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by
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ART. I.—*The Vicarious Sacrifice, grounded in Principles of Universal Obligation.* By HORACE BUSHNELL. New York: Charles Scribner & Co., 124 Grand street. 1866. 8vo. pp. 552.

JUDGING from its impression upon ourselves, we should say that this book of Dr. Bushnell is far inferior in power to his former one. That was an outburst, instinct with feeling and poetic fire. This is cold. It is addressed to the understanding. It is an attempt to justify to the reason, and in the presence of the Bible, a theory as to the work of Christ, which is the product of his imagination. It deals in analysis, in subtle distinctions, in arguments, which from the necessity of the case are sophistical, and which must be known to be false, even by those who may not see where their fallacy lies. A man undertakes a desperate task who attempts to argue against the intuitive judgments of the mind or conscience; or who strives to prove that all mankind for thousands of years, who have read and studied the Scriptures, are mistaken as to one of its most prominent and most important doctrines. The case of the Reformers affords no parallel to such an attempt in our own day. The Romanists did not admit the Scriptures to be perspicuous or designed for the people. They did not profess to believe the doctrines against which the Reformers protested,

ART. V.—*Personal Reminiscences of the Life and Times of Gardiner Spring, Pastor of the Brick Presbyterian Church in the city of New York.* New York: Charles Scribner & Co. 1866.

THE appearance of these volumes has been eagerly welcomed by the Christian, and especially the Presbyterian public. Various circumstances invest them with peculiar interest. Dr. Spring is an octogenarian. His public life runs back nearly to the beginning of the present century. He has been the distinguished pastor of one of the most prominent churches in the country for more than fifty-five years. In this conspicuous post he has, from the first, been in the very front rank of American preachers, and among the most successful of pastors. Born, reared, educated in New England, the son of a leading Hopkinsian divine of eminent piety, who took a prominent part in founding and shaping Andover Theological Seminary, himself a participator in the Hopkinsian and New Haven, and various other controversies connected with the disruption of the Presbyterian church, he is not only the strongest living link between the ecclesiastical past and present, but between the Presbyterian and Congregational bodies, once maintaining an intimacy of mutual fellowship which, if it has abated, has not utterly ceased. All these and many other circumstances impart a special interest to the reminiscences of Dr. Spring, and will lead a wide circle, particularly of Presbyterians, to examine its contents with avidity.

The preparation of such a book, by a man past eighty, is a phenomenon. It has its advantages and disadvantages. It gives something of the charm which attaches to the marvellous. Of course, it is no disparagement to say that tokens are not wanting, that the work is not what it would have been had it been written earlier, occupied a longer time, and had more pains-taking laboration. Of this the venerable author seems to be fully sensible. "Another embarrassment which I deeply feel, is the fact that I am too far advanced in years to have

any very strong expectation that my life and health will be prolonged to the completion of that which I have undertaken. I am driven to the work; I am running a race with time; it is too hasty an effort. Could I have had two years for it, instead of the four months it has occupied, it might have been more interesting, as well as more instructive." Vol. i. pp. 8, 9.

Notwithstanding any drawbacks on this account, however, we are thankful for the many valuable documents, precious mementos, instructive reflections, and important testimonies which the book contains. To know simply the personal history, training, habits, methods, development, of such a man, the results he has achieved, and the relation between his personal characteristics and ways, on the one hand, and his great public achievements on the other, is itself a treasure. The light, too, shed on great public events and questions with which the distinguished author has been connected, is, of course, important. We shall proceed to call attention to such matters, practical and doctrinal, brought to view in these volumes, as most concern our readers.

Dr. Spring's lineage was of the "seed royal" of heaven, and in the line of the covenant. His mother's ancestors, for several generations, were ministers of the gospel, Nonconformists and English Puritans. Her grandfather, Rev. Samuel Hopkins, D.D., of West Springfield, Mass., (not the author of Hopkinsianism,) was the son of a sister of the elder President Edwards. His father was the Rev. Samuel Spring, D.D., pastor of an important church in Newburyport, Mass., descended also from some of the best Puritan stock. He was educated at Nassau Hall, a thing not uncommon at that period for the sons of New England. He studied theology for a time with Dr. Witherspoon, whom he greatly admired. He, however, afterwards studied with Bellamy, West, and Hopkins, and, as the result of the whole, became a determined Hopkinsian, quite a leader in his day of that more moderate portion of this school that did not follow Emmons, who, by marriage, appears to have become his kinsman. At all events, Dr. Emmons addresses Dr. Gardiner Spring as his nephew. While in College, he was the roommate of President Madison. His tutor was the younger Edwards, who stimulated his metaphysical powers. He also fell

under the influence of a resident graduate, named Periam, brilliant both in physical and metaphysical philosophy, for whom he cherished the warmest admiration. This man, of such great early promise, appears to have either died early, or otherwise fallen into obscurity. But he, like many others of that day, became a Berkleian, and for a time succeeded in inoculating Samuel Stanhope Smith, afterwards President of the College, and young Mr. Spring, with his views. Says his son: "My father was interested in Berkley's philosophy; and but for the influence of Dr. Witherspoon, might have adopted the opinion that the objects of perception are not real existences, and are simply ideas which exist only in the mind." So it appears that discussions on "Hard Matter," of which Dr. Spring complains as unprofitable in our present periodicals, were current in the days of our fathers.

