

# ANSWER BY GEORGE COMBE

TO THE

## ATTACK ON "THE CONSTITUTION OF MAN,"

CONTAINED IN

"NATURE AND REVELATION HARMONIOUS: A DEFENCE OF SCRIPTURE TRUTHS ASSAILED IN MR GEORGE COMBE'S WORK ON THE CONSTITUTION OF MAN, &c., BY THE REV. C. J. KENNEDY, PAISLEY; PUBLISHED UNDER THE SANCTION OF THE SCOTTISH ASSOCIATION FOR OPPOSING PREVALENT ERRORS."

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"Why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye?"—MATTHEW viii. 3.

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NOTE.—*The following pages first appeared in the Phrenological Journal, No. 93, for October 1847 ; but as Mr Kennedy's work may have reached individuals who do not read that Periodical, the article has been revised, and is now presented to the Public in its present form. Its origin will explain the use of the plural number, and of the third person, in speaking of the author and his book.*

G. C.

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## ANSWER, &c.

In 1845 an association was formed in Edinburgh by "a number of friends of evangelical truth," for "opposing prevalent errors." James Douglas, Esq. of Cavers, is, or was, the chairman, and the Rev. William Thomson, the Secession minister of Slateford, a small village near Edinburgh, is the secretary. The "prevalent errors" which the Society considers itself called upon to oppose, are, "Popery," "Puseyism," "Pantheism," "Anti-Supernaturalism," "Socialism," "Combe's *Constitution of Man*," and the "*Vestiges of the Natural History of Creation*." Mr Kennedy's work, mentioned in the title page, has been published under its sanction, and is the best of the books that have been written against "The Constitution of Man."

The secretary of the Association, in his official circular, acknowledges, that "there is little in the piety or principle of the mass of the population to which we can confidently look as a barrier to this tide of superstition." This is an ominous avowal, and one which—taken in connection with Dr Chalmers's declaration in the North British Review for February 1847, that, "as things stand at present, our creeds and confessions have become effete"—looks uncommonly like an avowal of failure by men who have been engaged in a vain attempt to *maintain* "prevalent errors." It forms a strange prelude to the announcement, that, notwithstanding this failure, they consider themselves qualified to undertake the gigantic task here presented in outline.

Since the Revolution in 1688, the clergy of Scotland have enjoyed the privilege of governing parish schools, and instructing the people in religion; and if, in the year 1847, they are constrained to acknowledge that their "creeds and catechisms have become effete," and that they have been able to infuse so "little piety or principle into the mass of the population," that they cannot resist Popery and Puseyism, and the various other "isms" before enumerated, they should really look into their own standards and tenets, and see if there be not in them some "vestiges" of error which have been the causes of so great a failure. Strength, solidity, and endurance, are the characteristics of truth; instability, feebleness, and decay, those of error. When, therefore, they acknowledge, that, after so long period of teaching, the latter

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characteristics attach to their own tenets, they should be modest in their condemnation of those of other men. It is, perhaps, a consciousness of this fact that has led them to add that they "feel the need of prudence and caution." These, certainly, are becoming principles of action in men who are meditating assaults upon the opinions of their neighbours, while their own positions are exposed to danger. We shall, however, endeavour to shew that they stand in need of even more of these virtues than they have exhibited in the present publication.

At the same time, we have great pleasure in making one acknowledgment in favour of Mr Kennedy's work. It is free from vulgar vituperation and denunciation. It is, moreover, well written, and, in some instances, ingeniously argued; and it is altogether superior to any thing we have seen produced on that side of the question. Unfortunately, we cannot carry our commendations farther. It assumes throughout that the Scotch Calvinistic *interpretations* of the Bible are the *Scriptures*, and that no different interpretations have ever been heard of; or at least none that are deserving even of mention. In *The Constitution of Man*, Mr Combe has quoted the following words of Dr Whately. "If we really are convinced of the truth of Scripture, and consequently of the falsity of any theory (of the earth for instance) which is really at variance with it, we must needs believe that that theory is also at variance with observable phenomena; and we ought not, therefore, to shrink from trying the question by an appeal to these." Mr Kennedy answers—

