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ARTICLE I.

INFLUENCE OF CHRISTIANITY ON CIVIL AND RELIGIOUS LIBERTY.

By REV. ROBERT BAIRD, D. D., New York.

It is Christianity alone which can give the noblest freedom. In the language of its glorious Author, this wonderful truth was uttered: "If the Son shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed." 4

Christianity comes to man like an angel of mercy, bearing in her hands the double gift of pardon and holiness. She brings to him a full and complete atonement for his sins, and secures the renovation of his soul. It reveals a Savior who suffered and bled on the Cross for our transgressions, and a Holy Spirit to renew and purify our hearts. How wonderful, and yet how simple! How simple, and yet how philosophical is the plan of salvation which the Gospel contains! What could be better adapted to the wants of humanity? What could better commend itself to enlightened reason, when revealed, although its discovery far surpasses all human intelligence? "Repentance toward God, and faith toward the Lord Jesus Christ," are the terms upon which salvation becomes ours. But what a repentance! Not only does it imply a confession of sins, but a heartfelt hatred and a sincere renunciation of them, together with a restoration of our affections to the ever-blessed God. And what a faith! Not simply an intellectual assent to the truth of the Gospel, but such a belief of it as "works by love, purifies the heart, and overcomes the world."

Such is the religion of the Gospel,—presenting to our acceptance a Divine Victim, on which our faith may lay her hand in

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ARTICLE II.

REVIEW OF FINNEY'S THEOLOGY.

By REV. GEO. DUFFIELD, D. D., Pastor of First Presbyterian Church of Detroit, Mich.

Lectures on Systematic Theology, embracing Lectures on Moral Government, together with Atonement, Moral and Physical Depravity, Regeneration, Philosophical Theories, and Evidences of Regeneration. By REV. C. G. FINNEY, Professor of Theology in the Oberlin Collegiate Institute.

THE work, whose title we have placed before the reader, as the subject of this article, is given to the world by its author, as a "text-book where (in ?) many points and questions are discussed of great practical importance, but which have not to (his) knowledge been discussed in any system of theological instruction extant." The present volume is to be followed by others, and will form the second of the series; because it embraces, as the author says, "subjects so distinct from what will appear in the first:"—"and because it seemed especially called for just now, to meet a demand of the church." The church in general, no doubt is meant, and by its "demand," the author's judgment of what it needs. The volume, therefore, lays high claims to general consideration.

The well established and extensive reputation of the author for piety, his success as a popular preacher, in the conversion of men, and the estimation in which his name and fame have been held in the churches, render any remarks from us unnecessary in the way of awarding the "honor to whom honor is due." For ourselves, however, we must be permitted to say, that we have always affectionately regarded him as one whose ministry the Lord delighted to bless; and although occasionally sentiments of an erratic character had been attributed to him by others, and quoted in isolated remarks from his writings, as we have seen, yet have we been wont to refer them rather to neglect in properly qualifying his expressions, than to any serious or radical departure from the orthodox faith. It is a matter of regret, that we have been constrained to apprehend there was more reason for censure than we had suspected. We still cherish the kindest feelings, notwithstanding we have yielded to what appears to us to be an imperious demand, to counteract the dangerous tendency of a philosoph-

¹ Preface, p. iii.

² p. v.

ical theory, more likely to become hurtful to the interests of evangelical faith and morality, in proportion to the respect and confidence previously entertained towards our author as a religious teacher.

In giving his work the attention it demands, we feel it is but justice to the author to estimate it as well in the light in which he himself presents it, as of the reasons he has assigned for its publication. He says that he has been "long convinced, that the truths of the blessed Gospel have been hidden under a false philosophy." The philosophy more especially referred to is that of those numerous system-builders among theological writers, who, by "assuming as true the dogma of a necessitated will, have embarrassed and perverted nearly all the practical doctrines of Christianity." His object is, to substitute the true for the false philosophy; and thus, by rescuing these doctrines from the unholy mixtures which have diluted or destroyed their power, and restoring them through this sanative alchemy, to their original simplicity and freshness, to return them to the church, in their native purity. With such design, we think that the most obvious and proper course to have been pursued by a teacher of Christianity, and especially, an instructor of candidates for the Gospel ministry, would have been to appeal at once to the Scriptures; and having separated the chaff from "the good seed of the word of God," to present the facts or truths revealed to faith, unadulterated by any admixtures of philosophy. This, undoubtedly, is the course prescribed by the great apostle of the Gentiles, who has charged us to "beware lest any man spoil (us) through philosophy," thus intimating, that, from this source, dangerous and corrupting influences would proceed. But this our author has not done. On the contrary, he has substituted his own as the true philosophy, designating it, in contradistinction from "the leaven of error" heretofore so fatal, as that of "The Freedom of the Will."

