between him and the Gentile, and consideration of his state.

**12-16.**] *The justice of a* GENERAL *judgment of* ALL,  
*but according to the advantages of each*.

**12. For as many as have sinned  
without** (the) **law** (of Moses) **shall also  
perish without** (the) **law** (of Moses)] i. e.  
*it shall not appear against them in judg-  
ment*. Whether that will *ameliorate* their  
case, is not even hinted,—but only the *fact*,  
as consonant with God’s justice, stated.  
That this is the meaning of *without law*  
is clear from 1 Cor. ix. 21. That even  
these have sinned against *a law* is presently (ver. 14) shewn. Chrysostom says, “The Greek is judged *without law* : this  
implies not a more severe, but a milder  
judgment (this is perhaps saying too  
much, see above), that is, he has not the  
law to accuse him. This is the meaning  
of *without law*, that he is convicted without its condemnation, by the arguments of nature only. But the Jew is judged  
by the law, ie. the law also, together  
with nature, accusing him: for the greater  
care he had bestowed on him, the greater  
will be his penalty.” It is said, **shall perish**, the *result* of the judgment on  
them, rather than “*shall be judged*,” its  
*process*, because the absence of the law  
would thus seem as if it were the *rule by  
which they are to be judged*,—whereas it  
is only an *accident* of that judgment,  
which *depends on other considerations*.

**under** (or in, as a condition of  
being) **the** (Mosaic) **law**; not ‘*a law*,’  
which would make the sentence a truism:  
it is on *that very* undeniable assumption,  
‘*that all who have had a law given shall  
be judged by that law*,’ that the Apostle  
constructs his argument, asserting it with  
to the Mosaic law in the ease of the  
Jews, and proving that the Gentiles have  
had a law given to them in the testimony  
of their consciences. These verses are no  
general assertions concerning men who  
have, and men who have not, a law revealed  
(for *all have one*), but a *statement of the  
case as concerning Jews and Gentiles*. It  
may safely be assumed that whenever the  
word “*law*” is used, without any further  
definition, in this Epistle, the law of Moses  
is intended by it. These last **shall be  
judged by the law**: for that will furnish  
the *measure* and *rule* by which judgment  
will proceed.

**13.**] This is to explain  
to the Jew the fact, that not his mere  
hearing of the law read in the synagogue,  
(which is equivalent to his being by birth  
and privilege a Jew,) will justify him before  
God, but (still keeping to general principles,  
and not tonehing as yet on the *impossibility  
of being thus justified*) the doing of the  
law.

**14.**] Now, the Apostle speaks  
of the **Gentiles** in general; see ch. iii. 29;  
xi. 13; xv. 10, 12.

**the law**] viz. *of Moses*. **A** law, they have; see below.  
**by nature**, i. e. in accordance with the  
promptings of their own minds.

**the things of the law**] i.e. the things about  
which the law is concerned: for example, abstain from stealing, or killing, or adultery. But it by no means follows that the Apostle means that the Gentiles could *fulfil*  
the law, do *the* things, i.e. *all* the things  
enjoined by the law: he argues that a  
conscientious Gentile, who knows not *the  
law*, does, when he acts in accordance  
with requirements of the law, so far set  
up the law to himself. The Apostle does  
not deny certain virtues to the Gentiles,  
but maintains the inefficiency of those,  
and all other virtues, towards man’s salvation.

**are the law unto themselves** (so far), not ‘*a law*,’ for *a law* may be  
just or unjust, God’s law or man’s law: