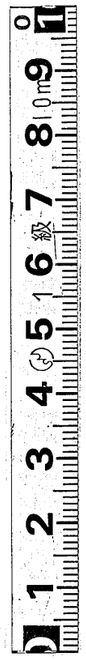

Earl of Lauderdale,
From Lord Grenv

OXFORD AND LOCKE.

T. WOODFALL, VINCENT SQUARE, WESTMINSTER.

OXFORD AND LOCKE.

BY

LORD GRENVILLE.

" Nec Romula quondam
Ullo se tantùm tellus jactabit alumno."

ÆNEID. LIB. VI.

LONDON:

JOHN MURRAY, ALBEMARLE STREET.

MDCCCXXIX.

In a state of health which admits of no lengthened application, the Writer of the following pages has found it a pleasing employment to vindicate from groundless aspersions, even in a transaction so remote as that which is here detailed, a Body in whose high reputation he has every reason to feel the warmest and most grateful interest.

To that Body, therefore, to the Vice-Chancellor, Masters, and Scholars of the University of Oxford, this little Tract is affectionately inscribed. In their eyes its purpose, and its motives will apologize for all its defects:—"Professione pietatis, aut laudatus erit, aut excusatus."

Dropmore, March 9th, 1829.

OXFORD AND LOCKE.

The Supplement to the Encyclopædia Britannica contains, as is well known, the first two parts of a dissertation, which the late Professor Stewart had undertaken to compose for that work, on the progress of intellectual and moral philosophy in Europe since the revival of letters. After their publication, the inquiry was unfortunately broken off, precisely at that point at which its farther prosecution would have been most interesting. But these pleasing and instructive essays, though falling so far short of their original design, have been very generally considered as a most valuable accession to the literary his-

tory of our country. Fully partaking of this impression, a sincere admirer of Mr. Stewart saw with regret, in the first of them, a passage respecting the University of Oxford, in which he conceived that gentleman to have been widely misled, both as to the real circumstances of the fact to which he adverted, and also as to the immediate cause which he appeared to assign for it.

The following extracts contain the substance of the statement here referred to: the whole may be found in pp. 96 and 97 of that publication [a].

"It is only, (says Father Malebranche,) since the time of Descartes, that to those confused and indeterminate questions, whether fire is hot, grass green, and sugar sweet, philosophers are in use to reply by distinguishing the equivocal meaning of the words expressing sensible qualities. If by heat, cold, and savour, you understand such and such a disposition of parts, or some unknown motion of sensible qualities, then fire is hot,

[a] See Supplement to the Encyclopædia Britannica, Vol. I. Dissertation, &c. Part I. p. 96.

grass green, and sugar sweet. But if by heat, and other qualities, you understand what I feel by fire, what I see in grass, &c., fire is not hot, nor grass green; for the heat I feel, and the colours I see, are only in the soul."———.

"The important observations of Descartes upon this subject made their way into England very soon after his death.———So slow however is the progress of good sense, when it has to struggle against the prejudices of THE LEARNED, that as lately as 1713 the paradox, so clearly explained and refuted by Descartes, *appears to have kept some footing in that University, from which, about thirty years before, Mr. Locke had been expelled.*"

Had this been really, at that late period, the state of philosophy in Oxford, so surprising a circumstance was doubtless very fit to be noticed in Mr. Stewart's inquiry. Tardy indeed was the progress of knowledge in this country, if such ignorance as this did actually so long disgrace one of our most distinguished seats of learning. But an assertion so important, a fact so unexpected,

could be established only by the strongest proofs. And in this case, what is the evidence? An insipid jest: an idle story from the Guardian, of "the logical attainments" with which, "after a year and a half's residence at that place, Jack Lizard" is supposed to astound his mother and his sisters[a]!

Cicero, we may remember, tells his son that after a year's attendance on the lectures of Cratippus, at Athens, his mind must be amply stored with the precepts and institutes of philosophy. But in our days a year and a half's residence, even at Oxford, is not thought quite sufficient for qualifying her students to rank among *the learned:* nor is Steele an author whose happiest efforts give us much insight into the doctrines of any school. Far better would it have been, had this unmeaning fiction been either wholly disregarded in so interesting a discussion, or noticed only for the purpose of opposing to it the correct and graceful wisdom of Addison, and the *extraordinary precision* (such are Mr. Stewart's own

[a] Stewart's Dissert., Part I. ut suprà.

words) with which that captivating writer, the friend and fellow-labourer of Steele, and his contemporary at Oxford, has treated of this very branch of the Cartesian philosophy[a]. Is it not from the works of such a man as this, that we must judge of the University which produced him? These are the bright samples which she exhibits of her abundant and well-ripened harvest; the fair fruits of her fertile soil and climate, her diligent and successful culture.

Mr. Stewart's general candour we willingly acknowledge; but he has in this case been, from whatever bias, betrayed into a reflexion so manifestly unfounded, that it could have claimed no serious attention, had he not, by however forced an association, coupled it with the great name of Locke. It was, we know, at Oxford that this wise and good man received his education. It was there that, in his maturer age, he pursued his studies with high reputation and esteem during no small portion of his life. And the often-repeated tale of his final expulsion from thence, never fails to convey the most unfavourable impressions

[a] Stewart's Dissert., Part II. p. 236.

of a body, which, after that long and intimate connexion, is supposed to have thus wantonly cast away one of its brightest ornaments. So long as virtue and wisdom are held in reverence amongst mankind, it must be regarded as no light charge against that noble seminary of learning, to have driven from its bosom, with disgrace, a man of such splendid talents, and unblemished character,—a philosopher famous to all ages for the improvement of science, and the assertion of religious and civil freedom. But the whole story is utterly groundless. It has arisen solely from the complete misconception of a very simple fact. This persuasion, the writer of these pages, not having the advantage of any personal acquaintance with Mr. Stewart, took an early opportunity of expressing to their common friend, the much-lamented Mr. Horner; who, in return, assured him that Mr. Stewart would receive, as kindness, the suggestion of any error, either of fact or opinion, into which he might unintentionally have fallen. And in that hope, well justified by the result, the letter was written which is now laid before the public, together with

the answer which it produced, and with a few further observations connected with the same subject.

It was as follows:

LORD GRENVILLE TO FRANCIS HORNER, ESQ.

"DROPMORE, Dec. 14, 1815.

"MY DEAR SIR,

"I NOW take the liberty of troubling you with the remarks which you have been so good as to undertake to communicate to Mr. Stewart respecting his assertion, that Locke was expelled from the University of Oxford. I am sensible that such a fact does not, at this distance of time, afford a very interesting subject of inquiry. But it derives some importance from the manner in which it has of late been repeatedly adverted to, as well as from the celebrity of the parties concerned. And when Mr. Stewart judges it capable of illustrating even the minutest point in his splendid survey of the progress of human knowledge, the interests of science, as well as those of truth, require that it should be correctly understood, and accurately related.

"The allusions, hitherto made to this transaction, have generally connected it with the political principles held by the University a few years before the revolution; Mr. Stewart has now coupled it with her alleged philosophical errors. It had in truth no relation to either. Into the discussion of these, therefore, I do not propose to enter. The political tenets of 1683, you will not suspect me of any disposition to defend; nor would there at the present time be much, either of merit or of use, in combating them. Such has been, at least in this branch of knowledge, the progress of the last century.

"As to the philosophy of that day, I cannot presume to discuss with Mr. Stewart, whether the learned at Oxford were more tardy than elsewhere, in discarding the silly sophistry of which he speaks. But if the fact were of much importance, one might perhaps be allowed to wish that he had thought it worthy of graver proof.

"The circumstances of the transaction respecting Locke were, shortly, these.

"He had long been connected with Lord

Shaftesbury; had served under him in office; had assisted him by his pen; and, on his retreat to Holland, had followed him there. All Shaftesbury's adherents were odious to the Court; and when Charles the Second had established his final triumph over the liberties of his people, Locke became a natural object of persecution. He possessed, probably, at that time, little else than his studentship of Christ-Church[a]; and as he derived this small emolument from a royal foundation, the king resolved to deprive him of it.