Dr. Gardiner Spring was born in Newburyport, February 24, 1785. Few men have enjoyed a more thorough Christian training, or, during childhood and youth, breathed an atmosphere of purer domestic piety. The letters of his mother, published in the first volume, and the high-toned religious character of his father, are sufficient proof of this. The effect is apparent in repeated seasons of seriousness and alarm, not without occasional intervals of trembling hope, especially under impressive sermons, and in times of revival, through his childhood, youth, and early manhood. He entered Yale College in 1799. His eyes becoming weak, through severe study, his father wisely withdrew him at the end of Freshman year, and, after a year's absence, permitted him to return to a lower class. He was a severely diligent student, and graduated with the highest honour of his class. The topic of his valedictory oration, *Aut Cesar aut nullus*, was significant. His father, after the conclusion of the commencement exercises, took an affectionate leave of him, and threw him upon his own resources, he having but four dollars in his possession. He cordially accepted the allotment: at once commenced the study of law, and sustained himself by leading singing in church, and teaching sacred music: while Moses Brown, Esq., one of his father's parishioners, whose name is inseparably connected with the munificent endowment of Andover Seminary, at his request,

loaned him two hundred and fifty dollars, on his own terms. Afterwards he accepted an invitation to teach a classical and mathematical school in the island of Bermuda. Meanwhile he was married. He earned enough to support himself and family until he was established in the successful practice of law in New Haven. Having reached this point, his religious impressions were revived and developed into such clearness of Christian faith and hope, that he made a profession of faith in the Centre church, New Haven, then under the pastoral care of Rev. Moses Stuart, afterwards the celebrated Professor of Biblical Exegesis and Literature at Andover.

He soon found his mind dissatisfied with the law, of which he had been a very thorough and zealous student, and in which he had already won an encouraging practice. His heart yearned for the ministry. He found himself interested in attending and addressing religious meetings in the suburbs of the city, and was ill at ease in the prospect of devoting his life to secular occupations. At length his mind was brought to a decision in the following manner, which is well worthy of record:

“At the following Commencement of Yale College, I was to take my degree of A. M., and to deliver an oration. My theme was the ‘Christian Patriot:’ nor were my views as yet decided with regard to the change in my professional career. Early on the morning after the Commencement, the Rev. Dr. John M. Mason preached his great sermon on the text, ‘To the poor the gospel is preached.’ As I led the choir, I sat immediately opposite the preacher. And never did I hear such a sermon. I could not refrain from weeping. Hundreds wept. Dr. Dwight wept; Dr. Backus wept like a child; senators wept. When I left the church, I could think of nothing but the *gospel*. I crossed the green exclaiming, ‘the gospel! the gospel!’ I entered the little parlor where my lovely wife was nursing her babe, and exclaimed, ‘the gospel! the gospel!’ I thought, I prayed, I resolved, if the providence of God should prepare the way, to become a preacher of the gospel. I said nothing but to Mr. Evarts. My purpose was formed.” Vol. i. pp. 97–8.

These details we have selected and condensed out of an indefinite number, scarcely inferior in interest, for the purpose

of bringing to view the early moulding-influences, and personal characteristics, which contributed to form the future pastor of the Brick church. His purpose once formed; in dependence on God, ways and means were quickly found for carrying it through. A wealthy lady of Salem, Massachusetts, Mrs. Mary Norris, learning his circumstances and plans, took his family, now consisting of a wife and two children, under her hospitable roof and provided for them, while he pursued his studies in Andover Seminary, then just established. In less than a year he was licensed. He received formal calls or informal overtures for settlement in a number of important churches in New England, but for various reasons declined them. Soon, however, passing through New York, and preaching an evening lecture for Dr. Romeyn in his absence, he was heard by some members of the Brick church. They soon procured him to preach a Sabbath, and immediately gave him a unanimous call, which he accepted. Having experienced some friction in his examination before Presbytery, on account, as he says, "of the views I THEN entertained on the subject of human ability," he was duly ordained and installed in the pastorate, which he has so honourably filled, during the life-time of two generations.

We will now ask the attention of our readers, first to the practical, and then to the doctrinal points, which deserve notice in these volumes. There is nothing in Dr. Spring's life and history more instructive and profitable, than his methods of preparation for the pulpit, and of manifold pastoral labour. His transcendent success, in these respects, renders his example worthy of all consideration by junior ministers and candidates for the ministry. The following extracts speak for themselves. They show no royal road, but only the beaten track of incessant toil, and a wise husbandry of time and resources, as the only and sure condition of ministerial success or eminence. After his ordination, he says: "By solemn oath I was pledged to my work, and set about it in earnest, though with fear and trembling. I neglected everything for the work of the ministry. I had a strong desire to visit the courts, and listen to the arguments of the eminent jurists of the city; but I had no time for this indulgence. I had none for light reading, none for even-

ing parties, and very little for social visiting or even for extensive reading. Everything was abandoned for my pulpit ministrations. I had warm friends in the Presbytery, in New England, in New Jersey, and in the eastern section of Long Island. And more than all, I had good courage. Three of the eight sermons I had prepared before I left Andover, I had preached in New York already, and the remaining number was kept good for several years. Under God it was this laborious and unintermitted effort that saved me from shipwreck. . . . Not every man, either among ministers or their hearers, is aware of the incessant and severe labour that is called for in the successful prosecution of the ministerial office. He must be thoroughly a working man. It is work, work, work, from the beginning of the year to the end of it. There is nothing of which I have been constrained to be more economical and even covetous than *time*. I have ever been an early riser, and even in mid-winter used to walk from Beekman street round the 'Forks of the Bowery,' now Union square, before I broke my fast. I usually went into my study at nine o'clock, and after my removal to Bond street, more generally at eight, though my study was opposite the City Hall, and more than a mile from my residence. . . . Nor have I ever been the advocate of night studies or night parties. These last would long ago have been the death of me. In whatever else I have been wanting, my habits have been habits of industry." *Id.* pp. 105—6.

The following passage presents the same fact in another important aspect. The habits and modes of preparing for the pulpit, of such a man as Dr. Spring, reveal the true secret of success in himself and others.

