

An engraving of St. Paul's Cathedral in London, showing its large dome and classical columns. To the left, Old London Bridge is visible with its multiple towers and arches. The scene is set in a city street with a few figures in the foreground.

An Essay on the
DEVELOPMENT
of Christian Doctrine

John Henry Newman

Resurrection Publishing

AN ESSAY ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE

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Scope

This edition prints Newman's 1878 Essay complete: Dedication, Preface to the Edition of 1878, Advertisement to the First Edition (with Postscript), Introduction, and Chapters I–XII (including the Part II head with Chapter V). Newman's footnotes are retained as chapter-end notes with superscript callouts in the body (house pattern). Opaque treatise and work abbreviations in those notes are glossed with a brief English title in parentheses where needed. Greek and other non-Latin scripts are given in Unicode. It does **not** restore 1845 arrangement against the 1878 revision, nor add modern introductions or publisher advertisements from the Pickering volume.

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Structure and numbering

Newman's 1878 Essay marks major divisions with § and names each chapter in the table of contents. This Member Edition keeps those § section labels in the body and prints one italic chapter subtitle from Newman's contents under each chapter head.

For readability, the 1878 arabic paragraph numbers (1 ., 2 ., ...)—including cases where Victorian print omitted “1.” after a head, or where working drafts had stray page numerals—are **omitted** from the reading text. Argument flow follows Newman's prose and § divisions; readers are not asked to track paragraph numerals.

Spelling and punctuation

Newman's Victorian orthography and italics are retained except where clear transcription garble was corrected against the page images. Line-end hyphenation from the print is rejoined. Punctuation is lightly regularized for readability—quotation marks, dashes, and possessive apostrophes—without paraphrase.

Retained vocabulary

Newman's theological diction is retained (*development*, *corruption*, *dogma*, *antecedent probability*, and related terms). No modernizing rewrite of his argument or Catholic conclusion.

Scripture references

Scripture references are normalized to a consistent citation form (for example *John 6*, *1 Tim. 3:16*), while preserving Newman's chosen texts, wording, and order of citation. Quotations are not silently replaced with any modern Bible version. Newman's footnote citations appear with the chapter notes. Scholarly volume/page

NOTE ON THE TEXT

locators (Fathers, historians, Newman's own works) are protected from scripture normalizers.

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CHAPTER I

The Development of Ideas

Section I

On the Process of Development in Ideas

It is the characteristic of our minds to be ever engaged in passing judgment on the things which come before us. No sooner do we apprehend than we judge: we allow nothing to stand by itself: we compare, contrast, abstract, generalize, connect, adjust, classify: and we view all our knowledge in the associations with which these processes have invested it.

Of the judgments thus made, which become aspects in our minds of the things which meet us, some are mere opinions which come and go, or which remain with us only till an accident displaces them, whatever be the influence which they exercise meanwhile. Others are firmly fixed in our minds, with or without good reason, and have a hold upon us, whether they relate to matters of fact, or to principles of conduct, or are views of life and the world, or are prejudices, imaginations, or convictions. Many of them attach to one and the same object, which is thus variously viewed, not only by various minds, but by the same. They sometimes lie in such near relation, that each implies the others; some are only not inconsistent with each other, in that they have a common origin: some, as being actually incompatible with each other, are, one or other, falsely associated in our minds with their object, and in any case they may be nothing more than ideas, which we mistake for things.

Thus Judaism is an idea which once was objective, and Gnosticism is an idea which was never so. Both of them have various aspects: those of Judaism were such as monotheism, a certain ethical discipline, a ministration of divine vengeance, a preparation for Christianity: those of the Gnostic idea are such as the doctrine of two principles, that of emanation, the intrinsic malignity of matter, the inculpability of sensual indulgence, or the guilt of every pleasure of

sense, of which last two one or other must be in the Gnostic a false aspect and subjective only.