"With all due deference to this high authority, we maintain that, if Mr Combe's doctrines are really at variance with Scripture, and if we are really convinced of the truth of Scripture, we must conclude that Mr Combe's doctrines are false. The reasoning is so obviously fair, that we have no fear to exhibit it, either to Mr Combe or to the great logician whom he quotes. It stands thus:—

What is really at variance with Scripture cannot be true;  
Mr Combe's theory of the world is really at variance with Scripture;  
Therefore, Mr Combe's theory of the world cannot be true."

With all deference to Mr Kennedy, the Archbishop of Dublin is in the right. The record of nature is beyond all question Divine; and whatever we read correctly in it is Divine revelation. Hence it follows, to use the Archbishop's words, that "a pretended revelation would be proved not to be a true one, if it were at variance with the laws by which the Maker of the universe governs it." (*Essay on Christian Self-denial*.) Mr Kennedy, therefore, and his Society, and all other persons who assail expositions of scientific truths, by arguing that

they are at variance with the doctrines of Scripture, mistake the way to accomplish their own ends. Their true duty is to expound the laws of nature themselves, directly from the records of creation, and then to shew that their own interpretations of Scripture are in harmony with them. The title of Mr Kennedy's work would lead us to expect that he had done this; but his leading object has been only to attack Mr Combe's doctrines.

Dr Chalmers was called upon, in the Bridgewater Treatise assigned to him, to present a view of the moral government of the world by natural laws, if such exists; and had he given a sounder and more practically useful exposition of them than that contained in "The Constitution of Man," and afterwards reconciled Calvinism with it, he would not subsequently have been under the necessity of acknowledging that men "can speak, and with a truth the most humiliating, of our inert and unproductive orthodoxy." Calvinism, proved by an appeal to scientific facts to be a correct interpretation of nature, so far as its doctrines touch the beings and interests of this world, would exhibit none of the symptoms of weakness and decay before referred to; and a people instructed in the firm alliance between it and nature, would possess not a "little," but *much* "of the piety or principle to which we can confidently look as a barrier to the tide of superstition."

The Society of which we speak will do well to take this hint into consideration. "The Constitution of Man" is a body of alleged facts, and deductions from them. Mr Kennedy's work cannot take its place, because it contains no systematic exposition of the scheme of God's works and natural providence, which it is the aim of Mr Combe's treatise to exhibit. The human mind will not relinquish a positive for a negative, when that positive is acknowledged by Mr Kennedy himself to be "characterized by great ability," "its deleterious principles" being "mixed up with a large body of sound, and valuable, and interesting instruction." In the "Remarks on National Education," and in the essay on "The Relation between Religion and Science," Mr Combe has presented additional materials for the Society's operations. If they really design to make an impression on the public mind, let them grapple with the questions there proposed. For example, let them answer the following questions in substantive propositions, and prove the answers, viz.:—Is the world governed by natural laws, or is it not? If it is not, are physical and moral events still caused by special supernatural exertions of Divine power? If these have ceased, and no natural laws exist, is not this world necessarily a theatre of anarchy, and,

consequently, of atheism ? If, on the other hand, natural laws do exist, are they not of Divine institution and authority ? And if they possess this character, where is any intelligible and practical exposition of them, as guides to human conduct, challenging our reverence and obedience, to be found, emanating from "ministers and laymen connected with various denominations holding evangelical opinions ?" If no such expositions of them by these persons are published, is not the neglect of teaching them, true and practical infidelity to God's law written in the book of creation, on the part of these "ministers and laymen ?"

