but shows its inapplicability by outdoing Bildad in the description, without yielding his position. In the second section, chaps. xxvii., xxviii., he does the same with their other main argument, the rectitude of God's retributions. Though insisting that this is inapplicable to his own case, he concedes the fact and exhibits the true ground upon which it rests. For while man, though able to uncover the secrets of nature, cannot find, and the world cannot teach, wherein true wisdom lies, God has revealed that it consists in the fear of God, and in departing from evil. It is a lesson, therefore, resting on higher authority than any human experience, that ruin attends wicked courses, and happiness is only for the good. A large number of commentators, and among them Hahn and Schlottmann, understand chap. xxviii. differently, supposing it to teach the inscrutable nature of divine providence, and the impossibility of man's comprehending the wisdom by which God manages the world. We prefer, however, the view already given, which is substantially that of Hengstenberg and of Prof. Conant.

Considerable embarrassment has been created by the fact that Job seems to assert in this section, what he had strenuously denied in his previous speeches. Hence some have been disposed to think that the missing speech of Zophar has, by some error and confusion of the text, been assigned to Job. The whole difficulty may be explained, however, by attending to the

design of the respective passages. Job had denied the universality of a providential retribution, by showing that there were multitudes of cases, his own among the number, to which that rule would not apply. But he had no idea of denying that God exercised a moral government, on account of these inexplicable anomalies. He never meant to say that the course of the sinner was the path of wisdom and the high road to happiness. Accordingly he does not here contradict, but merely qualifies and explains his previous statements. He first provides for the exceptional cases which he had before exclusively insisted upon, by maintaining his own integrity notwithstanding his afflictions. He then freely concedes, what he had never doubted nor disputed, the existence of a righteous government in the world. In fact so far from being foreign to Job's views, it was this very conviction of God's essential righteousness, which enabled him to rise to that triumphant expression of his faith in chap. xix.

The fundamental idea of wisdom common to this book with the other two of the same class, and their mutual relations, have already been remarked upon. The resemblance of chap. xxviii. to various passages in Proverbs chaps. i.—ix. has been often observed, and is one of the grounds urged in favour of the composition of this book in the age of Solomon. But it may be worth while to notice the occurrence of a similar thought with a remarkable similarity of expression in the writings of Moses, Deut. xxx. 11–16, where he speaks of the life and good which he set before the people, as obtained not by searching for it in heaven, nor by going beyond the sea, but as brought nigh them by the revelation of God.

In the third section of his discourse Job proceeds to show that in spite of the concessions just made, the enigma of his own case remained unsolved. The problem in fact was one not reached by their arguments; it was that of suffering righteousness. He dwells (chap. xxix.) upon his former happy condition; then states in contrast (chap. xxx.) the present dismal reverse, and (chap. xxxi.) his freedom from any crime which could account for the change. The opinion expressed by Delitzsch and others, that xxxi. 35–37 has been shifted from its proper place, and that this solemn appeal to God and asseveration of

innocence ought to stand at the close of the chapter, could only have arisen from overlooking the plan upon which the whole is arranged. This plan is to group together a number of hypothetical statements of his guilt of various crimes, with the occasional introduction of a parenthesis denying the fact of the crime hypothetically assumed, and to terminate the entire series by the imprecation of a severe penalty upon himself, if he were really guilty. Thus ver. 22 is the imprecation following the various hypothetical statements of criminality found in vs. 13, 16, 19, 20, 21, while vs. 14, 15 and ver. 18 contain parentheses declaring his abhorrence of, or freedom from the forms of criminality named. So ver. 40 is an imprecation closing the series of hypothetical statements beginning with ver. 24, the form of the imprecation being determined as in the previous instance by the sin last named. In the course of this series of assumed possibilities he introduces parenthetical clauses denying the truth of the suppositions made, c. g. vs. 28, 30, 32. So also vs. 35–37; having supposed the case that he might have concealed crimes of which he was really guilty, he introduces this parenthesis affirming in the most emphatic terms that he had no cause to do so. Then after another hypothetical statement of crime he adds to the whole an imprecation. And there are few probably, who would not say that the imprecation is the most fitting and emphatic close.