The idea which represents an object or supposed object is commensurate with the sum total of its possible aspects, however they may vary in the separate consciousness of individuals; and in proportion to the variety of aspects under which it presents itself to various minds is its force and depth, and the argument for its reality. Ordinarily an idea is not brought home to the intellect as objective except through this variety; like bodily substances, which are not apprehended except under the clothing of their properties and results, and which admit of being walked round, and surveyed on opposite sides, and in different perspectives, and in contrary lights, in evidence of their reality. And, as views of a material object may be taken from points so remote or so opposed, that they seem at first sight incompatible, and especially as their shadows will be disproportionate, or even monstrous, and yet all these anomalies will disappear and all these contrarieties be adjusted, on ascertaining the point of vision or the surface of projection in each case; so also all the aspects of an idea are capable of coalition, and of a resolution into the object to which it belongs; and the *primâ facie* dissimilitude of its aspects becomes, when explained, an argument for its substantiveness and integrity, and their multiplicity for its originality and power.

There is no one aspect deep enough to exhaust the contents of a real idea, no one term or proposition which will serve to define it; though of course one representation of it is more just and exact than another, and though when an idea is very complex, it is allowable, for the sake of convenience, to consider its distinct aspects as if separate ideas. Thus, with all our intimate knowledge of animal life and of the structure of particular animals, we have not arrived at a true definition of any one of them, but are forced to enumerate properties and accidents by way of description. Nor can we inclose in a formula that intellectual fact, or system of thought, which we call the Platonic philosophy, or that historical phenomenon of doctrine and conduct,

which we call the heresy of Montanus or of Manes. Again, if Protestantism were said to lie in its theory of private judgment, and Lutheranism in its doctrine of justification, this indeed would be an approximation to the truth; but it is plain that to argue or to act as if the one or the other aspect were a sufficient account of those forms of religion severally, would be a serious mistake. Sometimes an attempt is made to determine the "leading idea," as it has been called, of Christianity, an ambitious essay as employed on a supernatural work, when, even as regards the visible creation and the inventions of man, such a task is beyond us. Thus its one idea has been said by some to be the restoration of our fallen race, by others philanthropy, by others the tidings of immortality, or the spirituality of true religious service, or the salvation of the elect, or mental liberty, or the union of the soul with God. If, indeed, it is only thereby meant to use one or other of these as a central idea for convenience, in order to group others around it, no fault can be found with such a proceeding; and in this sense I should myself call the Incarnation the central aspect of Christianity, out of which the three main aspects of its teaching take their rise, the sacramental, the hierarchical, and the ascetic. But one aspect of Revelation must not be allowed to exclude or to obscure another; and Christianity is dogmatical, devotional, practical all at once; it is esoteric and exoteric; it is indulgent and strict; it is light and dark; it is love, and it is fear.

When an idea, whether real or not, is of a nature to arrest and possess the mind, it may be said to have life, that is, to live in the mind which is its recipient. Thus mathematical ideas, real as they are, can hardly properly be called living, at least ordinarily. But, when some great enunciation, whether true or false, about human nature, or present good, or government, or duty, or religion, is carried forward into the public throng of men and draws attention, then it is not merely received passively in this or that form into many minds, but it becomes an active principle within them, leading them to an ever-new contemplation of itself, to an application of it in various

directions, and a propagation of it on every side. Such is the doctrine of the divine right of kings, or of the rights of man, or of the anti-social bearings of a priesthood, or utilitarianism, or free trade, or the duty of benevolent enterprises, or the philosophy of Zeno or Epicurus, doctrines which are of a nature to attract and influence, and have so far a *primâ facie* reality, that they may be looked at on many sides and strike various minds very variously. Let one such idea get possession of the popular mind, or the mind of any portion of the community, and it is not difficult to understand what will be the result. At first men will not fully realize what it is that moves them, and will express and explain themselves inadequately. There will be a general agitation of thought, and an action of mind upon mind. There will be a time of confusion, when conceptions and misconceptions are in conflict, and it is uncertain whether anything is to come of the idea at all, or which view of it is to get the start of the others. New lights will be brought to bear upon the original statements of the doctrine put forward; judgments and aspects will accumulate. After a while some definite teaching emerges; and, as time proceeds, one view will be modified or expanded by another, and then combined with a third; till the idea to which these various aspects belong, will be to each mind separately what at first it was only to all together. It will be surveyed too in its relation to other doctrines or facts, to other natural laws or established customs, to the varying circumstances of times and places, to other religions, politics, philosophies, as the case may be. How it stands affected towards other systems, how it affects them, how far it may be made to combine with them, how far it tolerates them, when it interferes with them, will be gradually wrought out. It will be interrogated and criticized by enemies, and defended by well-wishers. The multitude of opinions formed concerning it in these respects and many others will be collected, compared, sorted, sifted, selected, rejected, gradually attached to it, separated from it, in the minds of individuals and of the community. It will, in proportion to its native vigour and

subtlety, introduce itself into the framework and details of social life, changing public opinion, and strengthening or undermining the foundations of established order. Thus in time it will have grown into an ethical code, or into a system of government, or into a theology, or into a ritual, according to its capabilities: and this body of thought, thus laboriously gained, will after all be little more than the proper representative of one idea, being in substance what that idea meant from the first, its complete image as seen in a combination of diversified aspects, with the suggestions and corrections of many minds, and the illustration of many experiences.

This process, whether it be longer or shorter in point of time, by which the aspects of an idea are brought into consistency and form, I call its development, being the germination and maturation of some truth or apparent truth on a large mental field. On the other hand this process will not be a development, unless the assemblage of aspects, which constitute its ultimate shape, really belongs to the idea from which they start. A republic, for instance, is not a development from a pure monarchy, though it may follow upon it; whereas the Greek "tyrant" may be considered as included in the idea of a democracy. Moreover a development will have this characteristic, that, its action being in the busy scene of human life, it cannot progress at all without cutting across, and thereby destroying or modifying and incorporating with itself existing modes of thinking and operating. The development then of an idea is not like an investigation worked out on paper, in which each successive advance is a pure evolution from a foregoing, but it is carried on through and by means of communities of men and their leaders and guides; and it employs their minds as its instruments, and depends upon them, while it uses them. And so, as regards existing opinions, principles, measures, and institutions of the community which it has invaded; it develops by establishing relations between itself and them; it employs itself, in giving them a new meaning and direction, in creating what may be called a jurisdiction over them, in throwing off

whatever in them it cannot assimilate. It grows when it incorporates, and its identity is found, not in isolation, but in continuity and sovereignty. This it is that imparts to the history both of states and of religions, its specially turbulent and polemical character. Such is the explanation of the wranglings, whether of schools or of parliaments. It is the warfare of ideas under their various aspects striving for the mastery, each of them enterprising, engrossing, imperious, more or less incompatible with the rest, and rallying followers or rousing foes, according as it acts upon the faith, the prejudices, or the interest of parties or classes.

Moreover, an idea not only modifies, but is modified, or at least influenced, by the state of things in which it is carried out, and is dependent in various ways on the circumstances which surround it. Its development proceeds quickly or slowly, as it may be; the order of succession in its separate stages is variable; it shows differently in a small sphere of action and in an extended; it may be interrupted, retarded, mutilated, distorted, by external violence; it may be enfeebled by the effort of ridding itself of domestic foes; it may be impeded and swayed or even absorbed by counter energetic ideas; it may be coloured by the received tone of thought into which it comes, or depraved by the intrusion of foreign principles, or at length shattered by the development of some original fault within it.