"I have preached many, very many, very poor sermons, but very rarely one that was hastily written. I have found that my mind was uniformly most active at the close of my Sabbath services; and for a series of years I rarely retired to my pillow of a Lord's day evening without having selected my subject for the following Lord's day. I found great advantage in doing this, in that my mind was not embarrassed by conflicting subjects, or no subject at all; in that I had a subject to think of, to pray over, and sometimes to dream about; and in that one

subject naturally led to another. More generally, and almost uniformly, I began my sermon on the morning of every Tuesday; so that if I finished it by Friday noon, I had one day to spare for general reading. If my subject required more than a week's study, I gave it two weeks, sometimes three, sometimes four, and in one instance *six* weeks, and was greatly the gainer by so doing. One sermon, thus elaborated and prayed over, is worth to the *settled pastor* and to his people more than a score of hasty discourses. In order to carry this arrangement into effect, I obtained help from my brethren, or fell back upon the old store, or preached with no other preparation than a few outlines of thought treasured up in memory and delivered without notes. I say 'delivered without notes,' because I found by experience, that when my mind was divided between my notes and my invention, I was more embarrassed than when my invention was left unshackled. I have reason to believe that some of my best and most profitable discourses, saving a few outlines of thought, were truly extemporaneous, and so literally extemporaneous that from beginning to end I did not know beforehand what would be my next sentence. I say 'literally extemporaneous.' In one view only is this true, and in another, it must be borne in mind, that they are the result of some mental discipline, and express the thoughts laid up by previous study and the use of the pen. If he has self-possession and the use of language, attained by reading, writing and study, and any interest in the object of his vocation, any man can preach extemporaneously, and preach well." *Id.* pp. 110—11.

In regard to preaching with or without written preparation, we find the following additional judicious observations, which seem to us quite timely as respects this important but much mooted question.

"On the subject of preaching with notes or without them, it is difficult to express any satisfactory views. A minister's mind needs the careful and laborious culture of the pen; when this is attained and persevered in, the more he preaches without notes the better. If he has the spirit of devotedness to his work, intellectual resources, self-possession, a free command of his mother-tongue, intense interest in his subject, and confidence in God, he will preach far better with nothing before

him but God's Bible and the God of the sanctuary. If a man can lose sight of himself in preaching, and rise above the fear and applause of his hearers; if he can be so thoroughly master of his subject that in his illustrations his memory shall not embarrass his invention, he will preach better without notes than with them. The danger with extemporaneous preachers is, that they are not students; the defect and danger of written discourses, that the preacher has not the confidence to look his audience in the face unless he is endorsed and sustained by his manuscript.

“My own discourses on the Lord's day have been for the most part written out, and with care, because I am conscious that I lack those prerequisites for a purely extemporaneous preacher. My weekly lectures have never been written; I have rarely carried anything in the form of paper into the pulpit in these services. They have cost me no labour except a solitary walk, or a ride on the saddle; yet they have been among my best discourses. They have been *studied* discourses, not of the day, but of years of study long since past, gathered up and concentrated for the hour. A fanatical and ranting preacher once appointed a religious service in the town of Bethlehem, where Dr. Bellamy was the settled pastor. Dr. Bellamy went to hear him; but in the presence of this distinguished man, the interloper refused to open his lips. After much disappointment, Dr. Bellamy was urged to conduct the service, and he did so, and preached without notes, and with great power. ‘Mr. Bellamy,’ said the stranger, ‘did you never study that sarmont?’ ‘YES,’ vociferated Dr. Bellamy, ‘*twenty years ago.*’”
Id. pp. 115, 116.

The main point here signalized is thoroughness of preparation for each particular exercise, so far as circumstances admit, supported by that general study and mastery of topics which renders one *semper paratus* on occasions for which there can be little or no special preparation. As to the mode of preparation, whether by writing out in full, and then memorizing or delivering from a manuscript, or by otherwise making one's self fully master of the subject, and the occasion, as to manner and matter, no uniform rule can be laid down. Here everything depends upon the peculiarities of the minister and his people.

The method best for one man is worst for another. Only one thing can be laid down of universal application. That is the necessity of incessant and wisely directed study, both for the general furnishing of the mind, and the best practicable preparation for each particular public exercise. This is the sure and only means of permanent success and usefulness in the ministry. Others may boast of what they can achieve by the force of genius, by off-hand, unstudied, rambling effusions. The great and mighty preachers and pastors, who have sustained themselves in widening usefulness, and brightening fame, till past three-score-and-ten, have been thankful, if they could instruct and profit their hearers by means of study. Dr. Spring made all things bend to, and subserve his pulpit preparations. He says:

“I have rarely been embarrassed for want of subjects. The wonderful facility with which one subject leads to another—the state of the congregation—an interview with some individual or family—a watchful observance of the leadings of Divine Providence—intercourse with ministerial brethren—some unexpected suggestion during the night-watches—a solitary ride on the saddle—my ‘index rerum’—and the inexhaustible treasures of the Bible—furnished me with subjects which I have not yet overtaken. My reading has been uniformly with a view to enrich my mind for my pulpit ministrations. To this end I have not slighted the works of the great Errorists; and have felt strong for the truth of God the more I have possessed myself of their sophistical reasoning.”

In regard to the themes and tone of his preaching, he says:

“I have generally aimed to preach on *important subjects*. The more important they were, the better were they suited to my taste and my wishes. I have laboured to distinguish between the precious and the vile; to insist largely and earnestly between the friends of God and his enemies, and ‘say to the righteous it shall be well with him, and say to the wicked it shall be ill with him.’ I began my work rather with the view of being instrumental in the conversion of sinners, than of comforting the people of God. I have found, too, that the discourses prepared for unrepenting men more generally interested,

and, indeed, comforted the people of God. I early found that I could more easily prepare a good sermon from an awakening and alarming subject, than from one that is more comforting. The fact is, I knew more of the terror of the law than the preciousness of the gospel. My own obligations to holiness, the strength and the evil of sin, my absolute dependence upon sovereign grace, my infinite and everlasting desert of God's displeasure, were subjects with which I was familiar. I knew much about them from my own experience. Of other and less distressing thoughts, though they have not been hidden from me, and have sometimes made my bosom warm and my tongue glow, I knew less, and felt less deeply. I could never understand why the great body of ministers preach with less embarrassment on fearful themes, than on those which are more attractive, unless it be that an alarmed conscience has more to do with our preaching than a loving heart; nor how this can be except that the heart is by nature desperately wicked. The difficulty of *preaching well* on the more attractive and winning themes, has sometimes alarmed me, and made me fear lest after having 'preached to others, I myself should be a cast-away.' " Id. pp. 109—10.

