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ART. I.—PREACHING TO THE CONSCIENCE.

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HUGH MILLER in his "Schools and Schoolmasters" tells of a certain Scotch stone-cutter, Donald Fraser by name, famed the country through for his astonishing feats in the line of his trade. Two or three times as much work as from any of those who wrought by his side, and equally well done, would come from under his hand in a day. And the explanation the narrator finds is "an extraordinary capacity which the man possessed for conceiving the finished work within the rough material, so that he cuts upon the true figure at once, avoiding the indirect approaches, and the endless repetitions of work common to others." A distinguished American author (Prof. Shedd, *Hist. of Doctrines*, vol. 1, p. 5,) relates a similar story of Michael Angelo, and illustrates by it the advantage of method in any pursuit. "Such is the bold, yet safe power, of a mind that works by an idea, and methodically." Even so. To know how to work is the secret of success. We see it in every branch of human industry; among all the trades and the learned professions: in the case at once of artist and artisan; in the highest departments of mental effort, and in the modest forms of manual labor. Herein precisely lies the difference between skilled and unskilled talent. Only the man of method is master in his calling.

And of nothing is this more true than of labor in the gospel ministry. The preacher has his work before him, a work for souls; the thing is to find out just how to accomplish it; just how to approach the soul which he would benefit; just what kind of

ART. VII.—CALVINISM IN DOCTRINE AND LIFE.

By LYMAN H. ATWATER, LL.D.

THE current fashion of assaulting Christian doctrines which are disrelished, by calling such doctrines dogmas, and then setting forth dogma in invidious and disparaging contrast with life, is so transparently absurd, that its prevalence and continuance constitute a marvel only matched by its absurdity. Men may doubtless hold the truth in unrighteousness, and by thus belying their convictions, make a practical, which is worse than a doctrinal, shipwreck of the faith. As there may be a dead faith, of course there may be a dead orthodoxy. But, on the other hand, to say that Christianity is not a doctrine but a life, is to utter a doctrine. It is impossible to declare or teach anything about religion or Christianity without affirming a doctrine. To say that this, that or the other doctrine, creed or system of religion or morals, is false, is to utter a doctrine or dogma. To guide the life on the hypothesis of its untruth or uncertainty, is to mould it by the doctrine that it is untrue. To affirm that there *is, or is not* a God, an Incarnate God, a Redeemer, a Judge of all, to deny a Revelation infallibly inspired of God, or that man owes duties to God, is a sinner; and must repent and believe in order to salvation, is to affirm a doctrine. To deny the reality of doctrine and the necessity of believing it, on pretext of exalting the Christian life above it, is to deny the possibility of such life. For the life can only be Christian as it is guided by and conformed to Christian truth. "He that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is the rewarder of them that diligently seek Him." "I am the way, the truth and the life; no man cometh to God but by me." "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." "He that believeth not shall be damned." Are not these doctrines, and requirements of the belief of doctrines, in order to religion and salvation, which, unless the Bible is a myth, it is unspeakably perilous to set aside and trifle with?

This destructive motto is now hurled with special vehemence and gusto against the "System of doctrine" set forth in the Westminster Symbols as that "contained in the Holy Scriptures,"—commonly, but not very happily, known as Calvinism. And this not only by skeptics and rationalists, but by some evangelicals who so misconceive and misrepresent to themselves and others

its peculiarities, as to give them a hideous aspect, even though they are wont spontaneously to recognize the essence of them in their devotions; herein not knowing what they do.

In general it will clear away one cause of error and confusion, if we premise, that by Calvinism is not meant all and singular the sentiments advanced by Calvin on religion generally, or even in reference to the system, or parts of the system, named after him. It is rather the system named thus, because he was foremost among the Reformation divines, in signaling, explicating, defending and formulating it. It is this system, not in all the minor details and unessential features which he connected with it, but in all the great, essential constituents which are held in common by those who have long accepted and had conceded to them the title of Calvinists. In the same way, it has by some been called, and before the Reformation was generally known as, the Augustinian system, because it is in essential outline, though not in all details, the same which Augustine elaborated, especially in his famous tractates against Pelagius. And in a more provincial way it has sometimes in the last century been called Edwardsism, not as identical at all points with what Jonathan Edwards maintained, even in defending the system, but because among the theologians of this century he was *facile princeps* among the defenders of its essential and distinctive features. And it is sometimes called Pauline, because while its distinctive principles underlie all parts of the Bible, ever and anon cropping out as its granitic stratum, they are most fully articulated in the Epistles of Paul, although not more positively asserted by him than by Christ himself, particularly in the gospel by his beloved disciple. [See John iii.; vi.; xv.; xvii.] This is easy to demonstrate, and has often been demonstrated in various treatises showing the Theology of Christ. The Calvinism * we mean then

* The infelicity already referred to in the use of this term to denote the system of which Calvin was but one of the preëminent expositors and defenders, is due to the fact that though none of them was probably greater or better than he, yet the harsher and sterner sides of his character, exaggerated as they are in the popular mind and by adversaries, are apt to transfuse themselves into the current conceptions of the system of doctrines thus called by his name. It is probably for this reason that Dr. Hodge, the greatest living defender of this system, scarcely, if ever, uses this term in his Systematic Theology. Yet the *usus loquendi* is so fixed that we see no prospect of displacing it by substituting Augustinianism or any equivalent term for it. This is only what is common in the history of words and their meaning. Their meaning has to be defined, not from their etymology, but their use.

is, if we may so speak, catholic Calvinism, what has been and is common to those who accept and have allotted to them the name of Calvinists. It is this divested of the distortions, exaggerations, one-sided views of it, or parts of it, which have often been mistaken for it by blinded friends and foes alike,—and especially in contrast with that Fatalism and Antinomianism which not only misconceive, but utterly destroy it. We go still further and insist that it is this, and not the somewhat variant subsidiary, collateral, or expository views,—more or less important in their place—with which different Calvinists defend, explain or apply these principles. It is, in short, the doctrine of “the sect every where spoken against,” particularly just now ; against which the world vents its hate, and the rationalistic, worldly and sensational pulpit and press are pouring out unexampled volleys of scoffing misrepresentation, caricature, invective and ridicule.

Now for the differential marks of what is essential in this system we have not far to seek. And when we find them “pure and simple,” divested of all extraneous incumbrances, we think it will be quite evident that they will bear all tests of their truth ; harmony with Scripture, also Christian experience and the intuitive convictions of men as far as legitimately applicable ; the unconscious verdict of really devout adversaries ; last, but not least, the logic not only of the intellect but of the life,—those fruits by which Christ enjoins us to test all teachers and their doctrines.

The distinguishing mark of Calvinism which usually ensures the appellation from friend and foe, is the doctrine of the divine foreordination, or predestination of all events in a manner and within limits exclusive of fatalism, but inclusive of the contingency of second causes, and the freedom of rational and accountable creatures. Whoever avows this predestination will earn for himself the title of Calvinist, and not unlikely, at the hands of some redoubtable polemic, the credit of making God an “infinite gorilla.” An eloquent Calvinistic preacher, whose prayers lifted us to the third heaven as no other man’s ever has, once told us, that whenever a minister preached election, he was sure to hear within a week that he had been preaching that “hell was peopled with infants.” No question, it is a part of the strategy of most anti-Calvinistic writers now, to load Calvinism with the doctrine of infant perdition, which it discards, and which has no more necessary affinity for it than for other

systems. But what we specially note is that predestination is recognized as a differential element of Calvinism by friend and foe, and is usually believed by each to carry with it whatever else he understands, or misunderstands, to belong to the system.*

Foreordination then being the distinctive mark of Calvinism, let us inquire more carefully what are its elements, its proofs, and its effects. In pursuing the inquiry these several branches of the subject will to a considerable extent intermingle.