"Lord Sunderland was therefore directed to signify to the dean, (Bishop Fell,) the king's commands to that effect, and to require from him information as to the method of carrying them into execution. Fell's answer was in substance, that 'Locke's conduct in the college had been too guarded to afford any handle for proceeding against him there,

[a] This was an error. I am now informed that Locke's account books shew him to have been at that time in what may be considered as easy circumstances. The fact is no otherwise important, than as it shews his residence at Oxford to have been then a matter of choice, not of necessity.

though endeavours had been used to ensnare him into the defence of his patron: that he had, however, been summoned to reside, and must consequently either put himself within the reach of the government, if they had other matter against him; or, by non-appearance, make himself liable to expulsion for contumacy. But that, if this method would not satisfy the king, his majesty, as founder and visitor of the college, had the power of removal by his own mandate.'

"On the receipt of this letter, the king and his minister, without a moment's hesitation, adopted the course last suggested. The order was sent in regular official form; that of a royal sign manual, countersigned by the secretary of state: and it was immediately obeyed by the dean and chapter.

"This statement is abstracted, I trust correctly, from the well-known documents, first published, I believe, in the Life of Locke prefixed to his works, and since repeatedly reprinted. It must, I think, at once satisfy Mr. Stewart, that his impressions on the subject have been erroneous.

"It is manifest that the University of Oxford, on whom the disgrace of this transaction has so often been represented as attaching, had in truth not the smallest concern or participation in the business. It is certain that Locke never was expelled either *by* or *from* the University. No trace appears, no evidence has ever been offered of any such proceeding. Mr. Stewart is much too well informed to confound the government of a college with that of the University. As well might we identify the acts of the corporation of London or Edinburgh with the acts of the British Parliament.

"It is no less evident that Locke never was *expelled* from Christ Church, if that term is meant to express any act or proceeding of the college, any exertion of their authority, or any exercise of their discretion. He was removed from his studentship on that foundation: but his deprivation was solely the act of the crown, in which the college had no other share than as the passive instruments of a superior, whom they had, or conceived themselves to have, neither the power nor the right to resist. It

is true that Fell's second letter speaks of Locke's *expulsion*. He may have used the word inadvertently, or he may have chosen it as most acceptable to the court. But it is clearly inaccurate. The entry on their own books proves decisively that the Chapter did no more than register, and put in execution the king's mandate of deprivation.

"This they had, in the first place, no *power* to resist. The king had made himself absolute in England; and it cannot well be reproached to the governors of a college, that they did not withstand an usurpation in which the whole country had so disgracefully acquiesced.

"But in this case they certainly thought they had no *right* of resistance. They conceived the warrant to be legal, and the mandate imperative on themselves.

"Christ-Church is a royal foundation; and as, in law, the king never dies, it has been always supposed that the crown still possesses there the authority both of founder and of visitor[a].

[a] A cathedral and collegiate church might seem at first view to be an ecclesiastical body, subject, as such, to the visitation of the ordinary. But the claim of the crown to visit there as founder, has, I believe, never been disputed. It is enough for my argument, that such a claim was at that time believed to be valid; and this is abundantly proved by all the papers in the case.

"Whether our present courts of law would admit even these powers to extend to the issuing a mandate for the arbitrary removal of a student without any cause alleged, or for his removal on an allegation of sedition, without hearing, and without proof, is not for me to determine. In these days it is not likely that the experiment would be tried, and, if it were, we should not, I think, be fearful of the issue.

"But those times were widely different. There can be no doubt that the deprivation of Locke by royal mandate, was then considered as a legal, though probably it was even then thought an odious exercise of an unquestionable authority[a]. Fell refers to the king's power as admitting no dispute. And he well

[a] From Burnet we learn, that nearly at the same period he suffered under a like injustice. On no better ground of proof, and with no juster pretence of right, the king *commanded*, through his secretary of state, that Burnet should be dismissed from the Chapel of the Rolls; and the order was obeyed.

knew the constitution of his college, which his father and himself had governed for so many years. Lord Sunderland, in like manner, considers the point as beyond all doubt. His first letter notifies the king's peremptory command for Locke's deprivation, and inquires only into the method of doing it. His second letter transmits the king's warrant for that purpose, as matter of course. And as such it is received, registered, and obeyed by the chapter. Add to all this, that after the accession of King William, Locke, we are told, wished to be restored to his studentship, but found it was impracticable. If the great lawyers of the Revolution, with whom he naturally advised, had even then considered his deprivation as illegal, the case, it should seem, could admit of no difficulty. He would have re-entered, as of right, into a place, of which he had never been lawfully dispossessed.

"This, then, I believe to be the just view of the transaction as it concerns the college. The meanness of Fell's letter, no honest man could wish to palliate: much less his con-

duct, if he had indeed (as he seems to intimate) been himself concerned in laying snares for the destruction of one who was a member of his own college, and to whom he stood therefore in the relation of a father. But these are the crimes of an individual; not imputable to a college, much less to an University[a]. And it must be said, that had

[a] Least of all, I might have added, can they justify any insinuations against the present character of those venerable bodies. The time which has since elapsed is little less than a century and a half; but there is a much wider interval between the feelings which dictated Fell's letter to Lord Sunderland, and the spirit which now floats in the very atmosphere of an English University.

I cannot think that I have judged that letter too harshly, stamped as it is with an indelible brand of servility and treachery. Yet Le Clerc, writing doubtless under impressions derived from the native candour of Locke's mind, paints Fell in favourable colours; and even ascribes his conduct in this instance to good, and kindly motives. By Burnet also, who had no political partiality for Fell, he is highly extolled. But the letter unfortunately speaks for itself; it shews what are the moral feelings acceptable to despotism and natural to slavery.

In what is said of Hough in the next sentence, a due reference to his associates ought not to have been omitted. Those who shared in the contest, must not be forgotten in the triumph. The courage which it called forth was not that of one man only, however justly reverenced and rewarded: its honour attaches on one of the largest colleges of that University which has been the

Fell been endowed with the courage and integrity of Hough himself, yet it was impossible for him to have done in this case, what was soon afterwards so nobly done at another college in the same University. The injustice of James the Second at Magdalen College, was not only a flagrant violation of private right, but a blow openly directed against the religion of his people; that of Charles the Second, at Christ Church, was an instance only of individual persecution, in a time when such instances were familiar. It was a perversion of admitted principles, an abuse of an acknowledged authority.

"On the whole, the inference which this transaction should suggest to the philosopher or the historian, is surely not that of reproach on those public bodies whose rights it infringed, and whose security it violated; on

theme of the ill-grounded imputation here refuted. Besides the President, who was ousted of his freehold, not less than nine and thirty members of that college were persecuted for their noble stand in defence of its rights. Twenty-six of the fellows were incapacitated from holding any ecclesiastical preferment, or, (if not already in orders,) from being thenceforth admitted into that profession: and thirteen of the *demies* (scholars) were struck out of the college books.

bodies who, in every just view of the case, were the victims, not the authors, of the oppression. With academical prejudices or errors, real or supposed, it has obviously no connection. But it affords a political lesson of the highest value, and which naturally has not been overlooked by Mr. Fox. It reminds us that the benefits of equal laws, and the securities of free government are alike important to every class of society. When the barrier of parliamentary protection was once removed, the guarded innocence of Locke, his studious retirement, and his humble station, were as much within the range of a vindictive tyranny, as the high birth, and ample wealth, the commanding influence, and the active patriotism of Russel or of Sydney [a].

"Believe me ever, my dear Sir,

"With the truest regard, most faithfully yours,

(Signed) "GRENVILLE."

"FRANCIS HORNER, ESQ."

[a] Need I say that these sentences were written with an immediate reference to that great topic of debate, (the Catholic Question, as it is most improperly termed,) which then divided, and has unfortunately until the present moment continued to divide the opinions and councils of our country? A whole people, labouring under civil disabilities and exclusions solely by

The documents which support the foregoing statement will be found in the Appendix to these pages. The entry on the books of the chapter of Christ Church, which is one of them, was communicated by the late dean, Dr. Hall. The others are transcribed from copies which have already been often printed, in the common accounts of the life of Locke. And to these Lord King's kindness now enables me to add, from Locke's papers, the draft of a petition to King William, praying him to redress the injustice of his predecessor. Why that petition was not

reason of their religious faith, was then confidently affirmed by some, and implicitly believed by many, to be quite insensible of the evils of that condition; equally careless of the privations which it imposes, and of the reproach which it implies. How groundless was that confidence, the state of Ireland at this day has but too plainly shewn.