Job is thus the victor in the argument. His friends have failed in their attempt to show cause why he should not complain. All that they have been able to advance, has fallen before his double appeal to the inequalities existing in the world, and to his own internal consciousness of rectitude. So far he stands justified, and his complaint against the providence of God appears to be well founded. The matter cannot of course be suffered to rest here. The question has only become more and more perplexed as the discussion has advanced; and some foreign aid is needed to disentangle it; some umpire to set both parties right, point out what is wrong in each, and show where the truth lies—to show how it is that a righteous man like Job can suffer as he did, and yet no reproach be cast upon the providence of God, nor the sufferer have any just ground to complain. This want is supplied in the remaining

chapters, which contain the decision. It is two-fold, as rendered by Elihu, and as rendered by the Lord.

No part of this book has given more trouble to interpreters than the speech of Elihu. It has been an exceedingly vexed question, what he is intended to represent, in what relation his decision stands to that of the Lord, or why two decisions are given, in place of settling the controversy by one. Many German critics, instead of patiently untying the knot, cut it by the assumption that the discourse of Elihu is an interpolation.

In proof of this it is urged, 1. That its language and style are different from the rest of the book. But a degree of individuality is given to each of the speakers by peculiarities of language; it was natural that this should be done for Elihu as for the rest. And if words and expressions occur here which are not met with again in the book, the same might be said of any portion of equal extent which could be selected in any part of it; for the whole abounds in unusual words and forms. Besides these are more than balanced by a still greater number of characteristic expressions which do occur in other parts of the book and betray identity of authorship.

2. No mention is made of Elihu elsewhere than in this single section. But there is no professed enumeration of the *dramatis personæ* in the previous part of the book. The three friends are spoken of because with them the discussion is carried on. Elihu only speaks because they cannot answer Job. To announce him at the beginning, therefore, would be to anticipate their failure before their incapacity had been actually shown. That nothing is said of him after his speech is concluded, is just because there was nothing to be said about him. Job makes no reply because he is silenced by the force of what is presented; and Elihu was not one of the parties to the contest, in reference to whom a judgment was to be expressed. His decision is impliedly sanctioned by the Lord, and that is all that could be asked.

3. This speech is alleged to be inconsistent with the plan and purpose of the book, but upon grounds mutually repugnant, and which may very properly be allowed to neutralize each other. Some object that it anticipates the Lord's decision, and so renders it superfluous; others, that it contradicts his deci-

sion, and consequently cannot be admitted. Neither charge is true, as a correct exposition will show.

A good illustration of the facility with which some German critics can believe or disbelieve just what they please, is furnished by Delitzsch's assertion that this speech, which he thinks to be greatly in advance of the rest of the book in its teachings, and to have been added to it by way of correction, is an interpolation, but is nevertheless canonical.

Among those who admit the genuineness of this discourse, there is still a wide difference of opinion as to the function assigned to it in the plan of the writer. Some have thought him to be the representative of human reason, and his decision to be not true but false, the true decision being subsequently given by the Lord. The purpose of his introduction will then be to show that here is an enigma, which unaided reason cannot solve. This is not a recent opinion. Jerome found in Elihu the representative of philosophy as opposed to faith, which latter was taught in the discourse of the Lord. Gregory the Great regarded him as a boastful, conceited stripling, presumptuously undertaking to solve a question to which older and wiser men had shown themselves incompetent. These lights in the western Church had a great influence upon subsequent commentators, down to the time of the Reformers, with whom a different view prevailed. The majority of Rationalistic writers take a like depreciating view of the part of Elihu. Eichhorn says that Job does not reply, for the reason that a giant would not measure himself with a boy. Among those who regard Elihu as the exponent of human reason, there is quite a diversity of judgment as to the ability which marks his discourse; some regarding it as empty and shallow in the highest degree, others as clear and forcible, and representing the loftiest result of the unaided wisdom of man, which fails, it is true, to give a just solution, but only because the problem itself transcends man's capacity, and requires the intervention of God himself in order to explain it. The advocates of this view, however modified, generally assume that Elihu stands upon the same platform essentially with the three friends, that of the invariable connection of suffering with sin, and that his doctrine is tantamount to theirs, or so nearly so, as not to embrace the case

in hand; while the doctrine of the decision given by the Lord is on the other hand, that these providences are inscrutable by man, as God's other works are. Man must bow to the infinite greatness of God, and submit without murmuring to his sovereign though inexplicable pleasure.