Farther : Are the practical precepts of Christianity regarding human conduct in this life in harmony with and supported by the order of God's providence in the natural world, or are they not ? If they are not, how *can* man conform his conduct to the order of nature *and* to these precepts ? If the precepts and God's order of providence in the natural world are in harmony,—as science proclaims,—why have these "ministers and laymen" failed to discover this fact ? and, if they have discovered it, why have they omitted to teach it ?

These are the questions which the "ministers and laymen" must fairly encounter and satisfactorily answer, before their lost strength will return to them ; and in giving them this advice, we are acting, we hope, as their sincere friends, and certainly as their wellwishers. If they had practised the "prudence and caution" of which they feel the need, they would have considered these questions maturely, before commencing their present crusade ; and perhaps saved themselves from the risk of a public exhibition of their own weakness, errors, and inconsistencies, while they are endeavouring to demonstrate those of their neighbours.

Chapter I. is entitled, "Mr Combe's hypothesis concerning the progressive development of elements of improvement in the physical and organic departments of the world considered ;" and the same subject is continued through the two subsequent chapters. The point at issue is, whether "the world contains within itself the elements of improvement ?" In the edition of 1835, Mr Combe had added to this sentence these words,—"which time will evolve and bring to maturity." Some persons had supposed these last expressions (unwarrantably, we think, when the context was taken into account) to imply a denial of the government of the world by Divine wisdom and power. In consequence of this misunderstanding, the expressions were altered in the next edition, that of 1841, and the words used were, "The world, including both the physical and moral departments, is, in itself, well and

wisely constructed on the principle of a progressive system, and, therefore, capable of improvement." Mr Kennedy founds his arguments exclusively on the edition of 1835, and never mentions the existence of any alterations in that of 1841. We have no doubt that this was unintentional on his part; but as the rule among honourable controversialists is to cite the latest, as the most carefully considered edition of a work assailed, we, while acquitting him of intentional injustice, regret the oversight, for his own sake.

Chapter IV. is on the "Harmony between Geology and Scripture;" which we leave in Mr Kennedy's hands, having neither interest nor space to enter into any controversy with him on the subject.

Chapter V. treats of the question, "Does the history of mankind establish Mr Combe's theory regarding progressive development?" Mr Kennedy's opening sentence admits that "mankind are, on the whole, making advancement in knowledge and civilization." "This advancement, however," he adds, "is not owing to the mere development of inherent elements of improvement in human nature. For this advancement of mankind, we must assign a very different cause. That cause is Divine mercy. Our world, though fallen, is not forsaken. It is marred; but there are agencies working to effect its restoration to order, beauty, and blessedness. Apostate man is the object of redeeming love, and the subject of renewing grace." This is fighting with a shadow. The real question, is, Whether the world be now governed through special supernatural interferences of God's power, or according to natural laws? Mr Kennedy has not shewn the former to be the case, and until he do so, we are entitled to hold by the latter, as the hypothesis which is supported by science and daily experience. But if the order of God's providence be now characterized by the regularity of natural laws, "redeeming love" and "renewing grace" cannot be *antagonistic* influences to these laws. Mr Kennedy would have better served his cause if he had fairly grappled with the merits of the question, and developed a view of the natural laws adapted to these influences, instead of harping on the words which Mr Combe had altered six years before the "Defence" was published, and which are no longer to be found in the "prevalent" editions of his work.

Chapter VI. is entitled, "Was Man originally mortal?" Mr Kennedy concedes that "there may have been death among the lower animals prior to the time when man sinned." Mr Combe added, that if man is now the same being that he was when created, he must then, as now, have possessed organs of Amativeness, Philoprogenitiveness, Combativeness, De-