We differ not as to what is meant by the term Philosophy. We use it to denote something distinguishable from science, or the knowledge of facts systematically arranged, whether in the world of matter or of mind. Its more current import involves the idea of those principles, postulates, or views, by means of which men attempt to explain facts. In its application to Scriptural doctrine, it denotes the attempt made, by the aid of first truths, and of psychological or metaphysical views, to explain the doctrines of the Gospel. In this sense our author has used the term, from which we do not dissent.

His book might be entitled, his philosophy of moral government; for it upholds his attempt, on certain metaphysical and psychological principles, to explain the great truths of the Bible

¹ Preface, p. iii.

² Preface, p. iii.

³ Col. 2: 8.

which involve the idea of moral obligation. These, in a few words, are what he holds to be the right idea of the freedom of the will, as opposed to what he calls the dogma of "a necessitated will." Our author is not the first who has thus attempted to bring in philosophy as the expounder, or rather arbiter, of Bible truth.

Theological readers are not unacquainted with the efforts and systems of Pelagius and Arminius, of Socinus and Crellius, and the history of their success in a similar enterprise. Nor are they ignorant of the gigantic powers of mind, and of the different philosophical systems, brought into requisition by the founders and promoters of new sects, and schemes of morality and religion, from the most ancient periods in the history of the world. The Chaldeans, Ethiopians, Egyptians, Phenicians, Persians, Indians, Greeks, Romans, and Barbarians,—all had their appropriate or peculiar philosophy, which became, in the hands of the priesthood, often powerful instruments of imposition and of superstition, for the support of their tyranny over the human conscience. It is well known, too, that in Greece there were different schools and teachers of renown, whose psychological and philosophical systems passed through various phases and mutations, some of which not only shaped, to a great extent, the sentiments of morality and religion among that highly educated people, but have actually contributed, through the instrumentality of their votaries, among Christian teachers, to give complexion and character to the Theology of the Church in different ages. The student of history can refer to the philosophy of Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle, of Pythagoras and the Stoic sect, of Xenophanes, Democritus, and others of the Eleatic sect, and of Epicurus and his disciples, not to mention minor systems; and he can trace the shades which they have cast even into the Church, affecting the minds of Christian teachers, in their apprehensions and exhibitions of Divine truth. The influence of the Gnostic philosophy; of the schools at Alexandria; of their presiding doctors, such as Athenagoras, Pantænus, and Clemens; of the Eclectic mode of philosophising; of the school of New Platonics, established by Ammonius Saccas; of the biblical exegesis adopted by Origen; and, in general, of converted men of learning addicted to philosophy—can be traced distinctly, in the corruptions of Christian doctrine, and in the fallacious method of Scriptural exposition, which began at an early period to appear in the Christian Church. It has been through the same channel of philosophy, that in successive ages, one erratic system after another has arisen, and claimed to adapt the doctrines of the Bible to the better and more deserved approbation of men.

It is not, therefore, without suspicion and some degree of alarm, that we learn from our author his object, to investigate and

settle, by philosophical explanations, the great truths which lie at the foundation of morality and religion. The volume he has published contains his philosophy. Its doctrinal discussions, throughout, betray an attempt to make the great truths of religion, and indeed much, both of its experience and practice, to conform to his dogma of the freedom of the will, which he says he has "in brief attempted to prove," and "everywhere assumed."

The freedom of the will is a fact reported by human consciousness, everywhere assumed in the sacred Scriptures, and very distinctly and definitely asserted in the Westminster Confession of Faith,—a form of sound words, embodying a system of doctrine which our author is pleased to stigmatize as Antinomian. It is not possible for language to be more explicit than its statement, that "God hath endued the will of man with that natural liberty, that it is neither forced nor, by any absolute necessity of will, determined to good or evil."¹ So far as the simple fact of the freedom of the will is concerned, it would be invidious and unjust to say, that our author teaches it, or proves it more explicitly than do those whom he charges with having assumed "the dogma of a necessitated will."

In what that freedom consists, and how far its liberty extends, are questions which have engaged the attention and discussions of theologians and moralists in all ages. According as men's psychological views of the nature and operations of the human mind have varied, have they differed, also, in their definitions and descriptions of it. The fact, so far as all the great ends of human life, and the principles and duties of morality are concerned, is so confirmed by universal consciousness, that arguments to prove it are wholly unnecessary. It is by no means important for practical purposes, that every man should be able to state with metaphysical accuracy, in what it consists, or how far extends. It may exist and be exercised, and for all particular ends be well enough understood without this; just as our civil, political, and religious liberty exist, notwithstanding the great mass of our free citizens, if required, would not be able to define their nature or boundaries. We converse with each other daily about them, assume them on all hands, and act accordingly, whatever may be our differing theories and notions as to the policy of the government. In the same way God speaks to us in the Scriptures about our liberty as moral agents, and assumes it continually in the administration of His providence. Metaphysical analyses and definitions here are not needed; nor are they given in the Word of God.