This seems to be a defective view of the case. For, 1. It is antecedently very improbable that a character to whom so large a space and so much prominence are assigned in the book, should contribute nothing or next to nothing to its main design. If the speech of Elihu does little more than repeat what had been said by the friends, and especially if it is mere twaddle and empty declamation, it is unworthy of its place and of the writer.

2. The positions taken by Elihu are not identical with those of the friends, and ought not to be confounded with them. The writer evidently did not intend them to be identical, for he says expressly (xxxii. 3) that Elihu blamed the friends for not having found the proper answer to Job. His own must consequently stand upon different ground from theirs. All that is plausible in this view of the matter arises from the fact that Elihu in several cases repeats the language of the friends, or uses expressions similar to those which they had employed. But he does so discriminatingly. They had said much that was just and true, and was only vitiated by the wrong application made of it. Elihu sanctions what was right, condemns what was wrong, and puts the whole matter upon its proper basis. The intimate relationship between the discourse of Elihu and that of the Lord is also such as to lend a divine sanction to the former, and attest the truth of his claim to inspiration.

3. The solution of the sufferings of the righteous furnished in this book is something more than that they must be resigned to an arbitrary allotment, which admits of neither justification nor explanation. That would leave the problem entirely unsolved, and would not remove the difficulty at all. A man may be crushed under an infinite force, and have to submit to it. But such a view of the matter will not satisfy his higher nature, and it will be impossible, except upon stoical principles, to acquiesce unmurmuringly in such an allotment.

The relation of these two decisions, as we conceive it, may be

expressed by calling the first the theoretical, and the second the practical decision. As far as there was any need of argument to justify the ways of God, this task was committed to Elihu. He meets Job like an equal, takes up the various points involved in the controversy, and shows Job that he was wrong in his complaint, and that God was right. The way is thus prepared for the Lord to appear and bring the whole matter to a final issue, rendering a decision not by mere words, but by acts.

The position of Elihu is distinguished from that taken by the friends, mainly by two particulars. He, like them, maintains a constant connection between suffering and sin. That this is not inconsistent with what is said of this infliction in the historical preface, has already been seen. Unlike them, however, he regards suffering as disciplinary, whereas they considered it as exclusively penal, with the exception of v. 17, which solitary passage had no influence on the general tone of their discussion; and sin is understood by him, not of gross external crimes merely, but as including inward states of heart, such as pride, xxxiii. 17, xxxv. 12, xxxvi. 9. His speech consists of four divisions. In the first (chap. xxxiii.) he establishes that suffering is sent upon the same errand with God's revelations to reclaim from sin; and if, when God's messenger explains its design, it is submissively received, its end is answered, and it will be removed. In the second (chap. xxxiv.) he shows that God is righteous in all his dealings; in the third (chap. xxxv.) that man can have no such merit before God as to claim exemption from suffering as a right; in the fourth (chaps. xxxvi. xxxvii.) that grace is joined with power in God. Job's silence is an admission that these principles are conclusive, and that they have effectually put an end to his complaint.

The discourse of the Lord is, as was fitting, far the sublimest portion of the book. Though the former speeches abound in lofty and striking passages, where one would think that the writer was exhibiting his full power, it is plain, when we see the new grandeur and majesty which are here developed, that he has been consciously holding back his strength to the last, with the view of making a worthy contrast between the divine speaker and the men who had preceded.

The principles upon which the question between Job and his

friends should be settled, having been stated by Elihu, nothing remains but to give to this the seal of the divine attestation by the actual issue to which God shall conduct the whole matter. This is the aim of the personal intervention of the Lord himself, and of his practical decision. He enters into no explanation of the principles upon which he conducts his providence; he makes no statement even of what had been his design in this instance; he brings no argument to justify to men the course which he had taken, or which he might at any time please to take. As far as it had been thought necessary or proper to give explanations and arguments, this had been devolved upon Elihu, who as God's agent and ambassador might very properly reason with his fellow-man, and labour to correct his misapprehensions, and justify to him the ways of God. It would not have been compatible with the divine dignity, however, to suffer the impression to be made that God regarded himself as amenable to human opinion or to the tribunal of his creatures. He is not responsible to them; nor are they authorized judges of his acts. The event itself is the only explanation which he deigns to furnish. The wisdom and goodness which mark the issue, afford sufficient proof that, in spite of previous appearances, he has been wise and good throughout. The issue to which God brings the sufferings of Job, and by which consequently his decision of the case is practically rendered, consists of two parts. It is, 1. Internal and spiritual, xxxviii. 1—xlii. 6, concerning the feelings and heart of Job; 2. External, xlii. 7–17, concerning his outward circumstances.