But we have at last left far behind us these dark and dangerous ways. The day-star of conciliation has arisen to guide us in the straight and smooth paths of wisdom and of justice. Already is its happy influence displayed in a measure of generous and confiding kindness. The light of equal freedom, the warmth of brotherly affection, are its vital principles; and long may they be cherished, long reverenced with pious zeal, by every part of a community happy because it is free, and powerful because it is united!

presented, or, if presented, not acted upon, I know not. Le Clerc's account of that matter seems unsatisfactory.

Mr. Stewart's reply was such as Mr. Horner had anticipated. After expressions of personal good opinion, much too flattering to be here transcribed, but looked back to certainly, in the present moment, with feelings of peculiar satisfaction, Mr. Stewart proceeds as follows:

—"If it be not disagreeable to his Lordship, and if you consent to relinquish in my favour your claim to your property, I should wish extremely that the original should remain in my possession. It not only contains some important details, of which, with Lord Grenville's permission, I shall be glad to avail myself on some future occasion; but is to me doubly precious, as a testimony (for so my vanity leads me to interpret it) of his *general* satisfaction with the train of thought running through my discourse."———

—"My impressions, with respect to the conduct of Oxford towards Mr. Locke, were entirely derived from Mr. Fox; in following whom as a historical guide, in a matter so

nearly affecting the credit of that seat of learning where he was himself educated, I conceived myself to be on very safe ground. The documents quoted by Lord Grenville convince me, that the college to which Mr. Locke belonged, had no alternative left but to obey the royal mandate; and, consequently, that Mr. Fox has expressed himself with an undue severity, when he says, that 'it was from the base principles of servility Mr. Locke was cast away by the University.' I should be truly happy, for the honour of learning, if it could be shewn, that the decree passed on the day of Russel's execution, was the consequence of an equally imperative interference on the part of government. At all events, the injustice which Mr. Locke was supposed to have received from Oxford in his lifetime, has, in my opinion, been more than compensated to his memory, by the filial anxiety of Lord Grenville to vindicate, at the distance of more than one hundred and thirty years, that learned body from what he considers as a calumny injurious to their reputation.

"The conclusion of the sentence in page 97

of my Dissertation, to which Lord Grenville has alluded, and which appears to myself, now when I read it coolly, to combine unfairly two circumstances altogether unconnected with each other, shall be altered, if my work shall ever come to a second impression. As to the hasty assertion involved in that sentence, 'that Mr. Locke was expelled from the University,' I am confident his Lordship will allow it to be a venial inaccuracy in a Scotchman, considering the loose terms in which Mr. Fox, Lord Sunderland, and Bishop Fell have all expressed themselves on the subject.

"I ever am, my dear Sir,

"Yours, most affectionately,

(Signed) "DUGALD STEWART."

After the receipt of such a letter, it would have ill become Lord Grenville to anticipate, by any publication of his, Mr. Stewart's intended correction of the error which he so ingenuously acknowledged. Abundant opportunities for such an explanation were likely to present themselves. Not only was it to be expected that many succeeding editions

would be called for of that interesting essay, but if its author had, fortunately for his readers, been able to resume his original design, its farther progress must again have led him repeatedly to speak of the life of Locke, of his opinions, both political and philosophical, of the various reception which they experienced, and of their powerful and beneficial influence on the most important interests of mankind. Mr. Stewart's plan, however, was unhappily too large for the period of life at which he undertook it. He brought it down in its first part, in one comprehensive view, to about the close of the seventeenth century. From that date he had proposed to distribute the inquiry under the three distinct, but closely connected divisions of metaphysics, ethics, and politics. For the eighteenth century he has executed only so much of his purpose as fell under the first of these: the best ground-work doubtless for the other two, but in his own judgment confessedly, of far the least general interest[a]. What a

[a] See the Advertisement prefixed to the Second Part of his Dissertation.

labour would it have been, how overwhelming to himself, but to the great mass of his readers how gratifying, if, with the same minute and accurate research, the same depth of thought, and perspicuity of language, he could have proceeded to trace the various, but still advancing course of the ethical and political philosophy of the last and the present age, not only in our own country, but throughout every part of Europe!

All must lament,—but who can wonder?—that under the infirmities of advancing age, such a task was not brought to its destined termination. Nor is it a small consolation to us, under such a loss, to know that it was the abandonment of that too sanguine undertaking which enabled Mr. Stewart, before his useful life had ceased, to complete the last, the ablest, the most eloquent, and most important of all his works, his *Philosophy of the active and moral Powers of Man.* On that interesting and beautiful account of our moral as distinguished from our intellectual nature, some of his latest days, we are told, were still occupied. And what fitter em-

ployment could he have found for such a season? What nobler legacy could he have bequeathed in his dying moments, to his country and to mankind?

But with this brilliant service his career, alas! is now closed. And the increased reverence with which this admirable work must henceforth clothe his name, affords a fresh motive for clearing up even the minutest particular in any page of his writings, which he himself, contrary to his avowed purpose, has left incorrect, or unexplained.

He had been entirely deceived, not only as to the real circumstances of the transaction adverted to in the foregoing letters, but also as to the causes from which he supposed it to have arisen. That Locke was not, as is the common report, expelled from Oxford, has been proved beyond all possibility of question. And it may very easily be shewn, with equal certainty, that had the fact been so, still its motives could not have been those which are commonly assigned for it. It is absolutely impossible that this excellent man

should, at the time referred to, have been exposed to censure or punishment for those works which, appearing only at a much later period, have finally assured to him the gratitude of the most remote posterity. Yet that he was, on that ground, "cast away" by the University, is, at this hour, if I mistake not, the general belief. Such was evidently the impression both of Mr. Stewart, and of Mr. Fox; and such, I think, is the effect naturally produced on every mind by the well-known lines, some of which Mr. Stewart, in the second part of his dissertation, has quoted from Pope, and which first, perhaps, gave currency to this idle tale.

"Prompt at the call, around the goddess roll
Broad hats, and hoods, and caps, a sable shoal:
Thick and more thick the black blockade extends,
A hundred head of Aristotle's friends.
Nor wert thou, Isis! wanting to the day:
Though Christ Church long kept prudishly away,
Each staunch polemic, stubborn as a rock,
Each fierce logician still expelling Locke,
Came whip and spur, and dashed through thin and thick,
On German Crousaz, and Dutch Burgersdyck."

Dunciad, B. IV. v. 189.

The satirist however is unfortunate in all his facts. All the rest of Oxford, (and in the preceding lines, all Cambridge with her,) he vilifies, without reserve; for Christ Church alone he makes some exception, such as it is. Yet in the only proceeding which he specifies as a ground for his abuse, the University had no concern whatever, while the college was exclusively, though quite blamelessly, its passive instrument. He speaks of the "fierce logicians *still* expelling Locke," who in truth, never was expelled at all; and, with these adverse logicians, the supposed persecutors of Locke, he associates the names of Burgersdyck, who wrote before Locke was born, and of Crousaz, Locke's disciple and panegyrist!

"Of the *Essay on the Human Understanding*," says Stewart, "Crousaz speaks in the following terms:—'Clarissimi, et merito celebratissimi Lockii de intellectu humano eximium opus, et auctore suo dignissimum, *logicis utilissimis* semper annumerabitur.' If Pope had ever looked into this treatise, he could not have committed so gross a mistake

as to introduce the author into the Dunciad, among Locke's Aristotelian opponents; a distinction for which Crousaz was probably indebted to his acute strictures on those passages in the *Essay on Man* which seem favourable to fatalism."[a]

Pope chose, for whatever reason, to speak thus contemptuously of two scholars, of whose writings probably he was alike ignorant; for we may well believe that he knew no more of Burgersdyck than of Crousaz. Their learning, their abilities, or their opinions, the poet could not criticize. But he had another resource. To the narrow-minded of every country, the name of foreigner is a term of abuse. He thinks it enough to tell us that the one was a German, the other a Dutchman! The countrymen of Luther and Leibnitz, of Erasmus and Grotius, what could they be but DUNCES?

Yet even here also it happens that the fact fails him. Crousaz was not a German, but a Swiss; a native of Lausanne, and a distinguished professor of its university[b]. The error

[a] Stewart's Dissert., Part II., p. 12. [b] Biographie Universelle.

is indeed in itself of small importance; but it completes the picture of that knowledge which undertook to heap insult and invective on the ignorance of others!

After these specimens can we wonder that the general impression conveyed by this passage should be found quite as erroneous as the most erroneous of its details? It vanishes under the slightest examination of dates and circumstances.