* Dr. Curry, a representative Methodist, in a recent number of the *Christian Advocate*, as quoted by the *Presbyterian*, declares: "The Westminster Confession of Faith, the ablest, clearest, most comprehensive system of Christian doctrine ever framed. That venerable instrument purposely embodies in its unity the dogma of absolute predestination, which necessarily becomes the corner-stone of the edifice, so giving it shape and character. But despite that capital fault, it is not only a wonderful monument of the intellectual greatness of its framers, but also a comprehensive embodiment of nearly all the precious truths of the Gospel. . . . Our high appreciation of the nominally Calvinistic churches of our country—and, we may add, our decided leaning towards Calvinism, with the dogma of fatalistic predestination eliminated—impels us to look hopefully towards them, and emboldens us to press upon their attention the high importance of getting rid of this dead weight in their creed as a condition requisite to their highest usefulness, not to say their continued existence. We concede to them the honor of having all along directed the best religious thinking of the country; but this burden of an obsolete and positively offensive dogma, is daily becoming more and more intolerable, and it must be cast off or the bearer must sink under it. . . . Because we are solicitous that the precious Gospel truths which are equally the heritage of Calvinists and Arminians—the great distinctive doctrines of the Reformation—shall be set forth with all possible force and fulness, we especially desire to see those churches emancipated from their fetters," etc.

We quote this, not for the purpose of making all the comments which it suggests, but as a striking evidence that the one differential feature of Calvinism in the eye of friend and foe, is its doctrine of predestination. Whoever denies it is not Calvinist; whoever holds it is a Calvinist, subject to the condition, nevertheless, that he hold with it, and in accordance with it, the other great doctrines of Christianity known as constituting the Evangelical system. To deny the Fall, Trinity, Incarnation, Atonement, Regeneration, etc., would indeed be to repudiate Calvinism; but so it would be to renounce Arminianism, Lutheranism, Romanism even—in short, Christianity.

We hope we justly appreciate Dr. Curry's appreciation of the Westminster Symbols, minus their predestination. But we may suggest that it is worth asking and answering, how it comes to pass that "the ablest, clearest, and most comprehensive system of Christian doctrine ever framed, purposely embodies in its unity the dogma of absolute predestination, which necessarily becomes the corner-stone of the whole edifice, so giving it shape and character?" and why its adherents have "all along directed the best religious thinking of the country?" Is there no logical and causal connection between this antecedent and these consequents?

This doctrine of predestination then means that all events in the universe were eternally designed and purposed of God, and certainly come to pass in accordance with and by virtue of such purpose, yet no less in accordance with the nature and by virtue of the proper efficiency of the second causes or creatures which effect them. So declares our Confession with incomparable exactness and precision of statement. "Although in relation to the foreknowledge and decree of God, the first cause, all things come to pass immutably and infallibly, yet by the same Providence, he ordereth them to fall out according to the nature of second causes, either necessarily, freely, or contingently," chap. v., 2. Hence again it declares, "God from all eternity, did by the most wise and holy counsel of his own will, freely and unchangeably ordain whatsoever comes to pass; yet so as thereby neither is God the author of sin, nor is violence offered to the will of the creatures, nor is the liberty or contingency of second causes taken away, but rather established," iii. 1. Again, although God's providence "extendeth itself even to the first fall, and all other sins of angels and men, and that not by a bare permission but such as hath joined with itself a most wise and powerful bounding and otherwise ordering and governing of them, in a manifold dispensation unto his own most wise and holy ends; yet so as the sinfulness thereof proceedeth only from the creature, and not from God; who being most holy and righteous, neither is, nor can be, the author or approver of sin." v., 4.

The objections and charges so vehemently urged against this doctrine, that it subverts or impairs the moral freedom and accountability of men, therefore are utterly groundless. It may be thus misconceived by adversaries. It is not thus conceived by its intelligent adherents. So far from undermining, it establishes liberty and responsibility on an impregnable basis. The decree of God is effective if it ensure the simple *certainty* of the event in accordance with the true nature, and by the proper efficiency of its immediate cause; and so freely, if it be free cause. Such certainty of action in no manner impairs freedom in the manner of it. This is susceptible of easy demonstration. Is it not certain that the most perfect free-agents, God, holy angels, and the spirits of the just made perfect in heaven, will never swerve from perfect holiness, and this without detriment to their freedom? And is not this certainty that God will only do what is right

and best, as absolute as both his goodness and his freedom? Moreover, it is indisputable, may we not say self-evident, that the nature of any event, or of the action of any cause, whether free or necessary, is not changed by the antecedent certainty that it will occur, and none the less so if this certainty reach back to the eternal cognitions and counsels of the infinite mind. If this is evident *a priori*, it is no less so *a posteriori*. Because we know beforehand that an upright judge will refuse a bribe, and a miser will clutch a nugget of gold within his reach, does this alter the nature, or prejudice the freedom of their acts? Christ certainly foreknew and predicted that Peter would deny him and repent thereof unto life, and that Judas would betray him by an act of hopeless apostacy. But this did not destroy the freedom, sin and guilt of these crimes, nor make Christ the author or approver of the iniquity they involved. Who dare intimate the blasphemy that it did?

It is however said, this certainty and foreknowledge of future actions grounded on such certainty, may be irrespective of any divine purpose or antecedent decree. But it has never yet been shown how any future event can be known as certain that is not certain to come to pass; or how, in the eternal ages back of creation, any certainty of future events in the created universe, and especially of acts of free-agents yet to come into being with power of alternative choice, could then have had existence aside of any purpose or determination of God that they should come to pass; how, in short, they could pass from the category of things that *may be or may not be*, to that of things that *shall certainly be*; from possibility to a *futurition*, which distinguishes them from all merely possible things that are never to become actual. But we need not press an extra-scriptural argument in proof that divine foreordination underlies divine foreknowledge further than to say, that the light of reason does corroborate the teachings of Scripture to this effect, when they declare that God worketh all things according to the counsel of his own will, predestinating them according to his eternal purpose, and that all things are known unto him from the foundation of the world.

It is not probable, however, that the doctrine would encounter serious opposition, if it extended only to the good acts of moral agents. It is because it extends to the evil or sinful acts of free-agents. Now, although it be conceded that this predestination

only ensures the certainty without altering the nature, or the freedom, criminality and guilt of these actions, so far as respects the agents, yet it is only candid to confess that this does not, of itself alone, dispose of the whole difficulty in relation to God. The question recurs, does not this put God in the attitude of in some degree causing, promoting or approving sin?—a question of theodicy, rather than of fatalism and freedom. To this we unhesitatingly answer no, a thousand times no. Any doctrine which makes God the author or approver of sin must be false. This doctrine, as set forth in the Bible and Reformed symbols, and by its intelligent advocates, does not. The assumption that it does is founded on false conceptions of, or groundless inferences from it. This is none the less so, whether we can here see fully how it can be or not. It will be made to appear beyond doubt in some exemplary and crucial scriptural cases, and what is true of God's relation to sin in these, *may* beyond all doubt be true of his relation to all sin; viz., that it may be within the scope of his plan and purpose, in such wise that he shall be in no manner its approver or author, but only its hater; while yet, through his wondrous counteraction and disposal of it, it shall at once call into conspicuous exercise and glorious manifestation his sin-aborring holiness and justice, the riches of his matchless love, mercy and grace, wisdom and power.

We hardly need say that a principal case to which we refer is the selling of Joseph into Egyptian bondage by his brethren, from the foulest motives of fratricidal envy and hate inspired by his superior goodness and prospects of deserved preëminence over them; and how Joseph thus became their deliverer from the most horrible of deaths, and was himself lifted into regal exaltation over them; so becoming at once the instrument of saving the chosen race, out of whom the Saviour of men was to be born according to the flesh, and an eminent type of Christ himself. Now the divine solution of this matter uttered by Joseph could hardly fail to be the instinctive judgment of every devout soul, even had it not thus been infallibly declared: "But as for you, ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good, to bring to pass as it is this day, to save much people alive." Gen. l. 20. Here was a divine purpose and aim in this crime of Joseph's brethren. This was wholly and infinitely good and praiseworthy. There was the crime and purpose of

its perpetrators. This was wholly base and criminal. They were wholly free in the act. It was all their own. The sin was all theirs. This sin God abhorred, but yet suffered and purposed its occurrence, not for the sake of the sin, but for the sake of the immeasurable good to which he could overrule it. They meant it for the evil in it. God meant the good to be educed from its counteraction, by his wonder-working wisdom, power and grace.