The spiritual effect or issue produced upon the heart of Job is, that he is brought to penitence and humiliation, xlii. 6. He is brought to say, "I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes." That which immediately produces this effect is his seeing God, ver. 5, "I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear, but now mine eye seeth thee." These verses are the key to what precedes, and must guide us in its interpretation. The great thing done by the Lord in this first part of his decision is, that he manifests or reveals himself to Job in such a way as brings him to humble penitence. He so appears as to make upon Job a profound impression of his presence and glory. The discourse, which he utters, is subordinated wholly

to this design of deepening Job's sense of the present God, of bringing home to his soul the thought of how great and glorious that Being is, who has appeared and who speaks to him.

In unfolding his greatness and glory to Job, the Lord dwells chiefly and almost exclusively upon those displays of it which are found in creation and in the external world, which he has made and which he upholds. It is to misconceive the purport of the decision which the Lord here renders, to see in it only an appeal to his omnipotence; so that the lesson would simply be, it is man's wisdom to submit to a power which it is vain for him to think of resisting. This would reduce its teaching to the heathen idea of submission to inexorable fate. Besides, if this were the meaning of the Lord's discourse, it could never have produced the effect upon the heart of Job, which it did produce, and to which allusion has already been made. In fact it was his being tempted to take this very view of God, and of his providential dealings toward him, which had awakened the previous struggle in his mind and been the source of his bitterest complaints. The whole art of the tempter lay in representing the Most High as an almighty force, crushing him without right or reason to the earth. God is more than power; or the heart of the sufferer could never be so melted into acquiescence as Job's was.

Nor again is it the design of this discourse simply to present the evidences of God's infinite wisdom, observable everywhere in the works of his hands; as though the lesson to be inculcated were exclusively this, that his orderings are infinitely wise and lifted immensely above the comprehension of man. His duty, therefore, in relation to afflictive dispensations, is to bow implicitly before a mystery which he cannot comprehend, but which is not on that account less profoundly wise. The real lesson is much broader than this. More is done towards solving this mystery than thus to pronounce it insolvable. And more comfort is given to the sufferer in view of the divine dealings than would be afforded by saying simply that they are inscrutable.

These incorrect or rather partial views of the design of the Lord's discourse have arisen in the first place from the erroneous supposition that it is designed as the direct answer to Job's

difficulty; whereas it makes no immediate nor express allusion to the case in hand. It is not directed to the solution of the enigma, but is subsidiary to the fact that God now appears before Job. It is simply designed to make a vivid impression upon Job's mind and heart of his character and greatness. It is but, as it were, the speaker's announcement of himself, I am GOD. A second source of these partial views has been the dissevering of this discourse from that of Elihu, as though they were two independent things; whereas Elihu's was a preparation for this, and his statements and reasonings are here presupposed. Elihu had dwelt upon the grace and the holiness of God, and had shown that these attributes are not impaired by the afflictions which he sends. He is gracious and just even in these afflictions. He is just, because no man has any such merit or claims, that God deprives him of his rights by afflicting him. He is gracious, because these afflictions are sent with a merciful design. These reasonings and explanations of Elihu removed the stumbling-block out of Job's mind, reconciled to him what he had found it impossible to reconcile before, and took away that obstacle which had prevented him from seeing God in his true character. When God now appeared, he was prepared to discern in him the possession of all his glorious attributes. He carried with him into his view of the divine nature those lessons which Elihu had taught him. He now saw the justice and benevolence of God. So that as soon as God appeared to him, and a practical impression was made upon his heart of the majesty and glory of the Most High, these attributes which had been so long obscured, shone out brightly with the rest. The words uttered by the Lord are occupied, it is true, with appeals to his works in nature, which may be said to yield a direct proof, only or at least mainly of his power and wisdom. But it is because these works palpable to every eye, give the grandest impression of his exalted being. They carry with them the irresistible conviction that he is the all-perfect One; and if this is so, he must be perfect in every attribute. No such monstrous conception could be admitted, as a being perfect in power, and perfect in wisdom, but devoid of goodness and of holiness. And hence after the instruction given by Elihu, and the preparation which his discourse afforded, it was