structiveness, Secretiveness, and Cautiousness, and that these seemed to him to indicate the adaptation of man to a world in which the old were to be removed by death, to make room for the young, and in which there was to be danger and difficulty, rendering the faculties before named useful and necessary. Mr Kennedy maintains that, notwithstanding these faculties, man may have been created sinless and immortal. The arguments by means of which he supports these propositions are,—first, that the old, like Enoch and Elijah, might have been “removed” to another sphere without dying; and, secondly, that Mr Combe has himself shewn that all the faculties have a legitimate sphere of action, and may, therefore, have been adapted to a world without death, danger, and sin. The question—Whether man was originally mortal—lies beyond the limits of science, and Mr Combe has not discussed it in “The Constitution of Man.” He has only asserted that the human mind and body, as now constituted, are *de facto* adapted to the world in which we find them; that, apparently, the world was not changed in its constitution and arrangements at the time of man’s appearance; and that it has not been substantially altered since. Our readers, therefore, will judge for themselves concerning man’s condition prior to his entering upon his present state of existence.

Chapter VII. is on “Man’s Fallen Condition.” We leave this also to Mr Kennedy, as one belonging to theology.

Chapter VIII. considers “Mr Combe’s Exposition and Application of the Natural Laws.” In this chapter Mr Kennedy invents difficulties in order to combat them. By way of correcting Mr Combe, he says—

“But it is not true; 1st, That any mode of action of a physical object is otherwise inherent in it, than as it is the will of God that that object should now present that mode of action. Nor is it true; 2d, That it is beyond the power of God to vary when he pleases, either temporarily or permanently, the constitution of physical objects.” This is trifling with the subject: Mr Combe has nowhere ascribed the inherent modes of action of any object, either physical or moral, to any cause except the will and power of God; and he has never maintained “that it is *beyond the power of God* to vary, when he pleases, either temporarily or permanently, the constitution” of these objects. The real practical question is, Does it *de facto* appear, from what we see passing around us, that *it does please God, now to vary*, either temporarily or permanently, the constitution and modes of action of physical or moral objects? Mr Combe affirms

that according to his observation of the *present* order of nature, it *does not please God* to vary these constitutions and modes of action; and Mr Kennedy, instead of shewing by clear and unequivocal facts, *now observable*, that God *does in our own day* please to vary these, enters into a general disquisition to prove that God *can* vary them, *if he pleases*, and that under the miraculous dispensations of the Old and New Testaments, he *did vary them*. But not one word of this argument applies to the case in hand. We ask Mr Kennedy, Were not the miraculous dispensations confined to the Jews and the Scripture times? Is the world *now* under the same special supernatural administration which is recorded to have characterized it *then*? Does not Mr Kennedy know that during the long reign of ignorance in the dark ages, the Roman Catholic priesthood pretended that a miraculous dispensation still continued, and that they were the appointed instruments for evoking special supernatural acts of Divine administration; and that one of the boasts of Protestantism has been the demonstration that these pretensions were presumptuous and fraudulent? With strange inconsistency, however, some Protestants have retained a portion of that superstition, and have not only taught it, but acted under its influence themselves. (See "*Relation between Religion and Science*," pages 2, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12.

Chapter IX. is on "The Efficacy of Prayer." The question here again at issue is, Whether we have evidence from observation and experience, that *in our day* God pleases to vary the constitution and modes of action which he has bestowed on physical and moral objects, in consequence of being requested to do so by men in prayer. Mr Kennedy quotes numerous instances from the Old Testament where this is recorded to have been done. "Take, for example," says he, "Elijah's prayer for rain. *That* prayer, in itself, could have no effect whatever on the atmosphere." On this point we beg to refer to the passage quoted from Archbishop Whately's address on the famine in Ireland, on pages 9 and 10 of "*Religion and Science*," which is strictly applicable to the present question; and to assure Mr Kennedy that if he will adduce a sufficient number of well authenticated instances of men in our day bringing rain or sunshine, or removing the potato blight, or staying fever, or accomplishing any similar physical result, by means of prayer, without bringing into operation, by natural means, the natural causes of these results, we shall abandon all belief in the natural laws, and renounce at once all the "prevalent errors" of Mr Combe's "Constitution of Man." But it is in vain to adduce examples