Passing the case of the Assyrian monarch whom God made his scourge to tread down an hypocritical nation, "howbeit he meaneth not so, neither doth his heart think so, but it is in his heart to destroy and cut off nations not a few;" we pass at once to the crucifixion of the Lord of Glory, the pivot on which human history, and the divine administration of Providence and Grace, alike turn. In forms most manifold, Christ signified to us that this great tragedy was to be carried through according to the counsel and purpose of God, and never more than in the outburst, "not as I will, but as thou wilt." It is evinced in the whole current of Messianic prophecy dawning in the promise, "the seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head." But if any doubt were left as to the conclusiveness of these evidences, they are forever removed by the explicit and unambiguous statements of Peter's pentecostal discourse, in language which no creed could more clearly or concisely formulate. "Him being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken and by wicked hands have crucified and slain." Acts. ii: 23. Again, "For of a truth against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles and the people of Israel, were gathered together for to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done," Acts. iv: 27-8. Now, had not these explicit declarations been given in the word of God, would it have been possible for devout minds to waver as to the belief of what they express? We think not, and that they would show it in their devotions, even if unable to reconcile it with their logic. We think all Christians of whatever school or sect, short of mere rationalism, not only readily but joyfully believe that redemption in all its parts was eternally designed and purposed of God, and that the glory thereof may not be given to another; that in God's eternal purpose Christ is the lamb "slain from

the foundation of the world." On the other hand they cannot but believe, even if God did not declare it, that on the part of Christ's crucifiers the whole procedure was murderous and diabolical; that, while acting according to the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, and doing "what his hand and counsel determined before should be done," they nevertheless "with wicked hands" did crucify and slay him. The sin in it was exclusively theirs, in no manner wrought or approved by God. But the incomparable good in the event as laying the foundations of human salvation was wholly of God; the grandest forthputting of his wisdom and power, to "the praise of the glory of his grace, whereby he hath made us accepted in the beloved."

Now these things are undeniable. Here are two monumental examples, of God's purpose and decree extending to, and making certain the coming to pass of acts of superlative guilt, which yet are inextricably interlinked with whatever is most fundamental in his kingdom of grace and glory. They clearly involve a wickedness of which he is in no manner the author or approver. What is true of these undeniably may be true of all. No man can prove the contrary, or find any lines of proof which, thoroughly followed out, do not converge in the doctrine of God's universal decrees, which are involved again in the doctrine of his universal Providence, as their central terminus. To suppose otherwise is to suppose that the greatest achievements in the kingdoms of providence and grace are contingent, not on his will, but on mere hap-hazard, or the caprice of foolish and sinful creatures. The devout mind can never rest here.

If it is easy to reply that all this does not show *how* God's purposes can include man's sin, and yet leave him untainted by it, it is enough to rejoin that we have shown irrefragably that it *is* so. There must be real harmony between these and all other truths, whether we can see the method of agreement and conciliation or not. If we cannot wholly solve it, it is only what occurs in regard to innumerable other truths, which we know beyond a doubt, but cannot explain in full. Our finite minds go but a step in any direction before they only see through a glass darkly. Daily Providence presents a tangled web beyond our power to unravel. Why evil exists at all is an unsolved mystery. Let him who insists that the perfect harmony of foreordination and free-agency shall be understood before he admits it, tell

why the first breath of the new-born babe is a moan of anguish, or how the bones do grow in the womb of her that is with child, or how the blade of grass is formed; or how the bombardment of Sumter should have "drenched our land in fraternal blood," or changed the whole current of human history, and yet be independent of the purpose and providence of God. Here we must not omit a caution against two opposite extremes which, in attempting to explain the harmony of foreordination and free agency, virtually undermine the one or the other, and thus impair the integrity of the doctrine. Some virtually resolve the freedom of the will into a mere pretense or feeling, without the reality of it. They say it only moves, as it is moved by external motives or forces of some sort from without the free agent himself. Such freedom as this it is easy to see God can control without impairing it. But this harmonizes foreordination with freedom, at the expense of the latter. It is true that man is not in every sense independent of the influence of objects or agents external to himself. Otherwise he would not be a reasoning being, capable of estimating objects, and of being persuaded to good or evil. Nevertheless it is he himself that, in the exercise of his own freedom, determines how these external objects shall influence him, so that what attracts one to good is perverted by another to evil. On the other hand, some try to solve the difficulty by straining free-agency to an extreme which subverts divine sovereignty and foreordination. They say that it is a power to act in a given way whatever omnipotence may do to prevent it—hence that God decrees such good actions as he foresees he can induce the good to perform, and such evil actions as, in the most efficient exercise of his almighty power, he foresees he will be unable to prevent. This is not foreordination. It is foresight without predetermination—if this were possible. The doctrine that there are powers of sin, rebellion and darkness in the very nature of free-agency, which may prove an overmatch for divine omnipotence, imperils the eternal fealty and felicity of the saints in glory. It enthrones the creature above the Creator, "all-powerful contingency" above the King Eternal, immortal and invisible. Thus the pillars of heaven tremble, while the very foundations of faith are shaken. And "if the foundations be destroyed what shall the righteous do?" How can the good man's heart be "fixed, trusting in the Lord," and how shall "they that

trust in the Lord be as Mount Zion that shall never be moved?" So remote from, and incompatible with, either Fatalism or Pelagianism, is the scriptural doctrine of divine predestination.

It is needless to add that this doctrine logically includes the doctrine of election of the heirs of salvation, and of non-election, otherwise preterition, which is all that is meant by the somewhat sterner, though not unscriptural term, reprobation; election not to salvation without faith, holiness and good works, but "according as he hath chosen us in him, before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy, and without blame before him in love," [Eph. i. 4; ix. 11; also Jude ii. 10; Rom. viii. 28, to the end, and the whole of Rom. ix. and xi.] Election too is involved in the doctrine of divine regeneration. For how could God bestow the grace of life, and by his spirit change the heart of stone to the heart of flesh, without first choosing to do it? and if this choice be antecedent to salvation, is it less than eternally so? And if the regenerate, believing and penitent are thus elect, are not those whom God, for reasons sufficient to his absolute wisdom and goodness, does not thus renew and sanctify, non-elect, whom he righteously passes by without communicating to them his saving grace, leaving them to despise, and wonder, and perish for their sins? If reason forces us to this conclusion, can any less be wrenched out of such Scriptures as Matt. xi. 25-26; several passages in Rom. ix., Jude 4, and 1 Pet. ii. 8? This non-election, or preterition, is in itself the determination, and goes into effect, like all cases of God's hardening the heart so abundantly spoken of in Scripture, by withholding the saving and renewing operation of the Spirit from the sinner, as a judicial and penal visitation for his sins. The consequence is that he sinks into deeper obduracy, through the unrestrained downward impulses of his heart, as by a moral gravitation—arising, not from the presence and agency, but from the absence and non-agency of God, who in just judgment for his sins lets him alone because he is joined to his idols. Thus "after his hardness and impenitent heart he treasures up wrath against the day of wrath." No principle is more plainly asserted in Scripture than that God often withdraws or withholds his spirit, and other restraints on wicked men, in punishment of their obduracy, and thus abandons them to their own hearts' lusts, to blindness, nay sometimes even "to

a strong delusion that they should believe a lie." On the other hand, it is not by any special merit, goodness, or works of righteousness in themselves; but of God's special, sovereign mercy towards themselves, that any are renewed. "All boasting is excluded." From first to last the glory is God's, the sin is man's. Of God, Christ "is made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption, that he that glorieth should glory in the Lord." 1 Cor. i. 30-31.

It is in place here to add, that it is an integral part of this great truth as related to the gospel, that God is perfectly sincere in all the gospel offers and promises, even in his condescending overtures and expostulations beseeching men to be reconciled to him, and to render him reasonable service. It is forever true, that God "so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have everlasting life;" and that there is a true sense in which God is "not willing that any should perish, but would that all should come to repentance." But this is, of course, not his will of decree or purpose, that this latter shall come to pass, whatever else it may be, otherwise it would contradict much that, as we have seen, God has elsewhere affirmed. That is, it does not mean his determination that the event shall occur. But it means his will of approbation and complacency in the case of all who obey the gospel, and the certain assurance that all such shall have eternal life, whoever and howsoever many they may be, even to the last man of the race. Whether we can see the mutual consistency of all these truths or not, is far less material than that we should accept them in their true import. It is forever true that God is sincere in the invitations of the gospel: "The Spirit and the Bride say, come; and let him that heareth say, come; and let him that is athirst, come; and whosoever will let him take of the water of life freely." Whoever so apprehends the doctrine of foreordination as to abridge the fulness, freeness, universality and sincerity of the gospel offer, misapprehends it. It is forever true that nothing stands in the way of the sinner's salvation but his own perverseness and refusal to accept it. As with free-agency, foreordination does not subvert or impair, but rather establishes all this. No matter if we do not understand it. Let us not therefore disbelieve it, or accept it haltingly and grudgingly. Let God be true but every man a liar. The sphere of

truth, especially with regard to the Infinite God, is none the less truth, though, like other spheres, the eye can only take in a part of it at once.