Very different, however, is the case with systematic writers, and theological professors, when they undertake to give their metaphysical and philosophical explanations of the *facts*; espe-

¹ Preface, iii.

² Chapter ix., Sec. 1.

cially when that is avowedly done for the purpose of unfolding and elucidating the doctrines of the Gospel. It behooves them to speak and write with the utmost precision, and to avoid, as far as possible, everything which might render their meaning vague or equivocal. After the avowal of our author, so full and explicit, that this volume has been prepared to meet a deep and growing demand for explanation ;”¹ that his “object has been to simplify and explain ;” and after having acknowledged that his book is “highly metaphysical,” requiring “much intense study,” and expressed his fears that, on the one hand, it will not be read by some, and on the other, will not be understood by others who are willing to read it, we confess ourselves surprised and disappointed to find, that in his definition of the very pivot on which his whole philosophy turns, or in laying the foundation on which he attempts to rear the great system of evangelical doctrine, he should have been so exceedingly ambiguous and confused. We confidently expected to learn from him, without possibility of misapprehension, in what he at least regarded “the freedom of the will” to consist, and what are its limits, if it has any. We have sedulously sought for the talismanic key which he carries along with him, wherewith to unlock the mysteries of our faith. But it has been all in vain. At one moment it appears clear and obvious ; but at the next, by a change of terms, it suddenly disappears.

It is but very little, at most, that we find on the subject ; and that is to be gathered from different parts of his work, where it is incidentally introduced. “By free will,” he says, “is intended the power of choosing, or refusing to choose, in compliance with moral obligation in every instance. Free will implies the power of originating and deciding our own choices, and exercising our own sovereignty, in every instance of choice upon moral questions—of deciding or choosing, in conformity with duty or otherwise, in all cases of moral obligation.” Here he has seen fit to restrict his definition of free will to matters only of moral obligation ; and let it be so restricted. In the first part of his definition, he calls free will “the power” to choose or refuse. But what is meant by “power” he has not said. The word is very comprehensive and variable in its significancy. At one time it is used to denote the faculty, or constitutional capacity for performing certain acts ; at another, the motive influences which prevail, or are present, previous to and during the act ; at another, the exciting and determining influence, which not only elicits, but directs and gives energy to the act ; at another, the means necessary to accomplish the act ; and again, all together. One class of metaphysico-theological writers also, use

¹ Pref. iv.

the term in one sense, and another in a different; one in the sense of capacity of being—adaptation of constitutional nature for specific acts; and another, of the relation which certain concurring causes sustain to the mind, and which are indispensable to the result in the voluntary act. But here our author's psychology, and his theology likewise, fail to give precision to his definition.

In the second part of his definition, he speaks of free will as implying a power to "originate" its own choice. What does this mean? We are left to conjecture, whether he means simply the power of the mind to choose, or the power to regulate and control that which is antecedent to choice. His language would import that there is something antecedent to it, which has a causal influence on the choice. When the mind exerts its capacity to will, and chooses, does that choice depend on, and is it determined by, any previous cause whatever? Does it stand correlated to it in any way? If so, then the choice had an origin in something antecedent to the mind's actually exerting its capacity to will. If not, why talk of free will implying a power to "originate" its own choice? He should have said, distinctly and definitely, the will itself is that power, and is not moved or determined by anything antecedent or correlated to its own volitions. The actual willing is the origin, the end, and the whole of it, according to this view. No causal influence whatever, whether producing or occasional, lies back of it, or beyond it. The will is absolutely and sovereignly self-determining. It is but darkening counsel with words, to say that free will implies a power to "originate" its own choice, when, according to our author's definition, it does, and can only mean nothing more nor less than that free-will consists in the mind's actually choosing, without any antecedent cause, or motive power whatever—entirely and exclusively by its own absolute independent self-determining volition. We strongly suspect that this is the author's real and influential idea of liberty, or "the freedom of the will;" and that with him, every motive and causal influence whatever, anterior to, and connected with, volition is fatalism and necessity. It certainly is essential that this be shown to be the true notion of its liberty, in order to establish some of the positions he seems to maintain. And yet, this does not always appear to be his idea; for, in his very definition, he adds that free will implies a still further power of "*deciding* our own choices."