of supernatural power wielded or evoked by the personages of the Old and New Testaments, as evidence that the same gifts have descended to the men of our generation. If they have so descended, why do we accuse the Roman Catholic priesthood of fraud and hypocrisy in having pretended to enjoy them? The man who, by prayer, could, in our day, induce God to send rain, or stay a pestilence, by special acts of Divine administration, would really be able to work miracles; and if we do not seriously believe that this can be done, why should we mock God and deceive ourselves by pretending to believe that it can be accomplished?

Chapter X. is on "Changes in Moral and Religious Character." It is not necessary to discuss the topics involved in this chapter, because the question constantly occurs—Are the changes referred to effected through the instrumentality of God's providence operating by means of the natural constitution conferred by Him on moral beings? or are they effected by influences lying beyond these, and not acknowledging alliance with them? If such influences exist and contradict the natural order of God's providence, Mr Kennedy is called on to prove this: If he admits that they act in conformity with it, and supplement it, he allows all that Mr Combe has contended for, which is simply this—that until the natural conditions on which an event or result depends are brought into existence, we have no warrant from *our own experience* (whatever may have been the experience of the Jews in scripture times), to expect that that result will be accomplished.

Chapters XI. and XII. are "On Affliction as a means of Moral Discipline," and contain a strange mixture of truth and error. Mr Kennedy here arrives at the discovery that the natural laws are inconsistent. "The very same act," says he, "*is required* by one law, and forbidden by another law"—both laws being Divine. "We sometimes cannot obey both the organic and the moral laws." He adds, very truly, "Now this view of matters involves gross absurdity." It really does so; but on whose side does the absurdity lie? By the natural laws, of course, he means *God's* natural laws; and his proposition amounts to this—that God's creation is not systematic and self-consistent; that the natural consequences which God has attached to the actions of moral beings are *not always* adapted to serve as guides to their conduct; but that man may, in certain cases, shew forth a wisdom superior to that of God, and legitimately disregard them. Mr Kennedy teaches us, that man by following the dictates of his own wisdom, in opposition to that of God, may reach more excellent and beneficial ends than by following submis-

sively in the track of God's providence! This doctrine, be it observed, proceeds from an evangelical Society associated to oppose "prevalent errors." This, although a strong statement of Mr Kennedy's doctrine, is no misrepresentation or perversion of it: for he assumes that the law which he says may be legitimately and beneficially transgressed or disregarded is *God's law*; and the proposition which he is combating is Mr Combe's doctrine that the Divine laws, *in all cases, and without any exception*, are entitled to command the respect and obedience of God's rational creatures. But let him speak for himself.

After citing, and partially approving of Mr Combe's representation of the advantages of obeying the natural laws, he proceeds thus: "Now, it is *only* the moral laws that *imperatively* regulate our conduct. Obedience to the first two classes (the physical and organic laws), is only prudential, and often has nothing moral in it. Moral laws should be obeyed at all times, and in all circumstances. *Physical laws we may evade or disobey in multiplied instances, quite unblameably.* That we *may fully obey* the moral laws, we frequently *must*, to some extent, *disregard the physical laws.*" "Physical laws ought not to be confounded with laws of human conduct. These we always must obey; those *we may often*, without deserving blame, *boldly disregard.*" "The same remarks, to some extent, apply also to the organic laws. These we *may often, to a large extent, properly disregard.*" p. 132. Does not this plainly teach that creation is not systematic and self-consistent; that God has so framed the physical and organic worlds and the moral law, that there is often open contradiction between them; that the natural consequences which He has attached to infringements of the physical and organic laws are *not intended*, or at least, *not calculated*, in all cases, to instruct us and to serve as guides to our conduct? All this seems to be implied in the doctrine, that we may "often," "properly," "unblameably," and "boldly," "disregard" those laws.