Locke's arbitrary removal from his studentship at Christ Church under the royal mandate, is manifestly the only fact which can ever have been confounded with his supposed expulsion from the University. But this transaction, though it has fixed eternal dishonour on its real authors, is yet clear of the peculiar disgrace with which it has commonly been stigmatized. The undeserving victim of that tyranny was a peaceful student, an estimable and accomplished scholar, a man whose talents and virtues were held in general respect; but at that time he had not yet made himself known either to his persecutors or to the world as an illustrious philosopher, and

distinguished benefactor of mankind. None of those works, which have established for him a lasting claim to these high titles, had then been published.

The earliest of them, was his unanswerable defence of toleration. His first letter on that subject was printed in Holland, and in the Latin language, in 1689. Its translation, and the succeeding letters followed at later periods. From no bigotry, therefore, however blind, from no zeal, however infuriated, against those principles of eternal justice which he has there so nobly upheld, can any part of what he suffered in 1684 have by any possibility originated.

The same may be said of his metaphysical, and the same of his political speculations. Neither his Essay on the Human Understanding, nor his Treatise on Government were given to the world till after the Revolution. Both breathe a love of truth, a zeal for the happiness of mankind, and a masculine spirit of free inquiry, ill-suited to those inauspicious times on which the first part of Locke's life had been cast. Both were reserved for

the dawn of a brighter day. To the government of Charles the Second, they cannot possibly have afforded any motive for the persecution of this excellent man. The true cause of that disgraceful step is distinctly, and quite differently stated to us by Le Clerc. Locke was suspected to be the author of some pamphlets, afterwards found to have been written by another. But the suspicion was enough. Among the conflicting enormities of that unhappy reign, its judicial crimes are the most detestable. Weak, indeed, before the tribunals of those days, was the safeguard of innocence. Locke therefore took refuge in Holland. From James the Second, the friends of this illustrious exile procured for him an offer of pardon, which he declined with conscious integrity. In Monmouth's rash and ill-conducted expedition he took no share: neither the leader nor the cause was such as could engage his confidence. But on that occasion he was again suspected without reason, and was thereupon demanded by the king from the Dutch government, under whose connivance he remained concealed till after the Revo-

lution. Then only did he stand forth as the open advocate of a wiser and juster system of government and law; proclaiming and vindicating those principles, so important to the happiness of all civil society, which he had before been compelled by an over-ruling necessity to cloak under the deep reserve so characteristically described by Fell. Then only did he recognize in his own days a proper season, and in his own country a congenial spot for rearing to maturity the fruits of his long-laboured meditations. From that date, not less auspicious to science than to liberty, commenced the bright æra of a new philosophy, which, whatever were still its imperfections, had for its basis clear and determinate conceptions, free inquiry and unbiassed reason for its instruments, and for its end TRUTH;—truth, unsophisticated and undisguised, shedding its pure light over every proper object of the human understanding, but confining itself with reverential awe within those bounds which an all-wise Creator has set to our inquiries.

WHAT has hitherto been here said, relates wholly to the groundless story of this great man's expulsion from Oxford, and to the causes with which that supposed insult has been connected in popular belief. To both these errors a new stamp and sanction seemed to have been given by the high authority of Mr. Stewart's dissertation. Their refutation, it is hoped, has been complete. But, before these pages are closed, it may not be superfluous to add to them a few brief observations on some things said of Locke in the second part of the same essay, published at a later period. These may appear of less moment; but some interest belongs to every circumstance in which the history of Oxford and of Locke is concerned, and particularly to those facts which prove a much closer connection than has been generally described between those so justly venerated names.

I. OF LOCKE'S MEDICAL STUDIES.

In the printed Life of Locke, commonly

prefixed to his works, we are told that he applied himself at the University with great diligence to the study of medicine, "not with any design of practising as a physician, but principally for the benefit of his own constitution, which was but weak."[a] The self-taught scholar, says the Italian proverb, has an ignorant master[b]; and the patient who prescribes for himself, has not often, I believe, a very wise physician. No such purpose is ascribed to Locke by Le Clerc, from whom our knowledge of his private history is principally derived. Nor can we believe that such a man chose for himself in youth that large and difficult study, with no view to the good of others, but meaning it to begin and end only with the care of his own health. Surely the spirit in which he resolved

> "To scorn delights, and live laborious days,"

was directed to far other ends than his own

[a] Locke, Vol. I., p. xx. 8vo. 1794, to which edition all the other references in these pages are also made.

[b] Chi s' insegna, ha un pazzo per maestro.

personal ease and comfort, or even than the fame which he has so justly earned. "Every one," he says, applying the rule to his own case at a much later period of his life, and in a far more infirm condition of his health, "every one, according to what way Providence has placed him in, is bound to labour for the public good as far as he is able."[a] Le Clerc asserts only that Locke never practised physic for profit, though he was highly esteemed by the ablest physicians of his time[b]: and Mr. Stewart, who has transcribed this statement, is not to be blamed for its inaccuracy. But it is unquestionably erroneous. We are positively told by Wood, that Locke did for a time, (we know not how long,) practise physic at Oxford. Le Clerc wrote, as he himself tells us, principally from hearsay, and not till some time after his great friend's death: Wood was living on the spot at the time of which he speaks, and could not be ignorant of the fact; nor had he any apparent motive to misrepresent it. When he

[a] Locke, Vol. VIII. p. 332.
[b] See Bibliothêque Choisie, Vol. VI.

speaks slightingly of Locke's reputation in that line, we recognize and disregard the antiquary's prejudices. Sydenham's words, quoted by Mr. Stewart from Le Clerc, afford a brilliant proof of the estimation in which Locke's medical skill was held by the first authorities in that science, as his talents and virtues were by all who knew him. "Nosti præterea quam huic meæ methodo suffragantem habeam, qui eam intimiùs per omnia perspexerat, utrique nostrum conjunctissimum, Dominum Joannem Locke; quo quidem viro, sive ingenio judicioque acri et subacto, sive etiam antiquis, hoc est, optimis moribus, vix superiorem quemquam, inter eos qui nunc sunt homines, repertum iri confido, paucissimos certè pares."[a] But even this testimony confirms Wood's assertion as to the main fact in question. Would Sydenham have thus boasted of the approbation given to a system of medical treatment, or medical study, by a person, however able, who was not himself a physician? A like inference

[a] Bibliothêque Choisie, Vol. VI. p. 350.

must be drawn from Locke's first connection with Lord Shaftesbury, which was manifestly that of medical attendance;—from his patron's desire "not to suffer him thenceforth to practise medicine out of his (Lord Shaftesbury's) house, except among some of his particular friends;"[a]—from several passages in his private letters, in which he offers with unhesitating confidence, medical advice to his correspondents;—and also, slight as the circumstance may seem, from his own statement to Le Clerc, that he had passed under the name of Doctor Locke, though he never took that degree. Le Clerc adds, that he contented himself with that of Master of Arts. But this is again a mistake. We know from Wood's Fasti, that Locke was created Bachelor in Physic at Oxford, in 1674. It appears, indeed, from a letter printed in his works, that four years before that time, his friends had endeavoured to procure for him, at the reception of the Prince of Orange, a doctor's degree, probably

[a] Locke's Life, ut suprà.

an honorary one[a]. But this request was withdrawn at Locke's own desire, having been objected to, I suppose, from the reluctance of the University to confer on professional men degrees of that description.

Mr. Stewart has remarked on the favourable effect likely to be produced by Locke's medical studies in preparing such a mind, so trained, and so cultivated as it had been, for the prosecution of those speculations which were afterwards to immortalize his name. The observation is just, and consonant to all experience. Nor can we limit it, with Mr. Stewart, to any one field of knowledge. From the very first dawn of reviving letters to the present moment, there never has been a period in this country, when the great masters of medicine among us have not made manifest the happy influence of that pursuit, on the cultivation of all the other branches of philosophy. And accordingly we find, that while Locke was still *proceeding*, as it is termed, in the academical course of that noble science, he was already occupied in

[a] Locke, Vol. IX. p. 321.

laying the foundations of the Essay on the Human Understanding, which, as we learn from Le Clerc, was commenced in 1670.