The act of deciding is not, and cannot be, an absolute independent volition, uninfluenced by any reason, motive, cause, or anterior act of mind; for there is implied in the very import of the word, the idea of previous intellectual acts, in the way of inquiring, investigating, comparing, reasoning, judging, so as to arrive at a conclusion. Does the intellect or the sensibility previously

affect the will, and influence its acts? Or does the will first, by its own self-determining act, evoke them in all cases? What power can the will have to *decide* on its own choices, whether it shall be this or that, if it is not influenced and determined by previous motive-considerations, which the mind has intellectually apprehended and pondered, or by inclinations and desires which the heart has previously felt? Does the author mean to admit, as Cousin has asked in reference to Locke, that we may seek for the will in the understanding? Or simply, that the "deciding," of which he speaks, is the mind's being led, in its operations of thought, to the conclusion, which evidence by a law of necessity secures, and which conclusion, connecting itself with, determines, and so causes the choice of, the will? Or, in other words, that the intellect concluding, the mind thereupon exerts its power of willing, and determines the particular volition conformably thereto? To talk of the will's "deciding its own choice," and yet affirm that it is in no way influenced by previous intellectual operations, but that nothing more is meant, than that the will of itself, as an efficient power, and the principle and cause of its own volitions, determines, irrespective of every antecedent state of mind, its particular volition,—thus, and not otherwise—is, to say the least, a vague and improper use of language. Had he said, the power of making or willing its choice, irrespective of every antecedent or motive influence, he would have relieved his definition from much obscurity. That he does mean this, after all, seems fairly inferable from what he adds, viz: that free will implies a power "of exercising our own sovereignty in every instance of choice."

By sovereignty, judging from his use of the term in other connections, we presume he means arbitrary volition—an act of will without any other reason or cause than the simple volition itself. If not, then does his definition become still more perplexed and obscure. It is not our purpose here, nor is it necessary in this article, to enter into any discussion on the question, whether the will is moved or determined by any motive power, or antecedent causal influence or reason from without itself, as Edwards teaches; nor whether such causal influence may be; that is, a producing, or only occasional cause; nor whether the mind is more properly the cause of volition. We do but notice the author's definition, and the influential idea which seems to affect his mind; and that, merely to exhibit the very vague and confused attempt he has made to define the nature of "the freedom of the will." Notwithstanding he has made that freedom the foundation of his metaphysical and philosophical explanations of the great questions in morality and religion which he discusses, he has failed in his definition to declare distinctly and intelligibly, what it is. We certainly have a right, especially after late discussions on

the subject in the Repository, to expect and demand precision, both of thought and language here, so that we may know, at least, what is his idea of it. This is essential. Is the freedom of the will absolute and unqualified? Are its volitions totally unaffected by, and independent of, any cause whatever without itself, anterior to its own act? Is it always self-determining? And what does he mean by the will's determining its own choices? How far is it limited? Is it incompatible with liberty, or at least with his notion of liberty, that it should be determined by influence, or motives, or causes from without? If so, then what is the character and extent of those extrinsic causes and motive-influences, which human consciousness reports to be so connected with volition, as to have a determining influence? Are intellectual apprehensions and sensitive emotions controlled by a law of necessity, while the will occupies supreme ground, so as to act irrespectively of either, or to avail itself of that necessity? Is this what the author means by its sovereignty? It seems to us that it is; but he is very confused in stating it. Certainly, he cannot but be aware of the fact that, on this point, it behooves him to be explicit;—that this is the very gist of his subject;—and that, till these points are fully and unequivocally met, all discussion and attempts at explanation will prove just as unsatisfactory as they have ever done, and will as assuredly leave the matter where they found it—in the same, or still greater confusion. Just as men start, with their notions and postulates, as to what the freedom of the will is, will they be disposed to affirm or deny fatalism, or free-agency on the one hand, or on the other. If everything is fatalism, which teaches a causal influence on the will, and nothing is free-agency where the will has not power to act and determine its volitions, irrespectively of any such influence from without, we shall at least know how to meet the subject, and where to find and place our author. We have endeavored carefully to get his precise idea of liberty, but in vain.

His psychological views are by no means fully and accurately delineated in his work. We gather therefrom occasional remarks and assumptions, and a few definitions. Having forewarned us that what he has said on the "foundation of moral obligation," is the key to his book and subject, we looked for something very definite and precise. But his views claim no special merit for plainness and precision here. Moral obligation, with him, involves and proceeds, *pari passu*, with "the freedom of the will"; which, as we have seen, he has not clearly defined. He reasons as follows, unfolding his psychological system: There can be no obligation where there is no power to obey. There is, and can be, no power to obey, except what is in its nature free to exercise itself in compliance or non-compliance.