only necessary for the Lord to bring vividly to view the sublime greatness of his nature in any one of its manifestations, in order to dispose Job to accept it in every other. Job had himself discoursed before at length of the wisdom and power of God. But he had contemplated these too much as isolated attributes; and this knowledge did not humble him. But now, when he not only hears of God, but sees him, and consequently views these in their indissoluble connection with the other divine perfections; when he views them as exalting the infinite nature of Him who is possessed of every lofty and glorious attribute, all disposition to murmur is hushed, and Job bows subdued in penitent submission.

The decisive reason, therefore, here given why he had no right to complain, is found in God's infinitely glorious nature; not in his power merely, nor in his wisdom abstracted from his other perfections, but in that exalted nature which embraces within itself the whole assemblage of divine perfections. The perfections of God present a ground for the most assured trust of his creatures; they can confide in him and ought to confide in him, under all circumstances. Such a being as he is, cannot do anything but what is wise and right and good. As soon as Job felt God's presence, he was instantly ashamed, and abhorred himself for what he had said. It was God who had done it, and that was enough. He could acquiesce without a word of complaint.

The second lesson brought to view by this issue of Job's affliction is, that the design of God in sending or permitting it, was to bring Job to this increased acquaintance with himself. Or, as the practical knowledge of God is identical with true piety, this is equivalent to saying that it was designed to lead him to a more elevated piety. The design of God in this matter is to be learned not from any verbal explanation which he makes, that would have comported less with the divine dignity—but from the event. That event is that Job is brought to a better and fuller acquaintance with God than he had before. The only solution of his enigma is found in God's infinitely perfect nature being brought practically home to his inmost feelings and convictions. He can find peace and satisfaction in no other. In that he finds instant repose. And as Job's case is

proposed as an example for the whole class of sufferers to which he belonged, the design of God here rendered apparent by the event may be safely taken as evidence of the design entertained by him in every like instance. Suffering and trial put a man in a position, in which an ordinary amount of faith in God will not answer; in which a faith that might maintain itself in times of prosperity will not hold out. It requires an increased persuasion of God's infinitely glorious attributes to give a man comfort and peace then; and this persuasion the severity of his affliction will lead him to struggle after, and by God's grace to attain. A condescending disclosure of himself made, if not like this to Job by an audible voice from the whirlwind, yet by the inward voice of his Spirit confirming and applying the word sent by his human messengers, such as Elihu, is the customary end of the afflictions of the pious.

The Lord's discourse is divided into two parts, at the close of each of which Job gives expression to the feelings of abasement, awakened by the view of God now vouchsafed to him. God first speaks of the displays of himself made in the inanimate and the animate creation, xxxviii. 1—xl. 2. Job can only reply that his unutterable sense of his own meanness in the contrast has silenced his complaint, xl. 3–5. God speaks again of the absurd presumption of his venturing a conflict with the Creator, who could not even contend with his creatures, xl. 6—xli. 34. Job replies more deeply humbled still. The inner workings of his thoughts are finely portrayed. We hear him repeating over to himself the words of God, which had so deeply penetrated his heart, and echoing their justice and their force. He first charges home upon his soul the opening words of God's first address, containing the theme to which it had been directed, (xxxviii. 2,) "Who is he that hideth counsel without knowledge?" Who is he that in his folly obscures or denies the wisdom of the divine proceedings? He admits the justice of the reproof, and owns that he has been talking of things above his capacity. He then repeats to himself the challenge with which God began his second address, (xl. 7,) rebuking his presumption for contending with him, and to which that branch of the Lord's discourse had been directed. But the new views now obtained of the glory of the divine nature,

made him loathe himself that he had been guilty of such arrogance.