Mr. Stewart thinks it matter of praise to Locke, that in that work "not a single passage," he says, occurs, savouring of the anatomy school, or the laboratory. This assertion is not to be too literally taken. Certainly no trace of professional pedantry is to be found in that simple and forcible writer. He had looked abroad into all the knowledge of his time, and in his unceasing endeavours to make his propositions, and his proofs, intelligible and perspicuous to all, he delighted to appeal to every topic of most familiar observation. Among these some reference to medical science could scarcely have been avoided. Nor has it been entirely so. Mr. Stewart himself has elsewhere noticed Locke's "*homely*" illustration of the nature of secondary qualities, by the operation of manna on the human body[a]. A more pleasing example of medical allusion is to be found in one of the many passages where

[a] Locke, Vol. I. p. 115.—Stewart Dissert., Part II. p. 239.

Locke points out to us how often men whose opinions substantially agree, are heard wrangling about the names and watch-words of parties and sects, to which they respectively attach quite different significations. He tells us of a meeting of physicians, at which he himself was present. These ingenious and learned men debated long, he says, "whether any liquor passed through the filaments of the nerves;" until it appeared, on mutual explanation, that they all admitted the passage of some fluid and subtle matter through those channels, and had been disputing only whether or not it should be called a *liquor*; "which, when considered, they thought not worth contending about."[a]

In his letters on Toleration, and in his essay on the Conduct of the Understanding, his two most valuable, because most practical works, he indulges much more freely in such allusions. It is frequently by their aid that, in the first of those admirable productions, he ridicules his unequal adversary's project of enforcing universal conformity by *moderate* and

[a] Locke, Vol. II. p. 16.

lenient persecution. In one place he compares him to a surgeon, using his knife on the sick and sound alike, on bad subjects and on good, without their consent, but, as he assures them, always solely for their own advantage; —and in another place to an empiric, prescribing, says Locke, his "*hiera picra*," (HIS HOLY BITTERS,) to be taken in such doses only as shall be sufficient for the cure, without once inquiring in what quantities of that poisonous drug such sufficiency is at all likely to be found. Again, we find him illustrating in a similar way the proper conduct to be pursued by a mind devoting itself in any case to a genuine search for truth. A diligent and sincere, a close and unbiassed examination, he powerfully insists upon as "the surest and safest" method for that purpose. Would not this, he asks, be the conduct of a student in medicine wishing to acquire just notions of that science, "or of the doctrines of Hippocrates, or any other book in which he conceived the whole art of physic to be infallibly contained?"[a] These and many other

[a] Locke, Vol. II. p. 383.

passages of a like description, are beauties, surely, not blemishes, in Locke's powerful composition; and certainly in no degree less valuable, for bearing some tincture of the current in which that great man's thoughts and studies had been so long carried forward.

II. OF LOCKE'S RESIDENCE AT OXFORD.

The particulars which have been stated in the preceding section, are connected with a question of still higher interest in the life of Locke. Mr. Stewart, misled probably by some ambiguous expressions of Le Clerc, asserts, that "in 1666," the thirty-fifth year of Locke's age, "a complete change took place both in the direction of his studies, and in his habits of life: that his attention appears to have been then turned for the first time to political subjects, *and his place of residence transferred* from the University to the metropolis."[a] This statement is in some points unquestionably inaccurate; and it conveys, I think, in

[a] Dissertation, Part II. p. 4.

its general import, a very mistaken impression of the facts to which it relates. Of this part of Locke's history we are, it is true, in some degree, imperfectly informed. But where is the authority for this total change in Locke's residence, studies, and habits of life? Certainly no such revolution took place in 1666. In that year, and in the spring of 1667, he was pursuing at Oxford a course of observations on the atmosphere. His diary of these has been published by Boyle, and we find that during the last four months of the above-named period, he continued it there uninterruptedly from day to day.

From the 28th of March 1667, to near the end of December 1669, this diary is suspended, and gives us no information of the places where he then resided. Le Clerc tells us that in 1668 he attended the Earl and Countess of Northumberland to the continent, and the Earl dying in his journey to Rome, Locke, who had been left with the Countess in France, returned with her from thence to England, sooner than was first designed. From December 1669 to the middle of 1675 there is a similar journal of the atmosphere

kept by him in London, but at very irregular and distant intervals, giving on the whole an average of no more than about fourteen entries in each year, and affording therefore little presumption of a fixed residence in that or any other place.

In June 1675, this London journal was, after only twelve entries in that half year, wholly discontinued. It had for the preceding year contained only six entries.

Its interruption was now occasioned by a journey into France for his own health. There he remained till 1679, in which year, we are told, Lord Shaftesbury, at that time again in office, sent for him to London. But after Shaftesbury's dismission, Locke returned to Oxford in January 1681, as is proved by his diary, and, in the month of March of that year, he resumed his journal of the atmosphere there, and continued it till his retreat to the continent in June 1683.

During the whole period which elapsed from 1667 to 1683, there seem to have been not more than three, or at the most four years in which Locke was officially employed under

Lord Shaftesbury; viz. from 1672 to 1674, both inclusive, and for a part of 1679 and 1680. In these years he may reasonably be presumed to have lived principally in London; though even with reference to them, and to the times which immediately preceded them, Le Clerc tells us more than once of Locke's repeated residences at Oxford.

His connexion, and continued intercourse with that place never ceased till he was driven into Holland in 1683. He was attached to it by early and strong ties. Removed there in 1652 from Westminster, he took, in 1658, his degree of Master of Arts. In 1661 he was appointed Greek Lecturer at Christ Church; in 1662, Reader in Rhetoric, and in 1663, Censor of Moral Philosophy. The rhetoric there taught must, no doubt, always have included, as it still includes, an elementary course of logic. So it should naturally be. The first step towards the art of speaking persuasively is that of reasoning accurately. And the logic of Locke was then no doubt that of the established studies of the place. The Censor at

Christ Church is the person immediately superintending the conduct of its junior members. During those three years therefore this great man was actively employed in the education and discipline carried on in that distinguished society. And who can contemplate without delight the powers of such a mind applied to that honourable service? How animating to every inmate of that venerable place, to the zeal of those who teach, to the diligence of those who learn there the lessons of wisdom and virtue, must be the remembrance that, within the same walls, Locke also laboured in the same cause! The same voice which has since spoken in imperishable accents to Europe, and to posterity, was there first heard to incite the youthful mind to the sedulous pursuit, and proper application of that knowledge which, to use this excellent philosopher's own words, the Creator of mankind "has given us for the conveniences of life, and information of virtue; putting within the reach of our discovery the comfortable provision for this life, and the way that leads to a better." [a]

[a] Locke, Vol. I. p. 3.

The duties of the censorship must have detained him at Christ Church till Christmas 1664. It was not therefore till immediately after that time, or in the first months of 1665, (then considered according to the prevailing mode of computation, as a part of 1664,) that he attended Sir Walter Vane[a] into Germany as is mentioned by Le Clerc. But he returned to Oxford within the year, and in 1666 was found by Lord Shaftesbury a practising physician there. And that statesman's rapid appreciation of his merits is a striking instance of an intuitive discrimination of character, one of the most valuable of all qualities in the conduct of political affairs.

After Locke's return in 1669, from his attendance on the Earl and Countess of Northumberland, he very soon became, at least for some time, again resident at Oxford. This we collect from his own account of the origin of his great metaphysical work, of which the first foundation was then laid.

The whole of that large enquiry arose, he tells us, from a conversation with five or six of his friends meeting *at his chamber*,

[a] Le Clerc calls him by mistake Sir W. Swan.

and discoursing on a subject very remote from such discussions. Le Clerc repeats the same anecdote from Locke's own mouth, but specifies Mr. Tyrrell and Mr. Thomas, as two of those friends. The time of that meeting he has fixed with precision, and the addition of these names goes very far to ascertain its place. It happened, he says, in 1670, and the same subject, it appears, was followed up with the same persons in subsequent conversations. But it was at Oxford that Locke enjoyed the society, both of Tyrrell, and of Thomas. The former was the author of that name who published a history of England, and several political discourses. He had retired to a studious life at a house which he had at Oakley, near Brill, within a few miles of Oxford. There are still extant among Locke's papers several letters between them, proving their intimacy; and in Locke's diary there are entries of visits to Oakley of about a fortnight each, in the two successive years, 1682 and 1683. Thomas is described by Le Clerc as a physician of Oxford.

During some part therefore of 1670, it seems beyond all question that Locke must

have been resident in that University. In 1671, although the account-books of the College for that year have been preserved, there are no traces in them of his residence. The books of the other years, from 1668 to 1675, inclusive, have not been found.