This power pertains exclusively to the will. "The intellect is a receptivity, as distinguished from a voluntary power. All the acts and states of the intelligence are under the law of necessity, or physical law." "The sensibility," by which he means "the faculty or susceptibility of feeling—all sensation, desire, emotion, passion, pain, pleasure," &c., "like the intellect, is a receptivity, or purely a passive, as distinguished from a voluntary faculty; all its phenomena are under the law of necessity." While "the thoughts, perceptions, affirmations, and all (the) phenomena (of the intellect,) are involuntary, and under a law of necessity." Nevertheless "the will can command the attention of the intellect." "The muscles of the body are directly under the control of the will." "The intellect is also directly under the control of the will." But "the sensibility is only indirectly controlled by the will." "This faculty is so correlated to the intelligence, that, when the intellect is intensely occupied with certain considerations, the sensibility is affected in a certain manner, and certain feelings exist in the sensibility by a law of necessity." "Outward action, together with the states of the intelligence and sensibility, are connected with the actions of the will by a law of necessity." "Feeling can be produced, only by directing the attention and thoughts to those subjects that excite feeling by a law of necessity."

Such is the psychological system of our author; and we may say the whole of it. Its great defectiveness will be apparent to every one versed in such matters. Not a word is said about, nor is any reference made to, the influence which particular prevalent dispositions and states of mind have in the production and excitement of emotion, and which cause the power of certain objects and subjects producing them, to vary greatly in different persons, and at different times in the same individual—yea, which sometimes destroy that power altogether. According to our author, the will is the sovereign moving power. It moves the intellect toward the subjects and objects that affect and excite the feelings, and thus transmits its impulse to the sensibility. "Man's causality, his *whole* power of causality to perform or do anything lies in his will."¹ "In it resides the power of causality."¹ We therefore cannot be said to do injustice to our author, when we affirm that he assumes and teaches, that the will itself, undetermined and unaffected by any causal influence from without it, must originate its own acts; must put the entire machinery, intellectual and sensitive, into motion, or it is not free—man has no liberty as a moral agent, and is under no moral obligation. This is the freedom, if we can understand his senti-

¹ p. 31.² p. 38.³ p. 32.⁴ p. 31, 32.⁵ ib.⁶ p. 38.⁷ p. 31.⁸ ib.⁹ ib.¹⁰ p. 27.¹¹ p. 32.

ments and language, of which our author speaks, when he says: "Unless the will is free, man has no freedom; and if he has no freedom he is not a moral agent, that is, he is incapable of moral action and also of moral character."¹

With all due courtesy and Christian feeling to the author, we, nevertheless, must say, that we know not how sufficiently to express our dissent from positions and assumptions which, as he has stated them, overlook entirely the fact of man's dependence on his Creator, and preclude, as it appears to us, utterly and forever, all possibility of any causal influence from the Divine Spirit being brought to bear upon the mind of the sinner for his conversion, or, indeed, from any other being in the universe for determining his will, without, by that very fact, destroying alike his moral agency and obligations. It is the highest claim that can be well advanced for the independence of the rational creature. It surpasses even that which our author concedes to God Himself. It virtually excludes all redeeming and regenerating influence of the Holy Spirit. It makes every attempt to bring an efficacious influence from God, as a determining cause, to bear upon the human will, a trespass on its freedom—a suspension of moral obligation. And, as the remote result, it consigns poor, fallen, corrupt, and ruined man to helpless, hopeless, remediless perdition. How it spreads confusion and desolation among all the well-established and precious evangelical doctrines connected with human agency and obligation, which have supported and nourished the faith of God's people in all ages, we shall see when we trace the theological uses and applications he has made of his metaphysical philosophy. Happy is it for our author, that he is inconsistent with himself; that God's Spirit can control his will, and that his piety will prevent him from adopting its legitimate and ultimate results. He seems to have lost sight of the fact of man's dependence on his Creator. He has not even attempted to define or trace it; but has actually placed fallen, degraded, ruined man by the side of, and on the very same ground with, his Maker—the one no more a subject of moral obligation than the other; both being, as it were, but co-ordinate agents, bound by the same supreme law—higher than the highest—to seek the greatest good of the universe.

We must object to the author's manner of bringing forward his psychological system. He uses terms as synonyms, denoting the same characteristic mental acts, which are not such, but which designate different acts and states. In vain have we looked for discrimination here. The words will, volition, consent, preference, intuition, resolution, purpose—indicating different acts or states of the will, with him seem to mean the same thing. The chief distinction he makes is between ultimate intentions

¹ p. 27.

and executive volitions—the choice of an end and the choice of means for accomplishing it. This classification by no means comprehends all the phenomena of the will. At least, there is a particularity of detail, in reference to the executive volitions, necessary to a full and right understanding of the subject, for which we look in vain in our author's outline of his psychological system. Similar things may be said of his designations of the phenomena of intellect and sensibility. The understanding, the reason, the intellect, reasoning, and the faculty or power appropriate for different acts of intellection, should not be confounded; nor should feeling, emotion, and sensibility be identified. When an author avowedly adduces a metaphysical or psychological system for the explanation of the theology of the Bible, we have a right to expect great care and accuracy in the use of language, as well as precision of thought.