But whatever be the risk of corruption from intercourse with the world around, such a risk must be encountered if a great idea is duly to be understood, and much more if it is to be fully exhibited. It is elicited and expanded by trial, and battles into perfection and supremacy. Nor does it escape the collision of opinion even in its earlier years, nor does it remain truer to itself, and with a better claim to be considered one and the same, though externally protected from vicissitude and change. It is indeed sometimes said that the stream is clearest near the spring. Whatever use may fairly be made of this image, it does not apply to the history of a philosophy or belief, which on the contrary is more equable, and purer, and stronger,

when its bed has become deep, and broad, and full. It necessarily rises out of an existing state of things, and for a time savours of the soil. Its vital element needs disengaging from what is foreign and temporary, and is employed in efforts after freedom which become more vigorous and hopeful as its years increase. Its beginnings are no measure of its capabilities, nor of its scope. At first no one knows what it is, or what it is worth. It remains perhaps for a time quiescent; it tries, as it were, its limbs, and proves the ground under it, and feels its way. From time to time it makes essays which fail, and are in consequence abandoned. It seems in suspense which way to go; it wavers, and at length strikes out in one definite direction. In time it enters upon strange territory; points of controversy alter their bearing; parties rise and fall around it; dangers and hopes appear in new relations; and old principles reappear under new forms. It changes with them in order to remain the same. In a higher world it is otherwise, but here below to live is to change, and to be perfect is to have changed often.

Section II

On the Kinds of Development in Ideas

To attempt an accurate analysis or complete enumeration of the processes of thought, whether speculative or practical, which come under the notion of development, exceeds the pretensions of an Essay like the present; but, without some general view of the various mental exercises which go by the name we shall have no security against confusion in our reasoning and necessary exposure to criticism.

First, then, it must be borne in mind that the word is commonly used, and is used here, in three senses indiscriminately, from defect of our language; on the one hand for the process of development, on the other for the result; and again either generally for a development, true or not true, (that is, faithful or unfaithful to the idea from which it started,) or exclusively for a development deserving the name. A false or unfaithful development is more properly to be called a corruption.

Next, it is plain that *mathematical* developments, that is, the system of truths drawn out from mathematical definitions or equations, do not fall under our present subject, though altogether analogous to it. There can be no corruption in such developments, because they are conducted on strict demonstration; and the conclusions in which they terminate, being necessary, cannot be declensions from the original idea.

Nor, of course, do *physical* developments, as the growth of animal or vegetable nature, come into consideration here; excepting that, together with mathematical, they may be taken as illustrations of the general subject to which we have to direct our attention.

Nor have we to consider *material* developments, which, though effected by human contrivance, are still physical; as the development, as it is called, of the national resources. We speak, for instance, of Ireland, the United States, or the valley of the Indus, as admitting of a

great development; by which we mean, that those countries have fertile tracts, or abundant products, or broad and deep rivers, or central positions for commerce, or capacious and commodious harbours, the materials and instruments of wealth, and these at present turned to insufficient account. Development in this case will proceed by establishing marts, cutting canals, laying down railroads, erecting factories, forming docks, and similar works, by which the natural riches of the country may be made to yield the largest return and to exert the greatest influence. In this sense, art is the development of nature, that is, its adaptation to the purposes of utility and beauty, the human intellect being the developing power.

When society and its various classes and interests are the subject-matter of the ideas which are in operation, the development may be called *political*; as we see it in the growth of States or the changes of a Constitution. Barbarians descend into southern regions from cupidity, and their warrant is the sword: this is no intellectual process, nor is it the mode of development exhibited in civilized communities. Where civilization exists, reason, in some shape or other, is the incentive or the pretence of development. When an empire enlarges, it is on the call of its allies, or for the balance of power, or from the necessity of a demonstration of strength, or from a fear for its frontiers. It lies uneasily in its territory, it is ill-shaped, it has unreal boundary-lines, deficient communication between its principal points, or defenceless or turbulent neighbours. Thus, of old time, Eubœa was necessary for Athens, and Cythera for Sparta; and Augustus left his advice, as a legacy, to confine the Empire between the Atlantic, the Rhine and Danube, the Euphrates, and the Arabian and African deserts. In this day, we hear of the Rhine being the natural boundary of France, and the Indus of our Eastern empire; and we predict that, in the event of a war, Prussia will change her outlines in the map of Europe. The development is material; but an idea gives unity and force to its movement.