Under the date of 1672, there was, we are told, among Locke's papers, a college or university-exercise of his on a theological question closely connected with some of his later works in that science. In 1674 he took, at Oxford, the degree of Bachelor in Medicine, long after the period when his standing in the University would have entitled him to it. The immediate motives for this step are nowhere explained; it had reference probably to the next circumstance of which I am about to speak. It affords no proof certainly of a fixed residence in that place, but it is on the other hand, totally at variance with Mr. Stewart's notion, that Locke had eight years before changed, not only the scene of his residence, but the whole direction of his studies and habits of life.

This was so far from being the case, that in January 1675 he was appointed by the

Dean and Chapter of Christ Church to what Fell, in his letter to Sunderland, calls a physician's place, or in the language of the college, to a faculty studentship in medicine. The sole object of that appointment was to enable him to retain his studentship without taking orders; which, by the college statutes, he could not otherwise have done. The suspension of ordination in the Church of England under the long persecution which she endured, had produced a necessity of providing specially after the Restoration for the case of those who by a non-compliance with that condition, would, if the law were strictly enforced, have forfeited their studentships at Christ Church. On this ground special dispensations had from time to time been granted to Locke and others by royal warrant. But his solicitation[a] and acceptance, first of these occasional indulgencies, and afterwards of a situation which gave him a legal and permanent right to the same exemption, fully prove the error of Mr. Stewart's supposition. Locke's connexion with his college, far from having been broken off by himself, would have

[a] See Locke, Vol. IX. p. 322. Lord Ashley's Letter to Fell.

ceased as of course, had he not taken these repeated and active steps for its continuance. It was, as we have seen, at last dissolved only by a tyranny which he could not resist.

When that event took place he had again recently manifested his unshaken attachment to Oxford. His third return from the continent was occasioned by his being once more summoned to London to serve in office under Shaftesbury; but even in that situation he still continued, says Le Clerc, his occasional visits to his college. And on Shaftesbury's dismission, it was to Oxford that Locke again returned, and there that he thenceforth resided until the period of his involuntary exile. To that favoured spot he looked, after all his wanderings, and all his avocations, as to his fixed, and final home. Accident or duty might for a time engage him elsewhere:—"tamen istic," he seems to say,

"—— istic mens animusque
"Fert, et amat spatiis obstantia rumpere claustra."

At no time before the Revolution, except

when he was actually employed in public office, does his residence seem ever to have been fixed in London, where Mr. Stewart supposes it to have been finally transferred more than twenty years before that great epoch. Till then we must regard him as having been, though with intervals more or less considerable, yet principally an inmate of Oxford, and of Christ Church, from his nineteenth to beyond his fiftieth year. With what feelings he was there regarded we know from the testimony of Tyrrell and of Sydenham, himself also an Oxford man;—from the important college offices which he discharged;—from the faculty studentship conferred upon him by Fell, for the sole purpose of retaining him as a member of that foundation;—from a letter still extant, in which the same person expresses much kindness towards him on the occasion of his last journey into France;—and in some degree perhaps, from the terms in which, in his beautiful character of Pococke, he speaks of his own intercourse with that amiable man.

After the Revolution Locke's political opi-

nions and engagements may not improbably, under the party violence of that day, have estranged from him some of the persons of highest influence in a place where the principles most opposite to his had then unfortunately so decided a prevalence. But though he ceased to reside there, he still viewed with unabated fondness those early scenes of his peaceful life, that happy retreat in which, to use his own characteristic words, "he had lived inoffensively so many years."[a] He bequeathed at his death, to the library of the University, a copy of his works; the best of all tokens which such a man could give of his persevering affection for the nursing mother of his youth; for the seat of his first education, and long continued studies; for that body from which he is so erroneously represented to have been driven with unmerited indignity. And his statue, which adorns the library of his college, though raised by private munificence, stands there an illustrious and highly valued monument of genius cultivated, and learning

[a] See the Appendix, No. VIII.

turned to its noblest use, within the bosom of a society which justly ranks him among the most distinguished of her many distinguished sons.

III. OF THE DOUBTFUL RECEPTION OF LOCKE'S METAPHYSICAL SPECULATIONS AT OXFORD.

"That the Essay on the Human Understanding", says Mr. Stewart, "should have excited some alarm in the University of Oxford, was no more than the author had reason to expect from his boldness as a philosophical reformer, from his avowed zeal in the cause of liberty, both civil and religious, from the suspected orthodoxy of his theological creed; and it is but candid to add, from the apparent coincidence of his ethical doctrines with those of Hobbes. It is more difficult to account for the long continuance in that illustrious seat of learning, of the prejudice against the logic of Locke, (by far the most valuable part of his work,) and for that partiality for the logic of Aristotle, of which Locke has so fully exposed the futility. In the University of

Cambridge on the other hand, the Essay on the Human Understanding was for many years regarded with a reverence approaching to idolatry; and to the authority of some distinguished persons connected with that learned body may be traced, ... the origin of the greater part of the extravagancies which towards the close of the last century were grafted on Locke's errors."[a]

To the first part of the foregoing passage, its author has subjoined a note by Des Maiseaux on a letter of Locke to Collins.

"It was proposed," he says, "at a meeting of the heads of houses of the University of Oxford, to censure and discourage the reading of Mr. Locke's Essay concerning the Human Understanding; and, after various debates among themselves, it was concluded that each head of a house should endeavour to prevent its being *read in his college*, without coming to any public censure."[b]

What Mr. Stewart has here said is candid in its admissions, and in its form apologetical.

[a] Dissertation, Part II. p. 9.

[b] Locke, Vol. IX. p. 277.

But he plainly implies, both in his text, and in the note annexed to it, some farther censure on the University of Oxford, as too tardy and reluctant in adopting the philosophy, or at least what he terms the logic, of Locke.

This reproach, like that which we have before examined, will best be tried by the test of facts. We shall then judge whether the prudent and pious caution of Oxford in this case, can be disadvantageously contrasted with the idolatrous reverence which elsewhere, like every other idolatry, taught its votaries "*to graft extravagance upon error.*"

But let me not be misunderstood. If I repeat these strong expressions, it is in the maintenance only of a just defence, and with no particle of invidious or disrespectful feeling towards the distinguished body to which Mr. Stewart has applied them. No man of a liberal mind stoops to view such subjects through the narrow loopholes of local or corporate jealousy. The true votary of science, loves her for herself, and for the countless blessings which she confers upon mankind. "For his brethren and companions' sake," he wishes

her prosperity wherever she is established. Her fruits, in whatever soil produced, he seeks to multiply and improve; to scatter widely the seeds of their increase, and to extend as far as possible the knowledge of their most profitable culture. But in the discharge of this duty a question of difficult decision not unfrequently presents itself to those who superintend the studies of a great University. Science is not stationary. On every side continual attempts are made to enlarge her boundaries: attempts, on the whole productive of measureless good, but in particular instances very frequently neither judicious nor successful. These in his private studies each man judges for himself, separating for his own use, as correctly as he can, the metal from the dross. But what shall be the conduct of the public teacher? At what period, and on what grounds of knowledge or opinion, shall the governors of national institutions of such wide-spread influence determine to engraft new tenets and new principles, new modes and systems of philosophy on those sciences, in which it is their office

and engagement to instruct the rising generations of their country?

It is obvious, that they must in the first place be themselves well satisfied of the advantage of the proposed improvement; of its greater accuracy, if it concerns any principle or doctrine of science, or of its greater convenience, if it relates only to modes of study or instruction. Nor is it less manifest that in every step of their progress to such conclusions, they are bound to tread with deliberate, and even fearful caution. Certainly no project for the advance of science is ever to be discountenanced merely for its novelty. All the knowledge of man was once new to him. Nor is the paramount interest of truth to be sacrificed to the reverence for any name, or the authority of any institutions. But on the other hand it must be remembered, that free inquiry, ample and adverse discussion, patient and unbiassed investigation, can alone lead in cases of real moment, to such reasonable and well-grounded conviction, as is fit to be acted upon where error may be so mischievous. An established course of public

instruction is not to be varied with the casual fluctuations of private judgment. And rarely therefore will it be found either expedient or just, materially to vary any such institutions, until the principle of the proposed alteration shall first have been sanctioned by the general assent of those most competent to judge of the particular point in question. It is thus, for example, that the true principles of political economy have by the wise judgment of the University, concurring with the munificence of an individual, been recently and happily domesticated at Oxford. The doctrine, now taught there by its well chosen professor, rests on the sure basis of a discussion of more than fifty years; and is in theory at least, if not even yet in practice, very generally recognized by all persons of liberal and enlightened minds.