Our author has indeed said truly, "that there is no such thing as holding theological opinions, without assuming the truth of some system of mental philosophy." But, if he means that every one who does so has studied, understood, or apprehends this or the other psychological system as taught by scientific men, he is mistaken. We are all aware that theological subjects relate to acts and states of the mind and heart; and each one practically learns through his own consciousness, that their character ranks them with matters of mental science. The mass of practical theologians and private Christians care not for psychological explanations. Nor can they be made to take any great interest in such things. What they seek and look for, in the study of the "Bible Theology," is the knowledge of facts or truths to be believed—not this or the other theory by which to explain those facts.

Different psychological and theological writers, have entertained conflicting views as to the operations and powers of the human mind; and have sought to explain, in different ways, all mental phenomena.¹ This is the appropriate province of metaphysical philosophy. It pertains to the schools—a legitimate region for exploration, and for the acquisitions of science. We object not to diligent and careful observation and study here. On the contrary, we deem it of essential moment, in any, and every well-conducted system of liberal education. But it is not to be denied that much of what passes here for science, is what Paul denominates "science falsely so called."² True science investigates and obtains the knowledge of facts. It is modest about deducing general conclusions. There must be a copious collection of facts or phenomena uniformly the same, under the same circumstances; those circumstances well and clearly defined and understood, before science will assume as fact, what

¹ p. 40.

² I. Tim. 6. 20.

are sometimes called laws—laws of nature, and laws of mind, &c. It will not do for the empiric with his crude and ill-digested system, to come forward with his postulates and general laws, and undertake, by applying the same, to be the interpreter of "Bible Theology." Endless have been the errors and heresies, and monstrous systems thus excogitated. Reason has, by such means, been enthroned in the seat of Jesus Christ; and having been exalted above the Bible, faith has been forbidden to be exercised, except as some one of its self-claimed infallible oracles has undertaken to dictate to it.

In so saying we object not to what our author claims to have accomplished, viz: "the application of reason in the explanation of the facts of revealed theology."¹ But we do most strenuously object to any and every attempt, by metaphysical reasoning or psychological crucibles, to change the character of the facts themselves, and so pass off upon us, and require us to receive as truths and doctrines of revelation, what are the explanations of reason.

The sacred Scriptures are remarkable for the simple, undisguised manner in which they state the facts revealed to our faith. They never give us philosophical explanations. Their facts are not reported as matters of science for the reason to analyse, but as matters of verity for the heart to believe. Nevertheless, we admit that it is not possible to prevent inquisitive minds, fond of examining into the causes of things, and of solving their phenomena, from attempting to explain the nature, or discover the rationale of what God has revealed. It is assumed with great propriety and truth, that the infinite supreme Intelligence always acts wisely, and has in all departments of His government, physical, providential, moral, and spiritual, the wisest and best reasons—as we would say, speaking after the manner of men—for His plans and institutions. Thus, in fact, are we necessitated to speak of His wisdom. What His omniscience is we know not. Our minds can form no adequate conception of a knowledge from eternity to eternity, changeless, incapable of increase or of diminution; a sort of intuition of all that is past, present and to come; and of all possible combinations of all possible causes, contingencies and consequences; eternity's fulness perceived at any and every present now. Yet must we talk of God's knowledge in a way analogous with our consciousness of our own, and conceive of His wisdom,—which is another, but loftier phase of his knowledge—as His intelligence, discerning, selecting and ordaining the best order and combination of causes, contingencies and results. Hence the mind of man is ever struggling to reach the reason in the nature of things, which is the only true philosophy, because it is God's; or in other words the reason of

¹p. 40.

His own doings—the explanation of His own works. None other deserves the name; nor should any receive our countenance and support, further than as it obviously accords with His. Here great modesty and reverence are required. Nevertheless, we are apt to impose on ourselves. In the various pleas which have been urged for different systems of human philosophy, as though it was the legitimate expositor of “Bible Theology,” each system-maker has condemned all others but his own, while he has claimed it to be pre-eminently true.

There is one leading idea, and that of a mixed character, which forms the basis of our author's system. He shall state it himself. “What I have said on the ‘foundation of moral obligation’ is the key to the whole subject. Whoever masters and understands that, can readily understand all the rest. But he who will not possess himself of my meaning upon this subject, will not, cannot understand the rest.”¹ This is undeniable. To this point, therefore, after having brought his psychological system into view, we must direct attention first and mainly, in any attempt to estimate the truth and value of his system of metaphysical philosophy, by which reason is made to explain the theology of the Bible.