And so to take a case of national politics, a late writer remarks of the Parliament of 1628-29, in its contest with Charles, that, so far from encroaching on the just powers of a limited monarch, it never hinted at the securities which were necessary for its measures. However, “twelve years more of repeated aggressions,” he adds, “taught the Long Parliament what a few sagacious men might perhaps have already suspected; that they must recover more of their ancient constitution, from oblivion; that they must sustain its partial weakness by new securities; that, in order to render the existence of monarchy compatible with that of freedom, they must not only strip it of all it had usurped, but of something that was its own.”¹ Whatever be the worth of this author’s theory, his facts or representations are an illustration of a political development.

Again, at the present day, that Ireland should have a population of one creed, and a Church of another, is felt to be a political arrangement so unsatisfactory, that all parties seem to agree that either the population will develop in power or the Establishment in influence.

Political developments, though really the growth of ideas, are often capricious and irregular from the nature of their subject-matter. They are influenced by the character of sovereigns, the rise and fall of statesmen, the fate of battles, and the numberless vicissitudes of the world. “Perhaps the Greeks would be still involved in the heresy of the Monophysites,” says Gibbon, “if the Emperor’s horse had not fortunately stumbled. Theodosius expired, his orthodox sister succeeded to the throne.”²

Again, it often happens, or generally, that various distinct and incompatible elements are found in the origin or infancy of politics, or indeed of philosophies, some of which must be ejected before any satisfactory developments, if any, can take place. And they are commonly ejected by the gradual growth of the stronger. The reign of Charles the First, just referred to, supplies an instance in point.

Sometimes discordant ideas are for a time connected and concealed by a common profession or name. Such is the case of coalitions in politics and comprehensions in religion, of which commonly no good is to be expected. Such is an ordinary function of committees and boards, and the sole aim of conciliations and concessions, to make contraries look the same, and to secure an outward agreement where there is no other unity.

Again, developments, reactions, reforms, revolutions, and changes of various kinds are mixed together in the actual history of states, as of philosophical sects, so as to make it very difficult to exhibit them in any scientific analysis.

Often the intellectual process is detached from the practical, and posterior to it. Thus it was after Elizabeth had established the Reformation that Hooker laid down his theory of Church and State as one and the same, differing only in idea; and, after the Revolution and its political consequences, that Warburton wrote his "Alliance." And now again a new theory is needed for the constitutional lawyer, in order to reconcile the existing political state of things with the just claims of religion. And so, again, in Parliamentary conflicts, men first come to their conclusions by the external pressure of events or the force of principles, they do not know how; then they have to speak, and they look about for arguments: and a pamphlet is published on the subject in debate, or an article appears in a Review, to furnish common-places for the many.

Other developments, though political, are strictly subjected and consequent to the ideas of which they are the exhibitions. Thus Locke's philosophy was a real guide, not a mere defence of the Revolution era, operating forcibly upon Church and Government in and after his day. Such too were the theories which preceded the overthrow of the old regime in France and other countries at the end of the last century.

Again, perhaps there are polities founded on no ideas at all, but on mere custom, as among the Asiatics.

In other developments the intellectual character is so prominent that they may even be called *logical*, as in the Anglican doctrine of the Royal Supremacy, which has been created in the courts of law, not in the cabinet or on the field. Hence it is carried out with a consistency and minute application which the history of constitutions cannot exhibit. It does not only exist in statutes, or in articles, or in oaths, it is realized in details: as in the *cong   d'  lire* and letter-missive on appointment of a Bishop;—in the forms observed in Privy Council on the issuing of State Prayers;—in certain arrangements observed in the Prayer-book, where the universal or abstract Church precedes the King, but the national or really existing body follows him; in printing his name in large capitals, while the Holiest Names are in ordinary type, and in fixing his arms in churches instead of the Crucifix; moreover, perhaps, in placing “sedition, privy conspiracy, and rebellion,” before “false doctrine, heresy, and schism” in the Litany.

Again, when some new philosophy or its instalments are introduced into the measures of the Legislature, or into the concessions made to a political party, or into commercial or agricultural policy, it is often said, “We have not seen the end of this;” “It is an earnest of future concessions;” “Our children will see.” We feel that it has unknown bearings and issues.

The admission of Jews to municipal offices has lately been defended³ on the ground that it is the introduction of no new principle, but a development of one already received; that its great premisses have been decided long since; and that the present age has but to draw the conclusion; that it is not open to us to inquire what ought to be done in the abstract, since there is no ideal model for the infallible guidance of nations; that change is only a question of time, and that there is a time for all things; that the application of principles ought not to go beyond the actual case, neither preceding nor coming after an imperative demand; that in point of fact Jews have lately been chosen for offices, and that in point of principle the law cannot refuse to legitimate such elections.

Another class of developments may be called *historical*; being the gradual formation of opinion concerning persons, facts, and events. Judgments, which were at one time confined to a few, at length spread through a community, and attain general reception by the accumulation and concurrence of testimony. Thus some authoritative accounts die away; others gain a footing, and are ultimately received as truths. Courts of law, Parliamentary proceedings, newspapers, letters and other posthumous documents, the industry of historians and biographers, and the lapse of years which dissipates parties and prejudices, are in this day the instruments of such development. Accordingly the Poet makes Truth the daughter of Time.⁴ Thus at length approximations are made to a right appreciation of transactions and characters. History cannot be written except in an after-age. Thus by development the Canon of the New Testament has been formed. Thus public men are content to leave their reputation to posterity; great reactions take place in opinion; nay, sometimes men outlive opposition and obloquy. Thus Saints are canonized in the Church, long after they have entered into their rest.

Ethical developments are not properly matter for argument and controversy, but are natural and personal, substituting what is congruous, desirable, pious, appropriate, generous, for strictly logical inference. Bishop Butler supplies us with a remarkable instance in the beginning of the Second Part of his "Analogy." As principles imply applications, and general propositions include particulars, so, he tells us, do certain relations imply correlative duties, and certain objects demand certain acts and feelings. He observes that, even though we were not enjoined to pay divine honours to the Second and Third Persons of the Holy Trinity, what is predicated of Them in Scripture would be an abundant warrant, an indirect command, nay, a ground in reason, for doing so. "Does not," he asks, "the duty of religious regards to both these Divine Persons as immediately arise, to the view of reason, out of the very nature of these offices and relations, as the inward good-will and kind intention which we owe to our fellow-

creatures arises out of the common relations between us and them?" He proceeds to say that he is speaking of the inward religious regards of reverence, honour, love, trust, gratitude, fear, hope. "In what external manner this inward worship is to be expressed, is a matter of pure revealed command;.. but the worship, the internal worship itself, to the Son and Holy Ghost, is no further matter of pure revealed command than as the relations they stand in to us are matter of pure revelation; for, the relations being known, the obligations to such internal worship are obligations of reason, arising out of those relations themselves." Here is a development of doctrine into worship, of which parallel instances are obviously to be found in the Church of Rome.

A development, converse to that which Butler speaks of, must next be mentioned. As certain objects excite certain emotions and sentiments, so do sentiments imply objects and duties. Thus conscience, the existence of which we cannot deny, is a proof of the doctrine of a Moral Governor, which alone gives it a meaning and a scope; that is, the doctrine of a Judge and Judgment to come is a development of the phenomenon of conscience. Again, it is plain that passions and affections are in action in our minds before the presence of their proper objects; and their activity would of course be an antecedent argument of extreme cogency in behalf of the real existence of those legitimate objects, supposing them unknown. And so again, the social principle, which is innate in us, gives a divine sanction to society and to civil government. And the usage of prayers for the dead implies certain circumstances of their state upon which such devotions bear. And rites and ceremonies are natural means through which the mind relieves itself of devotional and penitential emotions. And sometimes the cultivation of awe and love towards what is great, high, and unseen, has led a man to the abandonment of his sect for some more Catholic form of doctrine.