We will now only add that this truth, thus confirmed by Scripture and right reason against all serious objections, is buttressed by the concessions of adversaries, at all events, those of the evangelical stamp. For, just as those who, through misconceiving, dispute fundamental truths in any department, in practice spontaneously and unconsciously recognize them, so we are quite sure it is here. If denied by any in their speculations and logical constructions, they abundantly come out in their devotions. The Fatalist cannot avoid being a Free-willer, the Idealist a Realist in speech and action. On his knees, the Arminian forgets those logical puzzles which have distorted predestination to his mind and at once thankfully acknowledges his conversion to be due to that prevenient grace of God, without which no mere will or works of his own would ever have made him a new creature. He prays for that outpouring of God's Spirit to restrain, convince, renew and sanctify men; for that divine direction of human events, and overturning of the counsels and frustrating of the plans of wicked men; he gives to the Lord that glory and honor for what is actually done in this behalf, which imply that God reigns; that he is the sovereign disposer of all events, and that all good, and all thwarting of evil are due to him, while all evil is itself due to the creature. He recognizes the completeness of the divine fore-knowledge as bound up inseparably with the wisdom of his eternal purpose. His prayers for assurance of hope, or his present fruition of it, pre-suppose the faith that God can and will keep his feet from falling, and heaven from revolt, and that his purpose forms such an infallible nexus between present grace and eternal glory, that nothing shall be able to separate him from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus, our Lord. If this be so, he holds that "he who has begun a good work in him will perform it unto the last day of Jesus Christ;" not, indeed, without watchfulness, prayer and other needful effort, but in and by the use of all appropriate means, lest he fail of the grace of God and come short of his salvation. This is saint's perseverance enough for the Calvinist. More he does not ask. Less, none can hold who feel assurance of their own final salvation.

It is also due to adequacy of statement to add here, that normal or catholic Calvinists insist, with special emphasis, on the proper dualism of Creator and creature, as also of mind and matter, against all Pantheistic, Monistic, Materialistic or Idealistic theories to the contrary. This is necessarily involved in the perfection of supremacy and sovereignty, wisdom and truth, holiness and justice, love and mercy, which it ascribes to the Creator; the blended free-agency, accountability and dependence which it ascribes to the creature. It is quite true that occasional Calvinistic theologians have veered to extremes, now on this side and now on that, in withstanding opposite errors on this subject. Calvinists most sturdily oppose all that merging of mind and matter, God and the creature, in one substance, now so fashionable among perverters of science and philosophy, because their system so blends divine sovereignty and human agency in events, that God and man are each the authors and efficient of their own actions respectively. If man proposes, God disposes. Where the former means evil, the latter intends and does only good. Evil is wrought only by the creature. Even in regard to good actions of faith, repentance and holiness, while there is a positive transforming work of the Spirit in the soul, purging away its corruption and perverseness; yet all holy Christian *acts* are true and proper acts of the soul thus renewed, so that, while in one sense they come from God, as he has enabled and disposed the soul to their performance; in a strict and proper sense, they are our own, because we are the doers of them. If God makes willing in the day of his power, it is we that will. If he gives repentance, we repent. If he fulfils in us the work of faith, we believe. Man's acts are not God's acts. It is true that on either side, in the interest of human dependence or responsibility, a few Calvinistic divines have pushed their speculations to an extreme eccentric to and inconsistent with Calvinism, and generally disowned by Calvinists. Dr. Nathaniel Emmons brought this tendency on the divine side to its climax, when, with a considerable local but temporary following, he made God the direct author of all human actions, alike and after the same manner the evil and the good. This is little else than Fatalism. So shocking a view was bound to raise up a leader and champion of reactionary opposition, who appeared in the person of the renowned Nathaniel W. Taylor. This eminent divine did a much-needed work,

in asserting with great power, the true and proper agency and freedom of man as the doer and originator of his own actions ; the denial of all agency or complicity of God as the author or approver of sin, and in refuting the unwarrantable dogma, that " sin is the necessary means of the greatest good ;" although, in doing so, he too much lost sight of the partial truth which this proposition fails, although it is intended, to represent. He also carried his views of the uncontrollable autonomy and independence of the human will, in itself and its applications to the analysis of some doctrines, to an extent quite unnecessary for the overthrow of the opposite errors, whose disastrous influence he confronted and aimed to neutralize. This, with some one-sided views as to the nature of virtue, brought him into conflict with a much broader type of Calvinism than the original eccentric and provincial exaggerations of parts of it, which gave "form and pressure" to his own attempts at improvement. But it is none the less true that any extreme into which he went, was in the line of reaction from an opposite extreme in New England, which had come to a pass that urgently needed correction. Many have heard of the familiar phrase : " Taylorism is Emmonism with the divine efficiency part cut off." This Dr. Emmons put in his own laconic way, when, in answer to Dr. Lyman Beecher's irenic statement : " Well, you and Taylor now agree that all moral character consists in exercises." Dr. Emmons answered : " Yes, but we differ as to where they come from." But such eccentricities of individual Calvinists, or of those claiming to be Calvinists, constitute no part of catholic Calvinism, any more than Edwards' maintaining that created substance is only a constant series of instantaneous divine acts, or that the essence of virtue is " love to being in general," are parts of it. They are simply special modes of advocating it, adopted by some eminent polemics.

All this holds good with reference to any alleged limitations of the fullness and freeness of the gospel offer, and of the provision of salvation on which it is founded, as affected by the relation of personal election to the atonement. The atonement of Christ possesses an inherent worth and sufficiency as boundless as his divinity, fully adequate to the expiation of all the sins of all sinners. As such, it is freely, fully and sincerely offered to all sinners of mankind ; and of these, all who accept it shall themselves be accepted of God, and saved. Whosoever

believeth on him shall not perish, but have eternal life. Whosoever will, let him come, and him that cometh he will in no wise cast out. Election places no limits upon all this. It simply insures its acceptance by all who do believe and obey, *i. e.* the elect; as Christ says: "All that the Father giveth me shall come unto me."—John vi. 37. It places no obstacle in the way of the non-elect. Their own obduracy and sinful blindness form the only barrier. For an innumerable company, including all who die in infancy, of our race, God's electing love and grace remove this otherwise invincible obstacle. "The election hath obtained it, the rest were blinded."—Rom. xi. 7.; *i. e.* by their own sinful hearts yielding to the seductions of "the God of this world, who hath blinded the minds of them that believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them."—2 Cor. iv. 4. There has been much logomachy as to the extent of the atonement among those who are agreed in fact. It is limited, not in its own infinite fullness, nor in the completeness, freeness and sincerity of the offer of it, but in the application, and intent of the application of it, to those who truly accept this offer, *i. e.* the elect; the sole ground of the exclusion of others being their rejection of it, as Christ himself declares: "Ye will not come to me, that ye may have life." No improvement on this much controverted and misconceived subject of the extent of the atonement, can be made upon the old formula: "Sufficient for the whole world; efficient only for the elect."

¶ We are thus brought face to face with the nature of atonement and justification which belongs to the essence of Calvinism, not as its differential part, but what belongs to it generically among the confessed integral elements of our common Evangelical Christianity.

It is aside of our plan, if we had space, to go into any minute controversies about the nature of punishment, distributive and general justice, and the effect of some provincial application of the happiness theory of ethics in producing speculative modifications of these doctrines, although, on these and their like, we might easily show our opinion. These things are quite important in their bearing on the outworks and defences of the doctrine. What we rather have now at heart, is the essence of the doctrine itself. It is certainly the doctrine of the Scriptures and of our

common Christianity, that Christ, the Lord of glory, made atonement for the sins of men, by the substitution of his sufferings and death for the merited punishment of all who believe on and obey him; that his death and antecedent sufferings were not merely those of a martyr, or didactic and symbolical, but that they were strictly vicarious, endured in lieu of the sinner's punishment, in vindication of the justice, law and government of God; that they were not merely exemplary, but expiatory and sacrificial, and in this sense, propitiatory. That Christ thus suffered, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, is the plain teaching of Scripture, even upon the lowest tolerable interpretation, whenever it treats upon the subject, as he who runs may read, without further citation of passages quite beyond the scope of the present article.