Again :

"I endeavoured to exhibit the fundamental doctrines of grace as the great means of bringing the benighted and lost out of darkness into God's marvellous light. I dwelt largely on the Divine attributes: upon the spirituality and obligations of the Divine law: upon the unmixed and total depravity of man: upon the all-sufficiency of the great atonement, the fulness there is in Christ, and the unembarrassed offer of pardon and life to all that have ears to hear: upon the great wickedness of unbelief: upon the absolute dependence of saint and sinner upon the power of the Holy Spirit: upon the Divine sovereignty and electing love: upon the perfect righteousness of Christ as the only ground of the believer's acceptance with God," &c., &c. Pp. 129—30.

It is this class of topics that alone can permanently give body and force to preaching, or penetrate the souls of men. He who brings such truths home to the hearts and consciences of his people, will find that the word so preached by him is "quick

and powerful." He will not need to discourse of secularities in order to interest his hearers. The sinners in Zion will be afraid. Fearfulness will surprise the hypocrites. Troubled souls will hang with breathless attention on the preacher's lips. Others will rejoice in hope, as they are pointed to Christ and him crucified, by him whose speech and preaching are not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power.

All who have observed the earlier and later sermons and publications of Dr. Spring, have doubtless observed the gradual mellowing of his tone, by the benignity of the gospel, so that, without ceasing to persuade men by the terrors of the Lord, he was in his later ministry wont, more and more, to constrain them by the love of Christ. This is a welcome change. No doubt, the theology in which he was trained accounted, in part, for this predominance of the alarming and terrific in his early preaching. This, however, is to be observed, that it is quite easy and common for ministers to lose sight of the denunciations and threatenings of the word of God against the sinful and impenitent, regarding them as overshadowed by the attractions of the cross; to overlook the lightnings of Sinai, as they charmed with the benignant radiance of Sion: to forget that the law gives us a knowledge of sin, and is a schoolmaster to lead us to Christ. We have often had a painful impression, that many ministers would rejoice in more conversions, and greater fruits of their labours, if they would unfold the law more fully in its precepts and penalty, so searching the hearts of sinners, and extinguishing every hope of salvation out of Christ. Unless the preacher echoes and re-echoes the scriptural warnings and threatenings to the impenitent, few of them will realize their ruin, danger, or the urgent necessity of fleeing from the wrath to come to the hope set before them. All one-sided presentations of the Divine attributes are mischievous. Sinners must be made to "behold the goodness and severity of God," or they will stand on slippery places, till they slide down to perdition. The degree of prominence which should be given, at any period, to these respective phases of scriptural truth, depends on circumstances. When men have long spurned the love of God in Christ, it may be needful to reiterate the terrors

of the Lord, till obdurate souls indeed feel that "he is a consuming fire." The great power of Dr. Spring's early ministry, the repeated and great revivals with which it was blessed, seem to indicate a then state of the public mind, that was not harmed by what, under other circumstances, might have been an undue preponderance of alarming, startling, or even "legal" preaching. Not that he ever lost sight of the gospel as the balm for wounded sinners—but that he found it powerless upon men, until they were made conscious of wounds and bruises and putrefying sores that needed such Divine medication. Our observation has led us to the belief, that very many preachers at this time would find the evangelism of their preaching more powerful, if they would rouse their hearers to a better appreciation of it, by more abundantly and earnestly warning them to flee from the wrath to come.

One other extract on this subject, upon which Dr. Spring has a right to speak with an authority second to no living man, puts in a strong light a truth well worthy of the prayerful consideration of all ministers, especially those who are mourning over a barren and fruitless ministry. It is necessary to be not only industrious in the preparation of sermons, but to shape them all to the accomplishment of the great end of preaching, the conversion of sinners, and the edification of saints.

He says:

"The *great end and object* of the ministry, though very imperfectly, I have endeavoured constantly to keep before my mind. I have generally found that laborious ministers gain their object. If it is to write *elegant* sermons, they write them, and gain their object. If it is to write *learned* sermons, they write them, and gain their object. If it is to *enrich their discourses* with the pithy and concentrated sentences of other days and great men, they do it, and gain their object. If it is to be popular, they are popular, and there the matter ends. They look no further. They gain their object, and have never thought of any thing beyond it. It was not the conversion of sinners they were aiming at, and therefore they never attained it. I know a most worthy minister who preached more than a year to the same people, and his preaching was sound in doctrine, logical, and able; but during that whole period I have

yet to learn that a single sinner was alarmed, convinced, or converted to God. And the reason is, that was not his object. He did not study for it, nor pray for it, nor preach for it. He gained his object most effectually, but it was not the conversion of men.

"I have adverted to this kind of preaching, because, as it seems to me, this is the snare of the modern pulpit. I have listened to not a few sermons within the past ten years, in which there was no want of instruction; they were full of solid and weighty truths; great pains were taken, in the use of metaphor and illustration, to indicate the preacher's progress in science, and to show that he stood abreast with the improvements of the age; but in which the great end of preaching was lost sight of—the turning of the wicked from the error of their ways—the salvation of the immortal soul. The preachers had power, but their minds were not directed to this great object. With all their intellectual effort, there was a want of amplification and earnestness in addressing the different classes of their audience, and crowding the conscience of the impenitent. Why is it that there is so little adaptation in so much of the preaching of the present day to produce the conversion of men? Too many ministers preach now as though they thought all their hearers were Christians, overlooking the multitudes who are dead in trespasses and sins, and pressing on in the broad way that leads to destruction!" Pp. 206—8.

Preaching to be seen of men is one thing, to save souls another, and, as in the case of praying and almsgiving, is apt to gain the reward it seeks, and to fail of that which it does not preëminently seek.