The spiritual design of the affliction being thus accomplished, the Lord proceeds to the second or external part of his practical decision, by rectifying Job's standing in relation to his three friends, and then reversing his calamities and doubling his previous prosperity. The friends had been looking down upon him as justly condemned of heaven. The Lord, however, pronounces against them, and in his favour. He had, it is true, spoken some things rashly and presumptuously, but for these he had now expressed the deepest penitence. Meanwhile, in spite of the sorest temptation, he had held fast to his confidence in God, and even risen to a triumphant statement of it. They had not only cruelly assailed instead of succouring their distressed friend, but in their professed defence of divine providence, had really limited God more than Job had done. They had prescribed a scheme of providential retribution, as though that were the only one consistent with equity and righteousness, which yet was very different and palpably so from the one God actually pursues. It was tantamount, therefore, to an indirect charge of injustice, even more serious than that made by Job, and for which they had no similar extenuation, in that they were not exposed to a like temptation. Their pardon being suspended upon his intercession, the first step in his restoration is made to test the thoroughness of that humiliation which his affliction has wrought. Will he forgive his friends for the unkind speeches which had so provoked and embittered him against them? As Job sustains this test, the next and concluding step is taken in his restoration.

Seeking again the design of God in the event, we learn that it was his purpose, by means of this affliction, to enhance Job's happiness. As far as Satan was concerned, this affliction, sent at his instigation, was designed for his confusion by the exhibition of Job's constancy; and this end was answered, notwithstanding any weakness he may have betrayed in the hour of its greatest severity. But as far as Job himself was concerned, we are taught, by combining the leading points of the Lord's decision, that the grounds of acquiescence in afflicting dispensations are to be found, first, in God's glorious perfections, and,

secondly, in his gracious design thereby to advance the holiness and the highest welfare of the sufferer. And this is precisely the teaching of Elihu, though presented in a different form. What he says in words, the Lord confirms by deeds. The two decisions are in entire harmony, yet each is indispensable.

That the mystery of this perplexing subject is not so fully opened up in this book, belonging to the former dispensation, and perhaps to its earlier periods, as it is in the New Testament, is a matter of course. The Comforter was not yet given to the saints so largely as he is now. And we find holy men all through the Old Testament, and especially in this book and in the Psalms, uttering their complaints in their afflictions as though they were suffering beneath God's frowns. The full revelation of divine love had not then been made, nor the perfection of the triumph of divine grace over evil been exhibited. So that it might be thoroughly and practically felt how completely afflictions have changed their nature, and instead of being frowns and tokens of displeasure, though merited and temporary, they are become positive fruits and evidences of love, according to the munificence of that gospel grant, "All things are yours," "All things work together for good." The great Pattern of submissive suffering had not then appeared, nor could the argument so full of consolation be employed, "Seeing that Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves with the same mind." And as life and immortality were not then so fully brought to light, it could not be said with the joyful confidence of an apostle, "These light afflictions, which are for a moment, work for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." And yet it will be perceived that the germs of the whole gospel doctrine are already here, only needing to be expanded to New Testament dimensions. There is not only the utmost harmony, but absolute identity; only one pursues the same course to a further point than the other. Perhaps it may not be improper to seek here the germs of future doctrine to even a greater extent than has now been intimated. It may be that the Messianic contents of this book, (for Christ cannot be absent from any leading portion of the Old Testament,) is to be sought less in detached passages than in its prominent figure, and in the idea presented

of the righteous sufferer. The struggle with Satan's malignity under the seeming hidings of God's face, conducted to Satan's overthrow; the being made perfect through sufferings, and the heightened blessedness consequent upon them, present a conception to the mind which was to be realized in its most perfect ideal. This thought we find freshly pursued under the guidance of the Spirit in those Psalms, in which the righteous sufferer is again depicted, with a basis, perhaps, in the actual experience of the writer, but with unmistakable reference to the future ideal. A line of typical or prophetic reference is thus drawn, culminating in Isaiah liii. in a clear statement of the doctrine of a suffering but sinless Messiah. The counterpart is written in the Gospels.