Aristotle furnishes us with an instance of this kind of development in his account of the happy man. After showing that his definition of

happiness includes in itself the pleasurable, which is the most obvious and popular idea of happiness, he goes on to say that still external goods are necessary to it, about which, however, the definition said nothing; that is, a certain prosperity is by moral fitness, not by logical necessity, attached to the happy man. "For it is impossible," he observes, "or not easy, to practise high virtue without abundant means. Many deeds are done by the instrumentality of friends, wealth and political power; and of some things the absence is a cloud upon happiness, as of noble birth, of hopeful children, and of personal appearance: for a person utterly deformed, or low-born, or bereaved and childless, cannot quite be happy: and still less if he have very worthless children or friends, or they were good and died."⁵

This process of development has been well delineated by a living French writer, in his Lectures on European civilization, who shall be quoted at some length. "If we reduce religion," he says, "to a purely religious sentiment... it appears evident that it must and ought to remain a purely personal concern. But I am either strangely mistaken, or this religious sentiment is not the complete expression of the religious nature of man. Religion is, I believe, very different from this, and much more extended. There are problems in human nature, in human destinies, which cannot be solved in this life, which depend on an order of things unconnected with the visible world, but which unceasingly agitate the human mind with a desire to comprehend them. The solution of these problems is the origin of all religion; her primary object is to discover the creeds and doctrines which contain, or are supposed to contain it.

Another cause also impels mankind to embrace religion... From whence do morals originate? whither do they lead? is this self-existing obligation to do good, an isolated fact, without an author, without an end? does it not conceal, or rather does it not reveal to man, an origin, a destiny, beyond this world? The science of morals, by these spontaneous and inevitable questions, conducts man to the threshold of religion, and displays to him a sphere from whence he has not

derived it. Thus the certain and never-failing sources of religion are, on the one hand, the problems of our nature; on the other, the necessity of seeking for morals a sanction, an origin, and an aim. It therefore assumes many other forms beside that of a pure sentiment; it appears a union of doctrines, of precepts, of promises. This is what truly constitutes religion; this is its fundamental character; it is not merely a form of sensibility, an impulse of the imagination, a variety of poetry.

When thus brought back to its true elements, to its essential nature, religion appears no longer a purely personal concern, but a powerful and fruitful principle of association. Is it considered in the light of a system of belief, a system of dogmas? Truth is not the heritage of any individual, it is absolute and universal; mankind ought to seek and profess it in common. Is it considered with reference to the precepts that are associated with its doctrines? A law which is obligatory on a single individual, is so on all; it ought to be promulgated, and it is our duty to endeavour to bring all mankind under its dominion. It is the same with respect to the promises that religion makes, in the name of its creeds and precepts; they ought to be diffused; all men should be incited to partake of their benefits. A religious society, therefore, naturally results from the essential elements of religion, and is such a necessary consequence of it that the term which expresses the most energetic social sentiment, the most intense desire to propagate ideas and extend society, is the word *proslitytism*, a term which is especially applied to religious belief, and in fact consecrated to it.

When a religious society has ever been formed, when a certain number of men are united by a common religious creed, are governed by the same religious precepts, and enjoy the same religious hopes, some form of government is necessary. No society can endure a week, nay more, no society can endure a single hour, without a government. The moment, indeed, a society is formed, by the very fact of its formation, it calls forth a government,—a government which shall

proclaim the common truth which is the bond of the society, and promulgate and maintain the precepts that this truth ought to produce. The necessity of a superior power, of a form of government, is involved in the fact of the existence of a religious, as it is in that of any other society.