Among the embarrassments of his early ministry, was the practice of his predecessors relative to infant baptism. Dr. Rodgers, Dr. McKnight, and Dr. Miller, had been in the habit of baptizing all the children of the congregation without regard to the Christian character and profession of either of the parents. He felt constrained to adopt a different course, and to baptize only those children, one of whose parents was a professed Christian. Of course the introduction of the strict practice encountered some antagonism, which he, however, speedily surmounted. Dr. Spring expresses his warm approval

of the celebrated Report on Infant Baptism, presented to the General Assembly, and prepared by Dr. Romeyn.

Fashionable amusements presented a difficulty more insuperable. Says Dr. Spring, "in this matter, 'old Adam was too hard for young Melancthon.' It is a foregone conclusion that our young people will dance. I regret it in Christian families, but I cannot prevent it. Our mercurial youth live for folly and fun. 'The heart of fools is in the house of mirth.' I have observed one thing, however; that when the Spirit of God is poured out upon us, there are no balls and assemblies; there is more prayer and praise than dancing. It is a grief of heart to the ministers of Christ that Christian families are so extensively the patrons of fashionable amusements. The giddy companions of the world, the sons and daughters of pleasure, give little proof of a Christian training." *Id.* p. 128.

The next topic of high moment handled in these volumes, is REVIVALS OF RELIGION. In regard to the first season of refreshing under his ministry, he writes as follows:

"This season of mercy was an emphatic expression of God's goodness to the youthful minister. He had been but six short years in the ministry, but God foresaw that he was to occupy a place in his earthly sanctuary for more than half a century. It was a weary wilderness he was appointed to traverse, and the God of Israel refreshed him with some of the grapes of Eshcol. Poor a thing as I have been, and still continue to be, with devout gratitude I record it here, that it was this work of grace that made me what I am; which enlarged my heart, gave vigour to my thoughts, ready utterance to my tongue, new views of the great object of the ministry, made my work my joy, and stimulated me to reach forward to greater measures of usefulness. I loved preaching the gospel before, but never as I have loved it since. But for this early season of mercy during the summer of 1814, I should have changed from place to place, and turned out what the Scotch call a 'sticket minister.' It was the Lord's doing, and marvellous in our eyes. The ingathering was not great, but it was the 'finest of the wheat.'" Pp. 163—4.

We have often observed that nothing so perfects ministerial and pastoral education as a great baptism of the Spirit in a

powerful revival of religion. This experimental teaching gives an insight into the true method of dealing with souls, in public preaching and private intercourse, which no amount of scholastic attainments or severe study can supply. For this, as well as so many other reasons, the young pastor should crave, pray, labour for a revival of religion, as the most inestimable of blessings. This great revival brought into the Brick church a large number of people in middle and advanced life, who, although they had been regular attendants upon and supporters of the church, had never yet consciously or professedly embraced salvation. During the next winter a visitation of grace still more powerful prevailed, especially among the youth of the congregation whose parents had been gathered in the previous summer. Besides this, there were other seasons of general awakening and revival in the old Brick church. But this appears to have been the most powerful and extensive of all. As Dr. Spring's account of it is not only extremely interesting and instructive, but brings into strong relief the measures employed, which stand in contrast to the fanatical measures and Pelagian preaching of Mr. Finney and other Western revivalists, elsewhere strongly reprobated by the venerable author, we will give it entire. In regard to all the revivals under his ministry, he remarks that, judging by the fruits, they were the work of the Spirit. The subjects of them, with few exceptions, have turned out intelligent and active Christians. Some are sceptical in regard to these seasons of special and prevailing religious attention, apprehensive that they will evaporate in fleshly excitement, without any pure and enduring fruits. This may be true of superficial and spurious excitements, got up by artificial machinery and unscriptural devices. These often give birth to an Ishmael, instead of an Isaac, the real child of promise. But in regard to those profound and extended awakenings, which arise from and are guided by scriptural truth, we apprehend that there will be vastly more irreligion and false religion in any congregation without them than with them. As one fruit of these revivals in Dr. Spring's church, it at one time contained sixty members, whom he could call upon to lead in prayer, and who, in little companies, held weekly meetings in different neighbourhoods of the congrega-

tion. We now give his account of the second great revival in his congregation.

“The commencement of the year 1815 was the dawning of a still brighter day. The last Sabbath of the ‘old year,’ and the evening services of that Sabbath, will be long remembered. The ‘New Year’s sermon,’ preached on the ‘last day of the old year,’ and printed under the quaint title of ‘Something Must be Done,’ has been widely circulated, and, by the Divine blessing, I have reason to believe, was of some service beyond the limits of our own congregation. Among our own people, eight or ten persons, during the following week, were found to be anxiously inquiring for the way to Zion, with their faces thitherward; weeping Marys and bold young men, startled from the grave of trespasses and sins. The whole winter proved to be a ‘day of the right hand of the Most High.’ There was murmuring, indeed, lest the young minister *should carry things too far*; and there was open hostility. Nor were there wanting serious and conscientious apprehensions on the part of some of my honoured brethren in the ministry, lest the work should savour more of fanaticism than sober thought, and ultimately show that it was the result of overheated and practised mechanism, rather than the work of God. But they were good men, and soon saw that their apprehensions were groundless. Amidst the greatest seriousness there was no outbreak, and no disorder of any kind. The sacred influence was silent as the dew of heaven. There was PRAYER. There was solemn and earnest preaching. There was frequent pastoral visitation. There were private circles for religious conversation, and prayer, and praise, and these scarcely known beyond the individuals who composed them. There were no ‘new measures,’ no ‘anxious seats,’ and no public announcement of the names or the number of those who were striving to enter into the strait gate. Yet there were unexpected and unthought-of instances of seriousness among the gay and frivolous, in the families of the rich and the poor, among the moral and immoral, and many were the triumphs of victorious grace.

“*The third Thursday of January*, by a private arrangement, was set apart by about thirty members of the church as a day of fasting, humiliation, and prayer. It was at a private house

in Church street, just in the rear of St. Paul's; and such a day I never saw before, and have never seen since. Such self-abasement, such confession of sin, such earnestness and importunity in prayer, and such hope in God's almightiness, I have rarely witnessed. And what deserves to be recorded is, that as the devotions of the day were drawing to a close, there was a *strong and confident expectation* that the Holy Spirit was about largely to descend upon the people. And so it was. He was even then descending. That cry: 'Where is thy hand, even thy right hand? Pluck it out of thy bosom,' was heard in heaven, and echoed by our great High Priest. A delightful impulse was given to the work by this day of prayer. The promise was made good, 'Before they call I will answer, and while they are yet speaking I will hear.'