The indisputable nature of the atonement thus foreshadows the nature of justification from the very inter-relation between them. The whole is thus summed up by the Apostle: "Even the righteousness of God, which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto and upon all that believe. For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God, being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness, for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; to declare at this time his righteousness, that he might be just, and yet the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus."—Rom. iii. 23–6. If we add to this from Chap. iv., 5: "But to him that worketh not (*i. e.* to effect a justifying righteousness) but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness," and take the word impute, in the Scriptural sense of count, or reckon to the account of, we have what, with other Scriptures, is so well interpreted and formulated in the Shorter Catechism: "Justification is an act of God's free grace, whereby he pardoneth all our sins and accepteth us as righteous in his sight, only for the righteousness of Christ imputed to us, and received by faith." Or, as it is more fully articulated in the Confession of Faith: "Those whom God effectually calleth, he also freely justifieth; not by infusing righteousness into them, but by pardoning their sins, and accounting and accepting their persons as righteous; not for anything wrought in them or done by them, but for Christ's sake alone;

not by imputing faith itself, the act of believing, or any other evangelical obedience to them, as their righteousness, but by imputing the obedience and satisfaction of Christ unto them, they receiving and resting on his righteousness by faith, which faith they have not of themselves, it is the gift of God."—Chap. xi. 1.

This founds our justification and acceptance before God entirely on the merits of Christ, to the exclusion of all righteousness or good works of our own. Hence, although it was at once the key-note and bugle-blast of the Reformation, which brought Luther's despairing soul out of bondage to the slavish and hopeless task-work of rites and ceremonies, penances and purchased indulgencies, imposed by the Romish hierarchy as the price of absolution, into the "liberty wherewith Christ maketh free," and has since been the very life and soul of Evangelical Protestantism; yet there are never wanting those who bring fresh proof that it is the scriptural doctrine, by hurling against it the same objections which Paul represents the cavilers of his day as hurling against it. If we are justified wholly by the righteousness or merits of another, why concern ourselves about any righteousness of our own? Why not "continue in sin that grace may abound"? Does not the doctrine lead to licentiousness? So now we hear a like outcry, even in Calvinistic communions, from the ostentatious heralds of a new evangel, who spare no hyperbole in displaying their hate and contempt of the real doctrines of the old gospel, that men had "better look out for their own righteousness than rely on the righteousness of another," and that dependence on the merits of a Mediator relaxes all incentives to personal righteousness. It is perfectly true that in all ages there have been perverters of the truth, who have "turned the grace of God into lasciviousness," and "wrested the Scriptures to their own destruction." Such perversion is no evidence against its divinity. Contrariwise, it is one sign that a doctrine is now taught as the Apostles taught it, if it provoke the same objections against it now as then.

The Apostle triumphantly answers the objection that his doctrine of justification encourages sin in Rom. vi.—"God forbid. How shall we that are dead to sin live any longer therein?" He shows that full deliverance from the curse of sin is essential to and secures deliverance from its dominion; that whereas, so

long as our sins are unexpiated by due discharge of the demands of the law and justice of God, so long as the soul is conscious that God's holiness and justice, *i. e.*, his glory, requires its perdition, that soul dare not trust itself to him ; if it cannot trust, it cannot be at peace with or love him ; if it cannot love him it wants the first element of all rectitude. But when it comes to Christ with true hatred of sin for its justification, it at once has "peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ," and the "love of God is shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Ghost." It "joys in God through the atonement," and the "joy of the Lord is its strength" for all good works, holy living, and victorious conflict with foes. So, if faith alone justifies, it is not faith which is alone. It is a faith which works, and justifies itself by works. It works by love, purifies the heart, and overcomes the world. So far is it from licentiousness that it delivers us from the thrall-like fear of the spirit of bondage, and the threatenings of an evil conscience, into the glorious liberty of the sons of God ; that with the freedom of filial love we may serve him without [slavish] fear in holiness and righteousness all the days of our lives. So far is it from licentiousness, that all history proves that holiness of life has ever flourished in proportion to the intelligence, heartiness, and thoroughness with which justification by faith alone has been embraced and lived by the people.* It was no random word of Luther that declared it *articulus stantis vel cadentis ecclesie*. No body of Christian ministers have been more strenuous and persistent than the most thoroughly Calvinistic in pressing this truth upon the acceptance of men, in its unqualified simplicity and integrity, and in all its manifold applications to the Christian life, in its beginnings, ongoings, and varied phases. And none have been more successful than they in thus bringing souls fettered, galled and disabled by a spirit of bondage into a spirit of adoption and sonship, liberty and peace, the love and hope, the joyful obedience and consecration of the sons of God. It is this feature of Calvinism, so contrary to the prejudices of many good men,

* "The Calvinistic people of Scotland, Holland, and New England have been more moral than the same classes among other nations. Those who have preached faith, in other words, a pure morality, have always produced more popular virtues than those who preached good works, or the mere regulation of outward acts."—*Sir James Mackintosh.*

that specially endears it, like those Scriptures which teach it, to so many Christians of the highest type. It brings out the grace of Christ in its fullness and freeness for sin-smitten and cowering souls, as no adverse or rival system can. Many, unfortunately, conceive of it as a system which is mainly occupied with preaching decrees instead of Christ, which is very much as if they should conceive of Trinitarians as mainly occupied in preaching about the relation of the Persons to the substance of the God-head, instead of preaching Christ. It must be confessed that, in a few exceptional cases, certain distortions and exaggerations of Calvinism, more properly known as hyper-Calvinism, have given some occasion for such misconception, in some localities. Perhaps no instance of this so noteworthy can be found as in the preaching in portions of New England in the early part of this century under the metaphysico-theological systems already adverted to, which flowered out as Hopkinsianism, and went to seed as Emmonism. For a time the preaching of divine sovereignty, decrees and election was extensively relied on more than the law to produce conviction of sin, first awakening the sense of guilty enmity to God in the soul through the conscious rebellion: these doctrines, thus put, aroused against themselves. Submission to this divine sovereignty in predestination was often proclaimed as the first and decisive step in reconciliation to God. True conversion was supposed to be indicated by the submission of the convert to this divine sovereignty. In doing this the sinner laid down the weapons of his rebellion and became reconciled to God. Thus predestination was often put in the place of both the law and gospel of God. So what was true and important in its place was jostled out of its due place and proportions into the place belonging to Christ, and justification through faith in his name, which is above every name, nay, the only name given under heaven whereby men can be saved; a procedure about as rational as if the doctrines of providence or eternal punishment were thrown into a like maladjustment. Let any one read the accounts of New England revivals in the *Connecticut Evangelical Magazine* in the early part of this century, and he will get our meaning, and find that it is no fancy sketch. It was among the current phrases of the day, which even became the subject of grave theological discussion, that the true test of conversion was

“a willingness to be damned for the glory of God.” If this was in some degree a caricature, yet it is indicative of the thing caricatured. No such caricature of the evangelism of catholic Calvinism in the past or present is even supposable. The initial point of conversion was apt to be described as a submission instead of believing; submission to divine sovereignty in election, instead of God’s righteousness in Christ.

The reaction from a distortion of Calvinism which put this evangel of hyperborean metaphysics in place of Christ and him crucified, as the power of God unto salvation, was in this aspect, as in others before referred to, bound to come. Like them, too, it was largely shaped by the constructive mind of Dr. Taylor. The revolution thoroughly cured the abnormality of putting predestination in the place belonging to Christ in the preaching of the gospel. But it went with very many to certain extremes to which all such reactions tend. It not only relieved divine decrees of the true function of Christ and justification through his blood, which had been improperly laid upon them, but it unduly weakened that doctrine in the theological and popular apprehension of its import, truth and uses: while it failed sufficiently to reinstate Christ as the way, the truth, and the life, as the one thing to be looked at by the inquiring sinner at this supreme crisis of his existence. The one great remedy for the faults that necessitated this reaction was to have put Christ where the divine decrees had been thrust into his proper place. Instead of this the sinner’s own ability was too much signalized there; he was directed too much to look at that as a source of relief, when his eye should have been more directed to the Great Physician for the removal of his guilt, helplessness and pollution. This has since largely given way to other types of preaching, now for better and now for worse, which we have no room to particularize. We will only say that, if in all parts of the Church we could hear justification through the blood, and regeneration by the spirit of Christ, proclaimed as the indispensable condition of salvation, with an earnestness and emphasis as if it were the battle-cry of a new reformation, we should have far brighter hopes of the immediate religious future, than from all those more or less pronounced outgivings in christology, soteriology and eschatology which betray more sympathy with Unitarians and Universalists, than with Luther, Calvin, Edwards, Paul, or Christ.