But, with every caution that can be applied to such questions, their prospective decision is always hazardous. There is far less risk of error in our subsequent judgments of them after their effect shall have been tried by long experience. And to this test we here

appeal. It is on this ground that Oxford may confidently claim to have acted in this case with unexceptionable propriety. Great, and transcendent as is the merit of Locke's essay, considered as a step, a giant's step, in the advance of science, yet how could it have been received with unqualified assent in any place of education? Pure and upright as its author's intentions were, some parts of it were from the beginning apprehended to be very questionable in their religious and moral tendency. Mr. Stewart himself has noticed the apparent coincidence of its ethical doctrines with those of Hobbes. And after the fullest examination of near a century and a half, that great work is now I believe very generally acknowledged to combine with much undisputed excellence, some matter in no slight degree exceptionable; and to have given rise in fact, though partly through the prevailing misconception of its doctrine, to some great and dangerous errors in philosophy. Such certainly is the light in which Mr. Stewart has viewed it, not only in the passage which I have quoted in the outset of this section, but

universally throughout all his writings. And in that judgment who does not see at once the full vindication of the conduct of Oxford in this case?

But in a question so closely connected with the object of these pages, it will not be superfluous to consider more particularly what really was that conduct.

Warburton has said that "when Locke *first* published his Essay on the Human Understanding, he had neither followers nor admirers, and hardly a single approver." This account though questioned by Mr. Stewart, is confirmed by Locke himself. His work first appeared in 1689. Seven years afterwards, he thus writes to Molyneux: "I was told some time since that my Essay *began* to get some credit in Cambridge, where, I think for some years after it was published, it was scarce so much as looked into."[a]

In Oxford, indeed, he tells the same correspondent, an abridgement of it was made in 1695,—"*for the use of scholars and in the place of an ordinary system of logic*, by a very in-

[a] Locke, Vol. VIII. p. 385.

genious man, a Master of Arts, very considerable for his learning and virtue, who has a great many pupils."[a] This, however, was the act only of an individual; a Mr. Wynne, then Fellow of Jesus College, afterwards Bishop of St. Asaph. And if, as Locke elsewhere says, his Essay "first crept into the world without any opposition, and passed amongst some for useful, and the least favourable for innocent," that calm was not destined to be of long continuance. A storm soon rose against him, his first remark on which is worthy of his character. "Whatever I write," says this upright man, "as soon as I shall discover it not to be truth, my hand shall be the forwardest to throw it into the fire."

The attack did not, however, as Mr. Stewart seems to have imagined, proceed exclusively, or even principally from Oxford. In 1696-7, Locke writes that Dean Sherlock, then Master of the Temple, had charged him, from that pulpit, with little less than atheism. In the same year, I believe, commenced his well-known controversy with Stillingfleet. And

[a] Locke, Vol. VIII. pp. 355. 360.

not long afterwards, a clergyman of the name of Lee published against him an entire volume, under the offensive and unjust title of "Anti-scepticism." All these were Cambridge men, and the two former of them persons of much eminence in our Church. Norris, who wrote against him about the same time, and of whom Mr. Stewart speaks highly, had been educated at Oxford. Of Lowde, his other chief antagonist at that period, I have met with no account.

It was not till some time after these alarms had been sounded, that the circumstance took place at Oxford, which is mentioned by Des Maiseaux. We are nowhere told, I believe, what was his authority for that statement. Locke himself remained, at least for some time, in much ignorance on the subject of those proceedings; of which he made repeated endeavours to procure from one of his friends "a particular account."[a] Whether he succeeded in this, we know not. But in a letter, written about a fortnight afterwards, he appears to have thought, that his disap-

[a] Locke, Vol. IX. p. 277, &c.

probation of the logic then taught at Oxford, had been the main ground of the objection there taken to his work[a].

If that impression was correct, we might, I think, very easily collect from it what was the immediate occasion and object of the resolution attributed to the Heads of Houses. A tutor of Oxford had published there, as we have seen, an analysis of Locke's Essay, avowedly as a substitute to be used by *the young scholars in the place of an ordinary system of logic*[b]. Could such a change be regarded with indifference by the Governors of the University? Its advantage was, at the best, very questionable. Down even to our own days the propriety of substituting in our academical institutions the logic of Bacon, or of Locke, for that of Aristotle, has been the subject of long-continued controversy. My readers will neither expect, nor desire to find in this place a repetition of the arguments by which the advocates of Oxford, on this subject, have so powerfully maintained her cause.

[a] Locke, Vol. IX. p. 280.
[b] Ibid, Vol. VIII. p. 355.

It is now, I believe, well understood how much this contest, like so many others, has turned on the different senses given to the principal term in the dispute. In its larger sense, logic, as explained by Locke and many others, comprehends the whole science of the human intellect, or what we now commonly understand by *Metaphysics*[a]. In its more limited acceptation, logic, or, as its great author termed it, *Dialectic*, includes only the science, and art of reasoning; the knowledge and application of those universal principles according to which we deduce just conclusions from proved or admitted premises[b]. Substitute these names for that of *Logic*, and the whole debate is at an end. The study of metaphysics is as plainly unfit for the first stage of edu-

[a] Locke, Vol. II. p. 296, &c.

Very various are the branches of knowledge to which the name of metaphysics has at different times been applied. The signification here given to it is that, I believe, in which it is now most generally used, and has repeatedly, but by no means uniformly, been sanctioned by Mr. Stewart's authority, particularly in the eloquent conclusion of the dissertation so often referred to in these pages. See also his Philosophical Essays. Introduction, pp. 25 and 41.

[b] Whateley's Elements of Logic. Passim.

cation, as the dialectic art is for our sole guidance through life in the acquisition and use of knowledge. Both are of unquestioned utility; but neither can perform the office of the other. That portion of the logic of Aristotle which has so long been used at Oxford and elsewhere in the elementary instruction of youth, the doctrine of the proposition and the syllogism, might, if such a change were really desirable, be wholly banished from their studies; but in that case the void must remain; never could it be supplied by the logic of Locke. These parts of learning have, in common, little else but the name. The ends at which they aim, the instruments which they employ, and the attainments which they presuppose, are wholly different. The art of reasoning, no doubt, is itself a portion of the general philosophy of mind. But how can it be shewn that the whole of that wide field of knowledge, and this very limited part of it, are best opened to the student at the same season? What is more necessary to the satisfactory and useful acquisition of science, what more conducive to its

continued improvement, than the successive subdivision, and separate culture of its different allotments?

The Heads of Houses at Oxford had therefore, even if they acted on this ground alone, abundant reason to discourage so great an innovation in the academical institutions of the societies over which they presided. They wisely and temperately forbore to censure a work whose tendency was still doubtful: but they might well decline to suffer it to be *read in their colleges;* to be made a text-book, (for so I understand the phrase,) for public education in those places. Without condemning, what was in that hour much too imperfectly understood to be definitively judged, it was their manifest duty to resist the project of admitting it into the elementary studies of their pupils, in a manner and for a purpose to which it was undeniably inapplicable.

But with all my veneration for the great name of Locke, I have not disguised the fact that there were other and much stronger grounds of objection, which, even if not as yet distinctly understood, but only generally and

doubtfully apprehended by those who were to judge of this matter at Oxford, must have led them to the same conclusion. I speak here both of the now acknowledged errors of Locke's Essay, and of the evil tendency of those doctrines which have, as Mr. Stewart tells us, been very generally, though quite inaccurately, ascribed to that admirable work.

"Few books", he says, "can be named from which it is possible to extract more exceptionable passages."[a] When Locke combats the Cartesian doctrine of *innate ideas*, he pushes his arguments so much too far, as to appear to question the immutability of moral truth, and the eternal distinctions of right and wrong. His notion,—derived indeed from his predecessors, but more fully developed and insisted on by himself,—his notion that the immediate objects of our mind in thinking are only the *ideas*, images, or resemblances of the things we think of, throws doubt on our conviction of the real existence of those things, whether material or immaterial. And his account of the origin and nature of such *ideas* is

[a] Stewart's Dissertation, Part II. p. 15.

unfortunately so expressed, that very many of his followers both at home and abroad, have always understood him to countenance that most unphilosophical opinion, which makes our senses the sole source, and exclusive vehicle of all human knowledge. "A maxim," says Mr. Stewart, which, "from the scepticism to which it leads by inevitable conclusion, would, if true, at once cut up by the roots, not only all metaphysics, but all ethics, and all religion, both natural and revealed:"[a] a theory, which, as has still more recently been said by a writer of great ability, and singular practical usefulness, "if admitted without limitation, undoubtedly tends to obscure our apprehension of the divine attributes, and to overthrow the internal evidences of religion, as deducible from its accordance with what we conceive probable respecting the will of a perfectly good Supreme Being."[b] To these statements, what can be added? Who would advise that a work which has, from whatever cause, actually given rise to so much and such wide-spread error,

[a] Dissertation, Part I. p. 110.