"Our weekly lecture occurred on the evening of the same day; and I may say, it was the most solemn service of my ministry. The subject of the lecture was, 'Marvel not that I said unto you, Ye must be born again.' God was with the hearers and the preacher; his Spirit moved them as 'the trees of the wood are moved with the wind.' There is good reason to believe that *more than one hundred persons* were deeply impressed with their lost condition as sinners, and their need of an interest in Christ, on that evening. It was not then with us as it is now. *Now* few attend our weekly lectures except the professed people of God; *then* the impenitent rushed to the house of prayer. Enemies were silenced; members of other churches came among us, some to spy out our liberty, and some to mark the character of the work for themselves, and all classes were constrained to confess, 'This is the finger of God.' Between one and two hundred attended the private meetings for religious instruction, and great solemnity pervaded the whole people. The work was rapid; awakening and conviction in many instances so short that older Christians began to doubt its genuineness. Yet some of the brightest and most enduring Christians among us were those whose conversion was as sudden as that of Saul of Tarsus. The gathered fruits of this protracted harvest were rich; consisting sometimes of thirty and forty, and at one communion season more than seventy, filling

the broad aisle of the church—a lovely spectacle to God, angels, and men.” *Id.* 166—8.

May such gracious and glorious visitations be multiplied in all our churches until all flesh shall see the salvation of God. May the ministers, office-bearers, and private Christians, incessantly labour and pray for these outpourings, even the great rain of God’s strength. And may the remembrance of these years of God’s right hand quicken the zeal of God’s people to promote his work.

Before proceeding to set forth the theological import of this work, we take occasion to say that the chapter of “Affecting Incidents,” and the account of the religious experience of his daughter, Mary Norris, are not only graphic and interesting, but they are highly instructive and edifying—as far as they go, quite akin to the celebrated “Pastor’s Sketches,” of the late Dr. Spencer. There is also much epistolary matter between the author and distinguished correspondents, such as Drs. Miller, Emmons, Stuart, Richards, Humphrey, and his honoured parents, which is valuable and interesting. In regard to Missions, Domestic and Foreign, it is only necessary to say that while he was among the founders or earliest supporters of the American Board of Foreign Missions, and the American Home Missionary Society, and was never otherwise than friendly to them, he nevertheless became an earnest supporter of the Boards of our own church; in these matters, being at once a loyal and a catholic Presbyterian.

The theological interest of these volumes arises from the author’s early Hopkinsian training; his consequent difficulties in coming among the old Calvinists of the Presbytery of New York; his uncompromising aversion to the New Haven Theology; and the gradual modification of his views, till the shades of difference between them and Old Calvinism are altogether slight, almost imperceptible. In this connection, we feel bound to signalize one noble trait of character, which is as conspicuous in Dr. Spring, as it is deficient in many, if not in most, good and great men. We refer to the candour with which, while remarkable for independence, firmness, and freedom from fickleness, he has opened his mind to new light in correction of his past opinions, and to his ingenuous acknowledgment of

any errors of opinion or conduct, of which he has thus become convinced. We see much in these volumes to bear out and illustrate the following statement of the venerable author :

“*Truth* has been my object, the truth as God has revealed it in his word. I never, consciously, had any reluctance to abandon a wrong view because I had long cherished it, nor to adopt different views because they countervailed my former opinions. I have often thought that if men of different theological sentiments, but of fair and ingenuous minds, would prosecute their inquiries under the impression that they are equally interested in ascertaining the truth, and that nothing is gained, but much is lost, by their adherence to error, there would be very little religious controversy.” Vol. i. p. 106.

We shall see illustrations of this in the author's doctrinal opinions. But there is one instance, of a practical kind, so marked as to deserve particular notice. In the height of the controversy about Taylorism, Dr. Spring, being in New Haven, was invited to preach in the College chapel. He had a discourse on “Native Depravity,” antagonistic to Dr. Taylor's views, which Dr. Nettleton had listened to in the Brick church with great approbation. He hesitated about preaching it in the chapel upon “so courteous an invitation.” Upon the somewhat wavering advice of Dr. Thomas H. Skinner, he at length concluded to preach it. Of course, it gave great offence, and made no little stir. “And,” says Dr. Spring, who might have omitted all reference to the matter whatever, “I much doubt the propriety of so doing, nor do I now judge that I was prompted to do it by the meekness of wisdom.” A like magnanimous change of front was shown by him in reference to the proposed new version of the Bible by the Bible Society.

Dr. Spring repeatedly assures us that he “did not adopt the *peculiarities* of Hopkinsianism” in his early ministry. And speaking of the present time he assures us, “I am no enemy to Hopkinsianism, though I have no fellowship with its peculiarities.” Vol. ii. p. 15. What he means by this, more fully appears in the following passage:

“We have no sympathy with the two peculiarities of Hopkinsianism. The position that *God is the author of sin*, and the doctrine of *unconditional submission* to the will of God, as ex-

plained by Hopkinsians, and enforced by a willingness to be damned for his glory, as essential to true piety, appear to me to have been inconsiderately adopted. I myself was early educated in this belief, but, with all reverence for my early training, I could not retain it in my creed. Many are the discussions on these subjects I have listened to when under my father's roof, and I shall never forget the impression made upon my mind by listening to the outline of a discourse upon the words, 'The wrath of man shall praise thee; the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain.' The *doctrine* of the discourse was, *There is no more sin in the world than God wants.* Though I was but a boy, the thought struck me painfully. My father disapproved of it, though he smiled; I felt it could not be true. Many a time has the thought occurred to my mind, that if God is the efficient cause of all the sin in the world, then is he the author of much more sin than holiness. I cannot believe it. . . . In regard to a *conditional consent to be damned*, even if the hypothesis it involves be admissible, I have no confidence in it as a practical test of Christian character. The strong attachment to a particular system of theology, and the deceitfulness of the human heart, are too operative to allow any man to trust himself with such a test of character. . . . It is *absurd* because it makes the Christian character an absurdity. . . . To be willing to be damned, is to be willing to sin and suffer eternally. . . . Is it possible for a good man to consent to such a perfect abandonment to all wickedness?" Vol. ii. pp. 10, 11, 12.

