

of that upon which it rests ; and it were ascribing a general infirmity to revelation, to set it forth, as leaning upon natural theism, in the way that a mathematical doctrine leans upon the axioms or first principles of the science. Christianity rests on its own proper evidence ; and if, instead of this, she be made to rest on an antecedent natural religion, she becomes weak throughout, because weak radically. It is true that in theology, the natural goes before the revealed, even as the cry of weakness or distress goes before the relief to which it aspires, and which it is prompted to seek after. It goes before, not synthetically in the order of demonstration, but historically in the mind of the inquirer. It is not that natural religion is the premises, and Christianity the conclusion ; but it is that natural religion creates an appetite which it cannot quell ; and he who is urged thereby, seeks for a rest and a satisfaction which he can only obtain in the fulness of the gospel. Natural theology has been called the basis of Christianity. It would accord better with our own views of the place which it occupies, and of the high purpose which it undoubtedly serves—if it were called the basis of Christianization.

28. The most important exemplification of the way in which natural religion bears upon Christianity, is furnished by the question of a sinner's acceptance with God. Natural religion can suggest to man the apprehension of his guilt ; for