We have seen that the atonement of Christ is necessary to the salvation of men, because "all have sinned and came short of the glory of God." This brings us into contact with the doctrine of sin, and the involvement of the race in it, which has such relations to our general subject that it cannot be wholly passed by. The universally corrupt and degraded condition of our race, except so far as reclaimed by supernatural revelation and grace, is too obvious to be gainsaid, and is a fact neither made, nor first made known, by the Bible. The only special relation of the Bible to it is in part to account for it, to define it more clearly, and to disclose a God-devised and God-sent remedy for it. The Bible account hitherto accepted, with insignificant exceptions, by Christendom is, that the race fell in the fall of its first progenitor, who was himself in some way standing on trial, not only for himself, but for his posterity. It is agreed too that both he and they "fell into a state of sin and misery," graphically depicted, Gen. iii., Rom. i., iii. v., Eph. ii, 1-5, and manifoldly throughout Scripture, verified and illustrated also by all history. The only questions regarding this have respect either to the methods of explaining and vindicating this relation of Adam to his posterity, or to the precise nature and extent of the depravity into which the latter were brought by his sin.

In regard to the former, the principal explanations are the representative, the realistic, and that of sovereign constitution including hereditary derivation, according to the first of which the race fell in him, because they sinned in him acting as their constituted representative; the second, because his sin was really the generic sin of the race; the third, God's sovereignty constituted such a relation between him and his posterity, that if he sinned and fell they should also be born corrupt, sin and fall. Although we have our view as to which of these most completely harmonizes with Scripture, the language and meaning of our Confession, with correlate doctrines, with the best theodicy, yet it is not needful or possible to linger now in these outworks. It is enough for our present purpose, that either of these solutions comes within the comprehension of Calvinism. Adopting either of them, we still know but in part. We go but a step or two in tracing the labyrinthine clew to the origin of evil. The dread mystery appals us, but does not vanish. The rationalist who would dissolve it by his special pleadings of its inconsistency

with God's goodness, still finds himself confronted by those birth-throes and death-pangs of all our race, which, as Pascal says, make man an enigma "more incomprehensible to himself, without this mystery [of original sin], than this mystery is incomprehensible to man."

In regard to the moral character of man as fallen, all agree that it is corrupt, so that the first and all subsequent moral acts are sinful, *i. e.*, destitute of holiness and love to God, until a radical change occurs; that while all infants are saved, it is only as they are washed by the blood and renewed by the spirit of Christ, and that with regard to all whose years render them capable of the same, this regeneration must be evinced by actual faith, repentance, and holy living. This is what is essential to Calvinism. Other questions, far from unimportant, have emerged here, and elicited much, even fierce, polemical disputation. These have come sometimes from a real, and sometimes from a merely verbal diversity of views, occasioned by the ambiguity of such terms as will, disposition, natural and moral ability, and inability, etc. Undoubtedly extreme views have been sincerely advocated, prompted on the one side by a desire to maintain intact the true freedom of will and proper responsibility of the sinner; and on the other his real bondage to sinful lusts, invincible except by divine grace. But on a candid summation of the whole, it will be found that there is substantial agreement in the following points among all Calvinists, whatever real or seeming variations and inconsistencies may have been espoused by any: 1. That the fall has left the faculties requisite to moral agency unimpaired. 2. That this is consistent with such a predominating native sinful bias in the unregenerate as makes them by nature unholy and children of wrath while it renders certain their constant sinning in the free exercise of these faculties, just as the contrary bias secures unfailing holy action in heaven. 3. That this sinful bias being such that the heart and will never truly embrace Christ till it is overcome by the supernatural grace of the Holy Spirit acting directly in the soul, constitutes a real moral inability to serve God acceptably without divine grace, which is none the less moral in whatever sense it may be natural, and none the less real for being moral and therefore criminal. This bondage to sin is indeed a willing bondage. None escape it except through

the grace of the Spirit making them new creatures in Christ Jesus. It is God who hath made them to differ. Even the "governing purpose" into which Dr. Taylor resolved his views, is explained by Prof. Fisher as a "profound Augustinian conception"* of this dominant sinful bias. Indeed this dominant sinful disposition is what results from the very nature and effect of sin, first in enlisting into its service the power of habit, and then in separating the soul from God, inducing dread instead of trustful love of him, so hardening the heart into enmity, and further increasing its distance from God. "Whoso committeth sin is the servant of sin."

Amid much that might be added in respect to those doctrines of our common salvation, of which Calvinism is specially tenacious, we feel bound to name, without room for explanation or argument, Plenary Inspiration of the Scriptures, and the Eternal Punishment of the wicked. The length to which our remarks on the doctrinal part of the subject have already been extended, narrows us down to the briefest possible treatment of it as related to

LIFE AND PRACTICE.

Brevity here is less to be regretted, since our treatment of the doctrinal side, particularly as relates to justification by faith, has required more or less exposition of its bearings on Christian experience and life. What we wish most especially to clear up in this connection is the bearing of the great differential feature of Calvinism on life and practice, *i. e.*, predestination and decrees in their various branches and modifications of other doctrines—a matter wherein it is so widely misconceived, perverted and maligned. Herein it would be difficult to exaggerate the justice and wisdom of our Confession of Faith, in its concluding article on the subject. Chap. iii. 8.

"The doctrine of this high mystery of predestination is to be handled with special prudence and care; that men attending to the will of God revealed in his Word and yielding obedience thereunto, may from the certainty of their effectual vocation be assured of their eternal election. So shall this doctrine afford matter of praise, reverence, and admiration of God; and of

* See *New Englander* for 1868, p. 308.

humility, diligence, and abundant consolation, to all that sincerely obey the gospel."

The "prudence and care" needed for handling this doctrine in an edifying manner, are also necessary in handling other doctrines, such as original sin, native depravity, justification by faith, regeneration, all of which are constantly and easily perverted into pretexts for encouraging irreligion, and casting the responsibility of it upon God. But they should be "special" here, as the facilities and temptations to such perversion and abuse are special in the case. Here, as elsewhere, the sum of our duty is rightly to divide the word of truth, and give to each one his portion in due season, the realization of which depends much on the spiritual discernment, the heavenly sagacity and tact of the preacher. We have known inability so reiterated, in utter divorce from its sinfulness and its divine remedy, as to produce all the effect of Fatalism; natural ability so intensified as to destroy the sense of dependence, and embolden the sinner so to feel that a new heart would be ever at his command, that sinking into present indifference, he would thrust forward his repentance to some unknown future till he thrust it beyond the grave. We have seen others work themselves into despair, in the vain attempt to work out salvation by their own power. We have seen justification by faith so put as to result in an Antinomian displacement of good works, and good works so placed as to displace the merits of Christian justification. It is no argument against any doctrine that it is thus abused or distorted. It is the doctrine of the Bible on predestination, against which cavillers have raised the outcry, "Why doth he yet find fault? For who hath resisted his will?" Rom. ix: 19. The doctrine against which this cavil is now raised, thus carries a strong presumption of its divinity.

This being premised then, the first concern and obvious duty of men is to attend to God's revealed will, and "yield obedience thereto," thus at once obeying the gospel call, while they receive the salvation of Christ therein proffered to all who accept it. They are not first to search for what they can never thus find, the unrevealed decrees of God, in order to learn their duty and safety, but to follow his revealed directions to them, and thus at once discharge their duty and ensure salvation. Thus they know that the divine call to them to obey the gospel is an

effectual call, because it has become such in their obeying it. Above all, then, this doctrine must be so put as to be a motive rather than a dissuasive to all to make the revealed will of God the rule of life. Any contrary use of it by men, is "wresting it to their own destruction." It would be like refusing to till the soil according to the laws disclosed by the light of nature and experience, until we first learn what is the secret purpose of God, to be executed in his Providence, in regard to the fruitfulness of the coming season.