The author's theological attitude at the beginning of his ministry, called forth the celebrated polemical work, entitled the *Contrast*, by the Rev. Ezra Stiles Ely, in which the Hopkinsian peculiarities, and some exaggerations and caricatures of them disowned by many of its adherents, and emphatically by Dr. Spring, were set in offensive and disparaging contrast with old Calvinism. Dr. Spring's course was eminently wise, and might well be imitated by many others in like circumstances. "I had no other way of quieting the alarm excited by the 'Contrast,' than by preaching the truth as it is in Jesus, and more plainly and pungently. This I was enabled to do. . . God's Spirit came down, and in a succession of outpourings . . .

enlarged, and beautified, and perpetuated the church, and gave it a name among the more useful and honoured churches of the land." Vol. i. pp. 129—31.

The conflict related mainly to the doctrines of original sin, human ability, and the extent of the atonement. Dr. Romeyn, in behalf of himself and other members of Presbytery who stood in doubt of him, presented to him twelve written questions, which he explicitly answered in writing: and then three supplementary questions arising out of three of his answers to the first series of interrogatories, which he also explicitly answered. This appears to have nearly or quite terminated the difficulties between Dr. Spring and his co-presbyters, growing out of this conflict. "On the subject of atonement, Dr. Romeyn, and the brethren in whose behalf he addressed me, were satisfied, and the controversy ended." The result of the whole was, that Dr. Spring's doctrine and that of his brethren might be summed up in the formula, that Christ's atonement is "sufficient for the whole world, efficient only for the elect," for whose sure salvation it was designed and provided.

In regard to ability, and particularly the distinction between natural and moral ability and inability, the author says: "I have never changed my views on this subject; but I have modified my statements, and, as I think, more in accordance with the word of God. The distinction is valuable; and though I do not now say that the sinner can repent *if he will*, because the assertion implies that an unholy volition produces holiness, yet I still maintain that his duty stands abreast with his intellectual powers, and his faculty of moral discernment. . . Those pulpits which teach that it is impossible for the unrenewed man to repent and believe the gospel, rarely urge this duty upon the impenitent, and never with the earnestness with which it is urged in the word of God. No man is required to perform *impossibilities*, nor is there any impossibility in the case, except that which arises from unmingled wickedness, and which leaves the sinner without excuse. . . . God makes no allowance for a wicked inability. . . In view of their perception, their reason, and their conscience, impenitent men *can*, and in view of their unconquerable depravity, they *cannot*, repent and believe the gospel." *Id.* pp. 136—7.

Although the author has corrected some of his earlier modes of statement on this subject, there is still a tinge of them left in those phrases which, after asserting a real, sinful, inexcusable inability, seem to assert that, in any view, the unregenerate "can repent and believe the gospel," by any power of their own. That this inability consists in a sinful moral state, not in the want of natural faculties which would suffice for all rectitude, if their sinful state were removed, is undeniable, and admitted by all. But then it is a real inability. The sinful heart cannot make itself holy. Depravity cannot eradicate itself. The dead soul cannot make itself alive. This Dr. Spring insists on. If then sinners cannot, on account of their depravity, make themselves new creatures, in what way, or by what powers, can they do it? And, if they have no power by which they can do it, although they have all power for all duty, if this sinful and inexcusable inability were removed, why say that, so long as this remains, they have anything that really amounts to the power requisite and adequate to the doing of it? Dr. Spring, in various phrase, states his belief in everything that we hold on this subject. And this seems to us inconsistent with anything that can properly be called ability in the sinner to anything spiritually good, or accompanying salvation.

In regard to "principle and exercise," he prints *inter alia*, a letter from Dr. Emmons, in which that acute reasoner says, "I suppose that perception, reason, conscience, memory, and volition, constitute the essence of the human mind; and I cannot conceive of any *substratum* in which these mental properties exist." In regard to this whole subject Dr. Spring says very frankly and explicitly:

"I have never entered deeply into this question. That fallen man is responsible for his sinful *nature* as well as his sinful *acts*, I have not a doubt. Did I not believe this, I should be driven to the conclusion that God is the author of sin. As the judicial visitation for Adam's first sin, the native tendencies of the race are to evil and not to good. I never was an acute metaphysician, and I am too old to attempt to become so now. Yet I cannot help thinking, though I once thought otherwise, that there is something in man's moral character besides the acts of the will. Are not love, hatred, hope, fear, the spon-

taneous acts of the mind, instead of being produced by any efficient acts of the will? Is not their moral character derived from the character of the mind or heart from which they flow? The tree is known by its fruits. Is it not the heart that gives character to its exercises, rather than its exercises that gives character to the heart? Do effects produce their causes, or do causes produce their effects? 'Keep *thy heart* with all diligence, for *out of it* are the issues of life.' Evil things come from *within*, and good things come from *within*. My own consciousness teaches me that there is something that lies deeper than the acts of my will." *Id.* pp. 158—9.

Dr. Spring says, that with respect to original sin, the difference "between old Calvinists and Hopkinsians is two-fold. Hopkinsians regard this arrangement in respect to the imputation of Adam's sin as simply a procedure of *sovereignty*, while the old Calvinists regard it as a measure of moral *government*. I once thought it was a procedure of mere sovereignty, but on more full examination of the language of the apostle, '*judgment* was by one to *condemnation*,' I became convinced that it was a procedure of moral government, and a judicial decision. *Judgment* and *condemnation* refer to judicial rather than to sovereign acts."