Every one who reads it, must be struck with the sublime power of this wonderful book. And certainly no one can study it without an ever heightening admiration. The marvellous fertility of its imagery, the grandeur of its descriptions, the masterly treatment of its high and solemn theme, the skill with which its various characters are managed, the vivid boldness with which the workings of a soul in the intensest inward struggles are depicted, and the delicate nicety displayed even in minute points of its structure and arrangement, place it among the loftiest productions of genius, even were it to be considered in no other light. That the author of such a book as this should have wholly dropped from sight, and have made no figure with his transcendent abilities in the history of Israel, seems scarcely supposable. It has often and justly been remarked, that the writer must have drunk deeply of the cup of affliction himself, have known in his own experience the inward conflict he portrays, and had brought home to his own heart the lessons that are here set before others. Can it be only another, in a series of fortuitous coincidences, that the reputed son of Pharaoh's daughter was driven forth an exiled fugitive for forty years for the crime of sympathizing with the Lord's people?—"choosing rather to *suffer affliction* with the people of God, than to enjoy the temporary pleasures of sin." Who can tell what it cost him to submit to this sudden reversal of fortune, and this apparently utter blasting of long cherished hopes, instilled even by a mother's faith into his infant mind? We see a momentary

trace of it dimming his joy at the birth of his first-born son, Ex. ii. 22. We read its permanent effects in the transformation of the impetuous youth into the man of self-distrust, and of meekness beyond that of any upon the face of the earth.

The volumes named at the head of this article are the best with which we are acquainted, that have appeared upon Job within the present decennium in Europe or America. That of Professor Conant is a translation with notes; each of the others is a commentary with a translation. The very cursory examination which we have been able to bestow upon the work of Professor Conant satisfies us of the scholarship and ability with which it has been executed; and we have no hesitation in commending it to students of this book as a valuable aid toward its interpretation. That we find ourselves to differ from him in some of his views, does not surprise us in a book which confessedly presents so many difficulties.

While such is our judgment, however, of this work as a private enterprise, we must not be understood for one moment to endorse the action of the Society, under whose auspices it is given to the public, nor to consent that this new translation should supersede in general and ecclesiastical use the common authorized version. It savours of no small presumption, in our judgment, for the fraction of a single denomination to arrogate to itself the work of altering that version, which is the common property of English-speaking Christendom. We do not claim perfection for the common version, but we do say that it is the best version in use in any language, ancient or modern. And the chances are ten thousand to one, that if the attempt was now made to prepare a substitute, it would be worse instead of better. And judging by representations made by those who ought to know, we should rate the chances in the attempt made by this Society at an immensely higher figure than that. The evils of making any change will be so serious, that nothing but the certainty of a great and positive good can justify the experiment. The common agreement of all Christian bodies upon the existing version, the familiarity of the people with it, the reverence with which it is regarded, the extent of its introduction into our religious literature, are advantages which will all be thrown away, the moment it begins to be tinkered

with. And what, even upon the most favourable assumption, is to be gained by the change? In the great body of the Bible the common version is the very best for the popular reader that could be made even at this day. The parts, where improvement is possible, form not the rule, but the exception, and a very limited exception too. It is almost exclusively in the most difficult passages of such books as Job, or the obscurer prophets, that corrections could be made. In none of these is any important point of doctrine or duty involved; in most, the essential meaning of the passage as a whole would be little if at all affected by the changes to be introduced; while in many, the best scholars are still far from being agreed as to the precise rendering to be preferred. To give a single instance of this diversity, Professor Conant translates Job xxx. 24, "Yea, there is no prayer, when he stretches out the hand; nor when he destroys, can they cry for help." Hahn, "May not a man in falling even raise his hand, nor in his destruction cry thereat?" Schlottmann, "Only let no one lay hands upon ruins; or is his fall another's weal?" Besides it is not impossible that there may be a reaction in Hebrew philology, and at least a partial return to old traditional interpretations from which it has departed. Of whatever service, therefore, such a translation as that of which we are speaking may be in the study of the Bible, and however it may serve as one of the preparatory steps toward an improvement of the existing version at some future time, we are more than ever convinced that the proper time for making any changes in the authorized version has not yet come. And if ever a time should come, when such a thing shall be feasible or expedient, let it be not a sectarian but a Christian enterprise, undertaken by the entire Church using the English language.