The view insisted on by Mr Kennedy, that "it is only the moral laws that *imperatively* regulate our conduct;" and that "obedience to the physical and organic laws is *only prudential*, and often has *nothing moral* in it," is unsound in principle and highly injurious to human welfare. That it should be boldly proclaimed by an "association" "holding evangelical sentiments," appears to us to be explicable only by the suppositions that they do not comprehend what is implied in a law of nature; or that their own moral and religious sentiments have been so misdirected by education, that they recog-

nize no *sacredness* in the order of God's Providence embodied in, and manifested through, the instrumentality of these laws. In Mr Kennedy's case, ignorance cannot be imputed; for he appreciates, to a considerable extent, the Divine origin and practical importance of the laws; but at the same time, and apparently from his Veneration and Conscientiousness never having been trained to *reverence* them, and to feel a *moral and religious* duty in obeying them, he openly proclaims that there is often "nothing moral" in that obedience. If the intellect were correctly instructed in the order of God's Providence, as embodied in the physical and organic systems of the world, and if the moral and religious sentiments were trained from infancy to reverence that order and the lessons which it is ever addressing to man for the regulation of his conduct, these lessons would be *felt* to imply a moral and religious obligation. Many persons, for example, consider it a sin to enter into a matrimonial compact for life without the benediction of a clergyman, but consider it no sin, and only an imprudence, to form, under the sanction of that benediction, an alliance which, according to the organic laws, will entail misery on their offspring. Such conduct appears to us to be explicable only by supposing either that they ignorantly disbelieve in the consequences of their own act, or that they entertain a most irreverent contempt for God's authority as manifested in the organic laws. Let us see, however, by what evidence Mr Kennedy supports his extraordinary proposition.

He appeals to the case of Grace Darling, "who," says he, "was rendered illustrious by nobly braving the surges of the tempestuous ocean, endangering her own life to rescue others from a watery grave. She scorned to be withheld from her generous exertions by the regard due to the well-known organic law, that a human body submerged beneath the waves, must soon be bereft of life." (P. 127.) This is a mistake. Grace Darling, by using a boat, which, by the physical law, floats on the surface of the water, preserved her own body out of the water; by obeying the physical law, she obeyed also the organic law, and thus saved herself and her fellow-creatures from drowning. Surely the Society's "prudence and caution," as well as their common sense, were asleep when they allowed Mr Kennedy to publish such an example as evidence of the *advantages of disobeying* a natural law.

He adds another instance in which Mr Holgrove rushed on a railway and rescued two poor women from destruction by an advancing train, but was himself struck down by the engine.

The argument founded on this case, has been already answered in Mr Combe's Pamphlet on "Religion and Science," pages 17 and 18. The argument itself affords an additional evidence of the thorough confusion which reigns in the minds of evangelical men on the subject of the natural laws, and the low estimate which they form of Divine wisdom manifested in the order of nature. It does not admit of doubt that Mr Holgrove suffered from an error in calculating the position in which his own body and the train would stand relatively to each other at the time when he made the effort. He reckoned on accomplishing his object, and on moving off the rail, before the train should come up ; in other words, he intended to *obey* the natural law, and not to set it at defiance. It is because we give him credit for this intention, and sympathize with his miscalculation (which in his place we likewise might have made), that we yield to him the tribute of our admiration. If we believed that he *meant* to surrender his own life, to save the lives of the old women (which he must have done, if he *intended* to disobey the physical law under which the advancing train was moving), we could *not* approve of his conduct. *He* was not the proper judge of the relative values of the lives. If he had left a bereaved widow and destitute children, they would have viewed the *deliberate* sacrifice of his own life for those of the old women as uncalled for by the claims of duty. Again, if he had *intended* to throw away his own life, and merely availed himself of the opportunity of the old women being on the rail, to kill himself with *eclat*, our judgment of his act would be one of unequivocal condemnation.