"The other point of difference relates to *mediate* or *immediate* imputation." Vol. ii. pp. 7, 8. Dr. Spring then goes on to argue at some length in favour of mediate imputation. We have no space to follow or examine his reasonings. The contrary view is so clearly asserted above, when he says, "as the judicial visitation for Adam's sin, the native tendencies of our race are to evil and not to good," that nothing more requires to be said on the subject.

The author, while discarding the offensive peculiarities of Hopkinsianism, quite naturally seeks to present the whole system, (not for the errors, but for the great amount of scriptural and Calvinistic truth it contains), and especially its advocates, in a favourable light. Doubtless, estimates of it must vary according to the light in which it was viewed; first, according as it is viewed with reference to the errors, or the truths it contained; secondly, according to the degree in which its peculiarities were developed and pushed to extremes in the persons

of its various adherents, embracing, as they did, men who, like Dr. Woods and Dr. Spring, never diverged widely from that old Calvinism which they more and more closely approximated through life, down to the school of Emmons, teaching that the soul is only a chain of exercises, and those exercises, alike the sinful and the holy, the immediate work of God. Says Dr. Spring, "the late Dr. Miller, of Princeton, once remarked to me, 'I should hesitate to lay hands on Dr. Emmons; but, though I do not approve of all Dr. Hopkins has written, I would ordain any man, otherwise qualified, who could honestly say, that he believed every word of Dr. Hopkins's system.'" *Id.* p. 6.

Dr. Spring was, as is well understood, opposed to the Dissolution of the Four Synods, and some other antecedent measures, which issued in the disruption of the Presbyterian Church. He belonged to the class who believed that the heresies and disorders which led to them, might have been surmounted with less violent remedies, while, as we have already seen, he, especially thirty years ago, adhered less closely than some to every one of the *ipsissima verba* of the Confession of Faith. His attitude on these subjects is sufficiently apparent in the following language:

"I love the Confession of Faith of the Presbyterian church, and always loved it. I have not altered in my preaching; my publications speak for themselves. I do not concur in all the peculiarities of old Calvinism, nor did I ever; nor do I with any of the New Haven Theology. If I must choose between old Calvinism and the New Haven Theology, give me old Calvinism. Old-fashioned Calvinists and old-fashioned Hopkinsians are not far apart: the more closely they are united in opposing modern errors, the better. These sentiments were uttered more than thirty years ago." Vol. i. p. 271.

Dr. Spring makes some noteworthy memoranda regarding the founding of Andover Seminary, in which his father had a leading part. Some letters from Dr. Woods to his father, here first published, put it beyond doubt, that Dr. Woods was a moderate Hopkinsian, and under pledges to the Hopkinsians when appointed to the Chair of Theology at Andover. He was to teach Hopkinsianism, but so prudently as not to alarm or

rouse into opposition the old Calvinists. He, however, himself gradually, as he advanced in life, "sustained a change in favour of the Calvinism of the Westminster Assembly," as abundantly appears from his writings. It still further appears, that, according to the constitution of that Seminary, its professors as well as its students may be either Presbyterians or Congregationalists; while some of the more rigid Independents were at one time disposed to force their own ecclesiastical polity exclusively upon the institution.

Dr. Spring has two chapters on the Southern rebellion, and its suppression. His indignant and eloquent denunciations of this mad and wicked insurrection are well known. It is unnecessary to repeat them, or to repeat the discussion concerning the propriety of making a declaration to that effect by the Assembly of 1861. But we wish to record on our pages his sentiments on two subjects growing out of the rebellion, which are now of deepest concern to us—sentiments which seem to us to be alike the dictates of Christian wisdom and love. The first respects the spirit to be cherished towards the conquered.

"But our nationality is saved, and we can afford to be magnanimous. While I hope that the leaders of the rebellion will be for ever disfranchised, I still hope that, in the exercise of a sound discretion, the Government will see fit to extend to them all the lenity which is consistent with the welfare of the nation. Times have altered; the South has altered; the spirit of the North has altered; there has been suffering enough; no man calls for blood now. Our 'erring sisters' have seen their error, and all we ask of them is to return to their first love. One thing is obvious, and that is, if we remain a prosperous, peaceful, and happy people, *we must treat our Southern friends with kindness.* The demon of secession cast out and purged of slavery, we ask of them nothing but loyalty and confidence." Vol. ii. p. 214.

He gives the following judgment as to the political status and franchises of the freedmen:

"There is one thought on the subject of slavery, which I may not omit. Utterly rejecting the doctrine of human servitude, or the right of property and ownership in man, I would not be in haste to elevate the coloured race to a position for

which they are not fitted. I would not, from an enthusiastic attachment to 'liberty and equality,' violently thrust them into offices of trust and responsibility, or give them the elective franchise, until they are prepared for it. Their own welfare, and the safety of our own institutions, would, in my judgment, be imperilled by such a policy. I would make them *free*, but I would treat them as servants, and just as I would treat the white races from abroad, and in our own land, who seek and are fitted for no higher position. Let them go when and where they will, and enjoy all the protection of law; let them serve whom they will, and in the capacity which they themselves may select, and receive recompense for their labours; but let them not aspire to a seat on the bench, nor to the pulpit, *until their intellectual culture and moral qualifications shall have fitted them for these responsible positions.* 'Wisdom is justified of her children:' the results will show that this is the true policy towards the coloured race. When *Christian* men and women are found among them, I would treat them with Christian love, which is 'without partiality and without hypocrisy.' I would treat them as 'Paul the aged' would have Philemon treat Onesimus, not as 'a slave, but above a slave, a brother beloved.' I would not assign to them the lowest place at the communion table, nor the highest, but a place where they are acknowledged as brethren and sisters in Christ." Vol. ii. pp. 202, 203.

We here take leave of the patriarchal counsels, records, and testimonies which the venerable author has embalmed in these volumes. Our remarks have necessarily been as discursive as the topics brought under review in such an autobiography. We sincerely rejoice that the author has been spared to prepare this memorial of himself, and these contributions to the ecclesiastical history of his times.