And not only is a government necessary, but it naturally forms itself.... When events are suffered to follow their natural laws, when force does not interfere, power falls into the hands of the most able, the most worthy, those who are most capable of carrying out the principles on which the society was founded. Is a warlike expedition in agitation? The bravest take the command. Is the object of the association learned research, or a scientific undertaking? The best informed will be the leader.... The inequality of faculties and influence, which is the foundation of power in civil life, has the same effect in a religious society... Religion has no sooner arisen in the human mind than a religious society appears; and immediately a religious society is formed, it produces its government.”⁶

It remains to allude to what, unless the word were often so vaguely and variously used, I should be led to call *metaphysical* developments; I mean such as are a mere analysis of the idea contemplated, and terminate in its exact and complete delineation. Thus Aristotle draws the character of a magnanimous or of a munificent man; thus Shakspeare might conceive and bring out his Hamlet or Ariel; thus Walter Scott gradually enucleates his James, or Dalgetty, as the action of his story proceeds; and thus, in the sacred province of theology, the mind may be employed in developing the solemn ideas, which it has hitherto held implicitly and without subjecting them to its reflecting and reasoning powers.

I have already treated of this subject at length, with a reference to the highest theological subject, in a former work, from which it will be sufficient here to quote some sentences in explanation:—

“The mind which is habituated to the thought of God, of Christ, of the Holy Spirit, naturally turns with a devout curiosity to the

contemplation of the object of its adoration, and begins to form statements concerning it, before it knows whither, or how far, it will be carried. One proposition necessarily leads to another, and a second to a third; then some limitation is required; and the combination of these opposites occasions some fresh evolutions from the original idea, which indeed can never be said to be entirely exhausted. This process is its development, and results in a series, or rather body, of dogmatic statements, till what was an impression on the Imagination has become a system or creed in the Reason.

Now such impressions are obviously individual and complete above other theological ideas, because they are the impressions of Objects. Ideas and their developments are commonly not identical, the development being but the carrying out of the idea into its consequences. Thus the doctrine of Penance may be called a development of the doctrine of Baptism, yet still is a distinct doctrine; whereas the developments in the doctrines of the Holy Trinity and the Incarnation are mere portions of the original impression, and modes of representing it. As God is one, so the impression which He gives us of Himself is one; it is not a thing of parts; it is not a system; nor is it anything imperfect and needing a counterpart. It is the vision of an object. When we pray, we pray, not to an assemblage of notions or to a creed, but to One Individual Being; and when we speak of Him, we speak of a Person, not of a Law or Manifestation... Religious men, according to their measure, have an idea or vision of the Blessed Trinity in Unity, of the Son Incarnate, and of His Presence, not as a number of qualities, attributes, and actions, not as the subject of a number of propositions, but as one and individual, and independent of words, like an impression conveyed through the senses.... Creeds and dogmas live in the one idea which they are designed to express, and which alone is substantive; and are necessary, because the human mind cannot reflect upon that idea except piecemeal, cannot use it in its oneness and entirety, or without resolving it into a series of aspects and relations.”⁷

So much on the development of ideas in various subject matters: it may be necessary to add that, in many cases, *development* simply stands for *exhibition*, as in some of the instances adduced above. Thus both Calvinism and Unitarianism may be called developments, that is, exhibitions, of the principle of Private Judgment, though they have nothing in common, viewed as doctrines.

As to Christianity, supposing the truths of which it consists to admit of development, that development will be one or other of the last five kinds. Taking the Incarnation as its central doctrine, the Episcopate, as taught by St. Ignatius, will be an instance of political development, the *Theotokos* of logical, the determination of the date of our Lord's birth of historical, the Holy Eucharist of moral, and the Athanasian Creed of metaphysical.

¹ Hallam's *Constit. Hist.* ch. vii. p. 572.

² ch. xlvii.

³ *Times* newspaper of March, 1845.

⁴ Crabbe's *Tales*.

⁵ *Eth. Nic.* i. 8.

⁶ Guizot, *Europ. Civil.*, Lect. v., Beckwith's Translation.

⁷ *Univ. Sermon*. xv. 20-23, pp. 329-332, ed. 3.

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