Proceeding thus, obedience to the Gospel becomes the indissoluble link between election in an eternity past, and glory through the eternity to come, with all the intermediate links. "Whom he did foreknow he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son that he might be the first-born among many brethren. Moreover whom he did predestinate them he also called, and whom he called them he also justified, and whom he justified them he also glorified." Rom. viii. 29-30. Therefore he who thus diligently devotes himself to obeying the gospel, is "giving all diligence to make his calling, and [thus] his election sure." This being so, it follows that to the same extent he attains the full assurance of faith, and of his destination to eternal glory, so that "nothing shall be able to separate him from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." 2. He is thus profoundly humble because all this is due not to himself nor to his own works which only merit perdition. He has chosen God, because God had first chosen him and hath made him to differ. Thus this doctrine lays the foundation for an assurance of hope at once humble and exultant. 3. Also for gratitude and grateful love and devotion to the giver of these incomparable blessings.

Love so amazing, so divine,
Demands my soul, my life, my all.

4. Hence, coupled with the universal providence of God, it becomes the strongest support and consolation of the soul under the sorest visitations, and amid the most hopeless apparent prospects to the unaided eye of sense or reason, for itself, the Church, and the world. It still "knows that all things shall work together for good to them that love God—to them that are the called according to his purpose;" yea, when his way is in the deep, and clouds and darkness are round about him. The gates

of hell shall not prevail against his Church. He will help her and right early. Even if the enemy comes in as a flood, the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him. Zion shall arise and shine, her light being come and the glory of the Lord arisen upon her. The kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of our Lord and his Christ. So this doctrine becomes a well-spring of strength, fortitude, and courage to the people of God, enabling them to do and endure for Christ even to the end, through darkness and terror most appalling to the eye of unbelief; to be faithful unto death, and to pass in joy and triumph through whatever tortures diabolic hate and ingenuity can invent, to a martyr's crown. Church history contains no grander chapters in martyrology than the Calvinistic; of the Huguenots, Puritans, Non-Conformists, and the Scotch Covenanters. Let us hear no more more of the stale charge that dependence on divine grace clips the wings of man's free agency, and cuts the sinews of his holy activity. It is the very support and foothold of all hopeful and effective human religious effort. So we pray God to draw us that we may run after him, and "work out our own salvation while God worketh in us to will and to do of his own good pleasure." This divine inworking is as much the support of all good self-working, as *terra firma* is the indispensable base of all onward footsteps; the feeders and bed and banks of a river, the requisites to its onward flow. This is no mere theory. It is attested by the fruits of Calvinism in all churches, countries, communities where it has been held fast in the lives and manners of its adherents, in its purifying influence on social and political life; in curbing that worldliness, selfishness, and effeminacy which are always and now the bane of religion; in originating and sustaining the Home and Foreign evangelism of our times. With much to confess and deplore, it is not ashamed of its record, as it is not ashamed of the gospel of Christ which is the wisdom of God and the power of God unto salvation. True, it insists that we are not sufficient for anything of ourselves, our sufficiency is of God. Without Christ we can do nothing, through Christ strengthening us we can do all things. We are in ourselves weak, indeed, and thrice blessed are they who so know their weakness as to be led to the Rock higher than themselves, whose strength is made perfect in their weakness. So when they are weak they shall, indeed, be

strong, strong in the Lord and the power of his might ; strong in faith, giving glory to God, and their faith shall be the victory that overcometh the world. This is the religion for life, death, judgment, eternity.

This part of the subject opens rich veins which we should delight, but have not space to work. We cannot forbear, however, before closing, to advert to the bearing of Calvinism, alike in its own distinctive elements, and in some articles of our common Christianity which it has been honored specially to emphasize, on civil and religious liberty. It makes God the immediate source of all true religion, of all gifts of grace and salvation to the believer, the immediate object of all true Christian worship and devotion, the only direct and infallible guide, through his word, of faith and life, the alone Lord of the conscience, while his Incarnate Son is the one Mediator between God and man. Thus while it joyfully accepts the aid of the Christian ministry as God's ordinance for helping the soul to learn the teachings of his word, it insists forever that we call no man Master ; that we rely on no gifts, rites, or ceremonies dispensed by, and at the pleasure of, sinful men as if our salvation were absolutely dependent thereon ; as if they could, however important in their place, secure or prevent our acceptance with God, and entrance into heaven. It knows no human, mediating priesthood ; no infallible or other human head, teacher and ruler of the Church, who can annul the right or the duty of private judgment ; the obligation and privilege of each one to search the Scriptures, whether these things be so ; to prove all things, and hold fast that which is good ; to try those which say they are apostles, and are not ; to reject all false prophets and teachers who either bring not the doctrine of Christ, or endeavor to seduce them from the true religion, by arts that would deceive, if possible, the very elect. In short, it allows no human power, civil or ecclesiastical, to thrust itself in between the soul and the Great Supreme, who is over all, in all, through all, All in All. Hence, while it earnestly and unconditionally enjoins subjection to the civil ruler, within the true sphere and limits in and for which he is a "power ordained of God," it will refuse obedience to him whenever he enjoins sin and rebellion against God. Whatever authorities in the Church, State or family, enjoin this, we must disobey them at whatever cost, else we abet rebellion against God. **WE MUST OBEY GOD**

RATHER THAN MAN. Acknowledging all human distinctions of inferiors and superiors in their God-ordained functions and sphere, yet as before God, all are on an equal footing. The king and the bondman, the rich man and beggar, "all flesh is guilty before God." They must all give account to God, and receive according to their deeds. They all can be saved only by faith in Christ, and this not of themselves, it is the gift of God; if thus in Christ, they are one in Christ; they all are brethren; by a higher than any earthly lineage they are heaven's noblemen, because God's sons and heirs, yea, joint heirs with Christ; kings and priests unto God, by a divine anointing and consecration.

Hence, although exceptional blots appear upon their grand record, showing that Calvinists have not always got in advance of the persecuting spirit of the times, yet it will hardly be disputed, that, on the whole, they have been in the fore-front of the great movements and battles for civil and religious liberty—a liberty so balanced by law, as not to degenerate into licentiousness, in the old world and the new. Whatever else they may have been, they have been the sworn foes of anarchy and tyranny. The history of Britain and America is a constant record of their services to civil and religious liberty, law and order. It has often been observed that three nations were sifted in order to furnish the seed for the planting of this nation. France, Holland, Britain seeded down this land at the first with their best Reformed, Calvinistic, Puritan and Presbyterian blood. It was Calvinism that led them to lay the foundations of our free and representative government; first, in the organization of their churches, and then in the organization of primitive republics and germinant democracies in townships, counties and colonial governments. It was from these and their descendants that the statesmen and the armies of the Revolution were largely supplied and bravely supported, till crowned with victory. Whatever denominations swarmed with Tories, they were scarce and found no welcome among Calvinists. If they planted and cherished our free institutions, they trained a race of people whose solid intelligence and hardy virtues were fitted to sustain and perpetuate them, and who have made predominant in our national life and manners, that spirit, which, aided by the Evangelical Christianity of the country, still preserves them in spite of the vast native and imported ignorance, corruption and enslavement to alien despots,

which we have invested with the power of suffrage. In our judgment, it is the momentum and formative power, transmitted from our forefathers through our institutional, social and political life, that now so at once restrains and assimilates this heterogenous mass, surcharged with much of the offscourings of the earth, as to save us from utterly perishing in our own corruption. The truth alone makes truly free, and whom the Son makes free, shall be free indeed. All this has been thoroughly understood and candidly acknowledged by such penetrating and philosophic historians as Bancroft, far enough from Calvinistic in his own personal convictions. And it has been in substance conceded by such great sceptical historians as Hume, Buckle and Froude. We cite the following among a multitude :

"We boast of our common schools; Calvin was the father of popular education, the inventor of the system of free schools. We are proud of the free States that fringe the Atlantic. The pilgrims of Plymouth were Calvinists; the best influence in South Carolina came from the Calvinists of France. William Penn was the disciple of the Huguenots; the ships from Holland that first brought colonists to Manhattan were filled with Calvinists. He that will not honor the memory, and respect the influence of Calvin, knows but little of the origin of American liberty." —*Literary and Historical Miscellanies* by George Bancroft, p. 406.