Mr Kennedy speaks of "evading" the natural laws. The thing is impossible. *God* has connected the consequences with the antecedents ; and *man* cannot separate or evade them. If Mr Kennedy had said, that by obeying one law we may shelter ourselves from the injurious effects of another, we could have understood what he meant ; although, even in this case, there would have been an error in the form of expressing the fact. For example, when a man rises in a balloon, he does not triumph over the law of gravitation by setting it at defiance, but by acting in accordance with it. That law causes the heavier gases of the atmosphere to gravitate more forcibly than the light hydrogen gas in the balloon ; and the former, gravitating downwards, lift the balloon up. A physician who, before visiting a case of malignant and infectious fever, takes a good breakfast, whereby he produces in his own organism an internal resisting power calculated to ward off external influences, and who orders the door and

windows of the patient's chamber to be opened, and the room to be ventilated, before he enters it, and by these means escapes infection, does not triumph over the organic law by defying it at the call of duty, but finds his safety in obeying it. If he enters that same apartment feeble, fasting, and exhausted, and encounters its concentrated contaminated atmosphere, unmodified by ventilation, the supposed calls of moral duty will not protect him from the consequences. According to the ordinary course of God's providence, he will be infected himself, and he may die. We should be glad to know whether the clergymen and lay inspectors of the poor who have recently fallen victims to their duty in fever hospitals, have acted on Mr Kennedy's view of the order of God's providence, or on ours. We have a suspicion that they have gone into the fever wards in a state of mental and physical exhaustion, and neglected the means of diminishing by ventilation the noxious influence of the effluvia from the bodies of the patients. Be this as it may, the natural tendency of Mr Kennedy's doctrine, backed by all the influence of the evangelical Society, is to encourage men, at the supposed call of moral or religious duty, to set the organic laws at defiance; whereas our earnest exhortation to them is to obey them in *all* cases to the very utmost of their ability. We leave it to the reader to judge which party is here propounding "dangerous error and gross absurdity;" and whether a Society which forms such an humble estimate of the self-consistency and instructive character of God's natural providence, and such an exalted view of its own discrimination, is more likely to "oppose" or to propagate "prevalent errors."

Chapter XIV. is "On the Alleged Possibility of Deducing a System of Morality merely from the Natural Laws." We at once concede to Mr Kennedy, that if God's natural laws be, as he argues, so worthless that "we may often, to a large extent, properly disregard them," and "evade or disobey them in multiplied instances, quite unblameably," they cannot be the fountain of a "system of morality." If he should ever have his eyes opened to higher views of the Divine Wisdom embodied in the order of nature, perhaps he may differ less from Mr Combe on this subject than he does at present.

Chapter XV. is "On the use of Science as a guide to the Interpretation of Scripture." True science is merely a correct record of the order of God's providence revealed to the human mind in the constitution and modes of action of physical and moral beings; and while Mr Kennedy forms his present humble estimate of its character, he is not in a condition to judge of its use and importance as a guide to the interpretation of Scripture.

To conclude : we are not sorry that this Society has been formed. When Mr Kennedy, as its organ, acknowledges that the natural laws are God's laws, and yet proclaims, with its sanction, that we may often "unblameably" and "boldly" disregard them, it exposes itself to the imputation of proclaiming war against the sacred and inviolable character of God's providence embodied in the order of nature. While, however, we acquit its members of this intention, we cannot help repeating that such works as Mr Kennedy's betray an extraordinary confusion reigning in the minds of some religious men on the connection between religion and the order of God's secular providence, as disclosed by science. This confusion appears to be general among the Calvinistic sects ; for "The Free Church Magazine" has not hesitated to adopt Mr Kennedy's views, to recommend his work, and, in American phraseology, to *endorse* all his doctrines. The education of the people, and social progress generally, are seriously retarded by such errors prevailing in such influential quarters.

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