[b] Shuttleworth, Paraphrase of the Epistles, p. 7.

should be adopted by a great University with unqualified, and unreflecting acquiescence, or put with unhesitating confidence as a text-book into the hands of youth?

But it would be highly unjust to ground on such passages any impression unfavourable to the general tenor of Locke's real philosophy, or in the slightest degree disadvantageous to his moral character. Against so great an error Mr. Stewart most studiously guards his readers. "If an author," he feelingly exclaims, "is to be held chargeable with all the consequences logically deducible from his opinions," or, as he might have added, which are even erroneously thought to be so deducible, "who can hope to escape censure?"[a] There is, among the worst arts of controversy, no fallacy more reprehensible than this, though unhappily, scarcely any is more frequent. In some minds the temptation to this unworthy sophistry seems to increase always in proportion to the importance of the subject on which it is employed, and to the extent of public, or of

[a] Dissertation, ut suprà.

private evil which the misrepresentation is likely to produce. It has in every case a direct tendency to discourage all freedom of thought, and sincerity of speech.

Reason and justice and charity alike prescribe a conduct directly opposite to this; and most widely different from it was the disposition of Mr. Stewart. Wherever the interests of truth and science have led him to dispute the tenets or the arguments of Locke, or to combat the prevailing misapprehension of his doctrines, he has laboured with great earnestness, to vindicate from all suspicion the sincere religious zeal, the pure and unblemished moral principles which really distinguished that great philosopher. He speaks of him every where with well-merited reverence, and on his Essay he finally bestows this highest of all praise: "The most characteristic feature", he says, "of that work, and that to which it is chiefly indebted for its immense influence on the philosophy of the eighteenth century, is its general effect in preparing his readers for the unshackled use of their own reason.

And such is the liberal tone of the author; such the manliness with which he constantly appeals to reason, and such the sincerity and simplicity with which on all occasions he appears to inquire after truth, that the general effect of the whole work may be regarded as the best of all antidotes against the errors involved in some of its particular conclusions."[a]

[a] Dissertation, Part II. p. 15.

APPENDIX.

APPENDIX.

No. I.

LETTER FROM THE EARL OF SUNDERLAND TO BISHOP FELL.

"WHITEHALL, Nov. 6, 1684.

"MY LORD,

"THE King having been given to understand that one Locke, who belonged to the late Earl of Shaftesbury, and has, upon several occasions, behaved himself very factiously against the Government, is a student of Christ Church: His Majesty commands me to signify to your Lordship, that he would have him removed from being a student, and that, in order thereunto, your Lordship would let him know the method of doing it, &c."

No. II.

FROM BISHOP FELL TO THE EARL OF SUNDERLAND.

"Nov. 8, 1684.

"RIGHT HONOURABLE,

"I HAVE received the honour of your Lordship's letter, wherein you are pleased to inquire concerning Mr. Locke's being a student of this house, of which I have this account to render: that he being, as your Lordship is truly informed, a person who was much trusted by the late Earl of Shaftesbury, and who is suspected to be ill affected to the government, I have for divers years had an eye upon him: but so close has his guard been on himself, that after several strict inquiries, I may confidently affirm, there is not any man in the college, however familiar with him, who has heard him speak a word either against or so much as concerning the government; and although very frequently, both in public and private, discourses have been purposely introduced to the disparagement of his master, the Earl of Shaftesbury, his party and designs; he could never be provoked to take any notice, or discover in word or look the least concern. So that I believe there is not a man in the world so much master of taciturnity and passion. He has here a physician's place, which frees him from the exercise of the college, and the obligation which others have to residence in it, and he is now abroad for want of health; but notwithstanding this, I have

summoned him to return home; which is done with this prospect, that if he comes not back, he will be liable to expulsion for contumacy; and if he does, he will be answerable to the law for that which he shall be found to have done amiss. It being probable that though he may have been thus cautious here, where he knew himself suspected, he has laid himself more open in London, where a general liberty of speaking was used, and where the execrable designs against his Majesty and his government were managed and pursued. If he don't return by the first of January, which is the time limited to him, I shall be able of course to proceed against him to expulsion. But if this method seems not effectual or speedy enough, and his Majesty, our founder and visitor, shall please to command his immediate remove, upon the receipt thereof, directed to the dean and chapter, it shall accordingly be executed by your Lordship's, &c."

No. III.

THE EARL OF SUNDERLAND TO BISHOP FELL.

"MY LORD,

"HAVING communicated your Lordship's of the 8th to his Majesty, he has thought fit to direct me to send you the inclosed concerning his commands for the immediate expulsion of Mr. Locke."

No. IV.

THE KING'S WARRANT ADDRESSED TO THE DEAN AND CHAPTER OF CHRIST-CHURCH[a].

" Nov. 12, 1684.

" WHEREAS we have received information of the factious and disloyal behaviour of Locke, one of the students of that our college, we have thought fit hereby to signify our will and pleasure to you, that you forthwith remove him from his student's place, and deprive him of all rights and advantages thereunto belonging, for which this shall be your warrant. And so we bid you heartily farewell. Given at our Court of Whitehall, the 11th day of November, 1684. By his Majesty's command,

" SUNDERLAND."

No. V.

BISHOP FELL TO THE EARL OF SUNDERLAND.

" Nov. 16.

" RIGHT HONOURABLE,

" I HOLD myself bound to signify to your Lordship, that his Majesty's command for the expulsion of Mr. Locke from this College is fully executed."

[a] The original warrant has the King's sign manual prefixed to it, although this is omitted in the printed copies from which these are transcribed.

No. VI.

ENTRY ON THE BOOKS OF THE CHAPTER OF CHRIST-CHURCH, INCLOSED IN THE FOREGOING LETTER.

" 15 November, 1684.

" BY the Dean and Chapter of the Cathedral Church of Christ in Oxon.

" The day and year above written, his Majesties mandat for the removal of Mr. Locke from his Student's Place and deprivation of him from all the rights and advantages thereto belonging was read in Chapter and ordered to be put in execution, there being present,

" JO. OXON, Dean.
" DR. EDWARD POCOCK.
" DR. HENRY SMYTH.
" DR. JO. HAMMOND.
" DR. HENRY ALDRICH."

No. VII.

THE EARL OF SUNDERLAND TO BISHOP FELL.

" I HAVE your Lordship's of the 16th, and have acquainted his Majesty therewith, who is well satisfied with the college's ready obedience to his commands for the expulsion of Mr. Locke."

No. VIII.

TO THE KING'S MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTIE.

THE HUMBLE PETITION OF JOHN LOCKE

" SHEWETH,

" THAT your Petitioner, being Student of Christ Church Colledg in Oxford, was in the year 1684, by a letter sent by the Earle of Sunderland, then principal Secretary of State, to the Dean and Chapter of the said Colledg ordered to be turnd out. Dr Fell, then Bp of Oxford and Dean of the said Colledg, finding it against the rules of common justice as well as the ordinary methods of the Colledg, to turn out any one without hearing, or soe much as being accused of any fact wch might forfeit his place, especially one who had lived inoffensively in the Colledg soe many years, did by a 'Moneo' affixed to the Screen in the colledg hall according to the ordinary way of proceeding in the said Colledg summon yr petitioner, who was then in Holland, to appear at Christmas following wch was about two months after, to answer any thing should be alleadged agt him. But this regular proceeding not suiting the designes upon the universitie an other letter was sent the week following with positive orders to turne yr petitioner out immediately wch was accordingly don

" Yr Petitioner therefor humbly prays that yr Matie being Visitor of the said Colledg & having power by yr immediate command to rectifie what you finde

amisse there would out of yr great justice and goodnesse be graciously pleased to direct the Dean and Chapter of the said Colledg to restore yr Petitioner to his Student's place together with all things belonging unto it wch he formerly enjoyd in the said Colledg.

" And yr petitioner shall ever pray &c."

T. Woodfall, Vincent Square, Westminster.


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