"I am going to ask you to consider how it came to pass that if Calvinism is indeed the hard and unreasonable creed which modern enlightenment declares it to be, it has possessed such singular attractions in past times for some of the greatest men that ever lived; and how—being, as we are told, fatal to morality, because it denies free will—the first symptoms of its operation, wherever it established itself, was to obliterate the distinction between sins and crimes, and to make the moral law the rule of life for States as well as persons. I shall ask you again, why, if it be a creed of intellectual servitude, it was able to inspire and sustain the bravest efforts ever made by man to break the yoke of unjust authority. When a l else has failed,—when patriotism has covered its face, and human courage has broken down,—when intellect has yielded, as Gibbon says, "with a smile or a sigh," content to philosophize in the closet, and abroad worship with the vulgar,—when emotion, and sentiment, and tender imaginative piety have become the handmaids of superstition, and have dreamt themselves into forgetfulness that there is any difference between lies and truth,—the slavish form of belief called Calvinism, in one or other of its many forms, has borne ever an inflexible front to illusion and mendacity, and has preferred rather to be ground to powder like flint than to bend before violence or melt under enervating temptation.

It is enough to mention the name of William the Silent, of Luther,—for on the points of which I am speaking Luther was one with Calvin,—of your own Knox and Andrew Melville and the Regent Murray, of Coligny, of our English Cromwell, of Milton, of John Bunyan. These were men possessed of all the qualities which give nobility and grandeur to human nature,—men whose life was as upright as their intellect was commanding and their public aims untainted with selfishness; unalterably just where duty required them to be stern, but with the ten-

derness of a woman in their hearts; frank, true, cheerful, humorous, as unlike sour fanatics as it is possible to imagine any one, and able in some way to sound the key-note to which every brave and faithful heart in Europe instinctively vibrated.

This is the problem. Grapes do not grow on bramble-bushes. Illustrious natures do not form themselves upon narrow and cruel theories."—*Short Stories on Great Subjects*, by James Anthony Froude, pp. 12-13.

"Now it is an interesting fact, that the doctrines which in England are called Calvinistic, have been always connected with a democratic spirit; while those of Arminianism have found most favor among the aristocratic or protective party. In the republics of Switzerland, of North America, and of Holland, Calvinism was always the popular creed. On the other hand, in those evil days, immediately after the death of Elizabeth, when our liberties were in imminent peril, when the Church of England, aided by the crown, attempted to subjugate the consciences of men; and when the monstrous claim of the divine right of episcopacy was first put forward; then it was that Arminianism became the cherished doctrine of the ablest and most ambitious of the ecclesiastical party. And in that sharp retribution which followed, the Puritans and Independents, by whom the punishment was inflicted, were, with scarcely an exception, Calvinists; nor, should we forget, that the first open movement against Charles proceeded from Scotland, where the principles of Calvin had long been in the ascendant.

"This different tendency of these two creeds is so clearly marked, that an inquiry into its causes becomes a necessary part of general history, and, as we shall presently see, is intimately connected with the history of the French Revolution.

The first circumstances by which we must be struck is, that Calvinism is a doctrine for the poor, and Arminianism for the rich. A creed which insists upon the necessity of faith, must be less costly than one which insists upon the necessity of works. In the former case the sinner seeks salvation by the strength of his belief; in the latter case he seeks it by the fulness of his contributions.

"Hence it is that every Christian democracy has simplified its external worship; every Christian aristocracy has embellished it. By a parity of reasoning, the more any society tends to equality, the more likely it is that its theological opinions will be Calvinistic; while the more a society tends towards inequality, the greater the probability of those opinions being Arminian.

It would be easy to push this contrast still further, and to show that Calvinism is more favorable to the sciences, Arminianism to the arts; and that, on the same principle, the first is better suited to thinkers, the other to scholars. But without pretending to trace the whole of this divergence, it is very important to observe, that the professors of the former religion are more likely to acquire habits of independent thinking than those of the latter."—*Buckle's History of Civilization*, Appleton's Edition, Vol. I, pp. 611-12-13.

We are aware that we speak in the ears of a generation largely taught to ignore or hate the sovereignty, justice, all the sterner, sin-aborring and sin-punishing attributes of God. The only divine attribute which many recognize is a love unbalanced by rectitude and purity; a love so sentimental, blind, and impulsive that it can inflict no pains upon sin, nor require any vicarious expiatory pains, in order to its forgiveness; which regards

the doctrine that "the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all unrighteousness," that he will visit "indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish" upon the wicked, and that these, if they abide impenitent, shall "go away into everlasting punishment," as obsolete superstitions. God is too good to be and do what his word declares. This is infidelity. And not only so. If he is too good for this, must he not be too good to impose or permit the labor and sorrow, and woe, the bondage, carnage, pestilence, and famine, which sin, that star Wormwood, hath brought upon our earth, poisoning one-third of the fountains of its waters? This is not infidelity merely. It is atheism in logical effect and consequence. This absorption of all divine attributes in love, under pretext of magnifying, in reality attenuates and vitiates God's love. Ignoring justice, the claims of God's moral government, and the necessity of vindicating justice by the infliction of correspondent pain on the evil-doer or his divine substitute, it makes light of sin and its ill-desert. It makes it rather a matter of debt than of grace in God to deliver the sinner from all sin and suffering on account of it. It reduces the real greatness of God's love in the sacrifice of his Son and the gift of his Spirit for the salvation of sinners to the lowest minimum.

And it genders a constant relaxation of religious and moral standards, of life and manners. It loosens the conscience, dissipates the salutary fear of God, not merely the slavish but the filial, and slackens diligence, watchfulness, and prayer, until sinners in Zion are no longer afraid, nor does fearfulness surprise the hypocrites. This spurious view of divine love which is closely related to the religion of humanitarianism, is that which, rather than the Pauline system, leads to licentiousness, as all present and past experience terribly prove. On the other hand, the true manifestation of divine love is, that while we were yet sinners, with all the ill-desert of such sinners at the hands of God, he gave his Son to die for us, and by the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus made us free from the law of sin and death; that when justly doomed to eternal death, he hath given us eternal life. Thus it is in the light of God's justice that his love most illustriously shines forth. Mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other. We are commanded "to behold both the goodness and severity of God." Either is as falsely seen without the other as the head

and body dissevered and out of mutual relation. If the sterner attributes be alone or chiefly in view, this will tend to a despairing bondage which fetters and disables for the service of God. If only the divine benevolence be regarded, the tendency is to presumption, negligence and sloth.

When the Apostle counsels us to "behold both the goodness and severity of God," he is specially treating of the saved and the lost through acceptance or rejection of Christ, and these as related to their election or non-election, Rom. xi. And he founds on the love and mercy thus set forth, a constraining motive and beseeching appeal for the heartiest self-consecration to his service. Thus the grace, even the election of grace, rightly apprehended, along with the justice of God, gives that view of the great love wherewith God hath loved us, which most kindles a responsive, grateful and loving obedience. So the Apostle pleads, Rom. xii. 1.: "I beseech you, therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies (or persons) a living sacrifice holy and acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service." This immediately follows that grand doxology in which his previous discourse on these high mysteries had culminated, showing the unsearchable mystery which envelops this great subject after all unfoldings of it, and which does but reflect the unsearchable perfections and glories of Him who is the First Cause and Last End of all things. "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments and his ways past finding out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord or who hath been his counsellor? Or who hath first given to him and it shall be recompensed unto him again? For of him and through him and to him are all things, to whom be glory for ever. Amen."

A class of writers and preachers have risen up, who unfortunately have to some extent a hearing and following in those churches which owe all that is noblest in their present and past condition to the influence of the contrary principle, who do not hesitate to pour upon the doctrine that God makes his own glory his ultimate end, a large vocabulary of opprobrious epithets. The whole plausibility of this procedure lies in assuming that it is like the case of man making self the end of all his actions; as if God were "altogether such an one as themselves." It must be remembered that God is "Absolute, Eternal, and In-

finite, Wisdom, Holiness, Justice, Goodness and Truth." Let him who can, show a higher end of action than the manifestation of this Infinite Excellence in, through, and to all intelligences; or that men have not always risen in, or fallen from, purity and nobility, so far as they have, or have not, made this their supreme aim. Whatever may be the oppositions or ravings of those who, if in one sense a little lower than the angels, in another are but worms, the testimonies of his word which liveth and abideth forever, are sure—"He hath made all things for himself." The heavens declare his glory. His saints are chosen that they may be "to the praise of the glory of his grace." "He hath created all things by Jesus Christ, to the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places may be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God" The very wrath of man shall praise Him. And his people are a chosen generation that they should "show forth the praises of him who hath called us out of darkness into his marvellous light." "Ye are bought with a price, therefore glorify God in your bodies and spirits which are God's." Yea, "whether ye eat or drink or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God."

Θεῶν μόνων δόξα.