He defines moral obligation to be “the bond or ligament that binds a moral agent to moral law.”² Here again we have a specimen of great vagueness and inaccuracy in defining. It is of indispensable necessity on this point, that our author should have taken special pains to make his meaning clear and unequivocal. Assuming that the full and correct idea is had of what constitutes a moral agent, the question of his obligation as such, confines itself to matters strictly and properly of a moral nature. Assuming again, that we have the full and correct idea of what is, and what is not of a moral nature, then, the question what is moral obligation directs our attention to the obligation binding or affecting us as moral agents, in reference to matters of a moral nature. Before this, therefore, can be correctly stated, it becomes necessary to inquire what is it that determines an action to be of a moral nature or not? The answer that will suffice, at least for the present, is, “moral law;” to which our author assents. A farther question still must be met, viz: what is moral law? To which it is sufficient to reply, law relating to the manners and actions (*mores moralis*, as the word imports), of a rational creature, considered as the subject of law, manners and actions, of which praise or blame may be predicated. When therefore, our author says that “moral obligation is the bond or ligament that binds a moral agent to moral law,” we are constrained to ask, whether he means that it is the connecting link or tie which brings us under the control of moral law,—or whether that which obligates

¹ pref. v.² p. 40.

or binds us to do or to avoid certain actions as prescribed or prohibited by moral law? His language would seem to intimate the former.

By law, is meant a rule of action given to a rational creature. But it is not every law that obliges us to do or avoid its precepts, or prohibitions. We often put ourselves, by our own voluntary act, under the control of laws, which, without that "ligament" binding us to them, would have no authority or obliging power over us. Does our author, then, mean to say, that moral obligation is the ligament or tie which connects us with, and brings us under, the control of moral law? If so, then must he go on to define and state in what that ligament, or connecting tie consists. Is it our own consent, or the act of God, or what is it? His definition amounts to just nothing at all—does not even begin to let us know the thing of which we are in quest—that is, wherein moral obligation consists. Perhaps he means that moral obligation is that which obliges, urges, or requires a rational creature, or moral agent, to do or avoid what the moral law enjoins or prohibits. If so, then it becomes an indispensable element in the definition, that it be stated what is moral law;—whether it be conscience, or "the nature and fitness of things," or "the reason," or "expediency," or the ten commandments, or the will of God, or whatever else may be supposed to have power or authority to require or prohibit the actions of a moral agent.

Our author has said that "the idea (of moral obligation) is too plain to be defined by the use of other language" than he has employed. "It is a pure idea of the reason, and better understood than explained by any term except that of moral obligation itself."¹ This will not do. Lexicographers have defined obligation to be, "that which constitutes legal or moral duty, and which renders a person liable to coercion and punishment for neglecting it." Paley says, "A man is said to be obliged, when he is urged by a violent motive resulting from the command of another."² If we add the idea of God, as the great moral law-giver, we shall have a definition of moral obligation that will, at least, lay claim to perspicuity, viz; the violent motive resulting from the command of God, which urges us to conform to it. We endorse not this phraseology; but for all practical purposes, it becomes intelligible among those who assume that motive determines the will. We consciously feel that law furnishes a motive to obedience.

Our author very correctly advances a step further, and asks, "Why does the moral law require what it does?" which is equivalent to this: Whence does moral law derive its motive power? The question leads directly to what he calls "the foun-

¹ p. 40.² Mor. and Pol. Phil., b. iii, c. 2.

dition" of moral obligation. By this he means, "the reason or consideration that imposes obligation on a moral agent to obey moral law." "Should the question be asked," he adds, "why does the moral law require what it does?—the true answer to this question would also answer the question, what is the foundation of moral obligation? There must be some good and sufficient reason for the law requiring what it does, or it cannot be moral law, or impose moral obligation. The question then is, why does the moral law require what it does? The reason that justifies and demands the requisition, must be the reason why it ought to be obeyed. The reason for the command must be identical with the reason for obedience—the reason why the law should require what it does. This *reason*, whatever it is, is the foundation of moral obligation, that is, of the obligation to obey moral law." But if we have failed to obtain a clear definition from our author, of what moral obligation is, we are left in still greater perplexity, as to what he means by its foundation. As he uses the term, it is difficult to tell whether he means the motive-consideration, that should secure obedience on the part of the creature, or that which determined the requisition on the part of the lawgiver. There is a very perceptible distinction between the source whence a law proceeds, that is, the authority imposing the law, and the ground or foundation on which it rests, that is, the reason why the lawgiver ordained it. Our author seems to use the term foundation, so far as it is applicable to the lawgiver, in both senses. It is some controlling power or authority higher than the will of God, the motive-consideration or reason that determined Him to ordain the requisitions of the law. Does he mean to say that the same motive-consideration which induced God to give the law, is that which should actuate the creature in obeying it? If so, the subject is relieved from some perplexity, and we object not. Doubtless it is proper for moral creatures to be influenced by the same great end or ends in obeying, which God had in view in ordaining His law, at least, in so far as that can be ascertained and known. But we ask, is this the reason emphatic, the great urgent motive, which the Bible assigns for obedience? Does it resolve our obligation into this,—and trace it to this source? Has moral obligation no other foundation?

Our author evidently proceeds on the assumption that it has but one source, or generating motive; and so states it as to shock the views and feelings of those who are accustomed to regard God as the rightful Lawgiver, and His will as both the rule and reason of obedience. Paley's view is too limited, and liable to objections in other respects. The expression, "violent motive," is objectionable on some accounts, especially because it may be

¹ p. 41.

² p. 41.

understood to mean something incompatible with the freedom of the will. He, doubtless, meant nothing more nor less by it than a motive-consideration, which the moral agent feels ought, of right, to determine his will, and, for refusing to yield to which, he is guilty, and justly to be condemned. Motive-influence on the creature may vary; and an action may be acceptable, even where there may not be the knowledge or discernment of that which determined God in ordaining the law. At one time we have it distinctly in view, as a motive to our action, to please God; at another time, the rectitude and propriety of the act may have its influence. Again, its benevolent tendency may commend it; the good of our fellow men, the general interests of society, the example of Jesus Christ, and such like, may also operate to sustain and give efficiency to our sense of obligation to God. The attempt to reduce all holiness to one invariable ultimate choice, which necessitates executive volitions, and brings emotions into play, is to exclude much of the genuine fruits of faith and of the Spirit from Christian experience and morality.

It is true that moral obligation has reference to an ultimate intention; and that actions assume their character from the generic purpose or choice which forms their appropriate cause. We say that we are obliged to ride, or to walk, or to resort to a particular diet or regimen, in certain cases, if we wish to have health; or to regular mental exertion, if we would acquire valuable habits of mind, and strengthen our intellectual powers; or, to deny ourselves some inferior good or gratification, if we would secure some greater and more important end. Obligation, in ordinary parlance, expresses the necessity of voluntary actions, as means in order to obtain some ulterior ends. In whatever case, the means are those *only*, by which certain ends can be obtained, we naturally say that we are obliged to use these means in order to secure them. Moral obligation restricts itself to those which we call virtuous or vicious, and comprehends more than the ultimate intention. Our author restricts it to such intention only. "Moral obligation," says he, "respects the ultimate intention *only*." "The law of God requires only entire consecration to the right end." Ultimate intention is everything with him. This is the warp or woof of his system. It is the interpreter of his morality, the expositor of his holiness, and the extent of his obligation. Its identity in some respects, with the system of Jesuit morality, which has sanctified the corruptions of Rome, and cursed the world, we shall presently notice. But previously, the author's views must be given in his own words.

He attempts to fortify himself, in this his citadel, by claiming

¹ p. 36.

² p. 41.

it to be "a first truth of reason,"—that is, a thing so obviously true, that there is neither place nor need for reasoning about it. "I have said that moral obligation respects the ultimate intention only. I am now prepared to say still farther, that this is a first truth of reason. It is truth universally and necessarily assumed by all moral agents, their speculations to the contrary in any wise notwithstanding." Yet, strange as it may appear,—showing some lurking doubts, whether, after all, it is a first truth—he attempts to prove it logically, affirming certain things to be fact, which are not fact, as he states them. For example: "Very young children," he says, "know and assume this truth universally. They always deem it a *sufficient* vindication of themselves, when accused of any delinquency, to say, 'I did not mean to;' or, if accused of short-coming, to say, 'I meant, or intended, to have done it; I designed it.' This, if true, they assume as an all-sufficient vindication of themselves. They know that this, if believed, *must be regarded* as a sufficient excuse to justify them in every case." We can scarcely tell what the author means, his language is so vague. But when a man, or child, *justifies* himself, he does not think of offering an excuse. Excuses are offered to palliate, to mitigate the offence, to relieve from some degree of censure—never to justify; and, so far as our observation and experience have gone, the child assigns his excuse to lessen the severity of censure, and to show that the offence was not as great as it would have been, had it been intentional. An instance occurs to our recollection, of a brother who thoughtlessly and unintentionally injured his sister's eye, so as to deprive her of sight. Yet did he ever afterward reproach himself for having been the cause of such a serious and justly censurable injury to her. The accidental manslayer might be pursued, and if overtaken before he reached the city of refuge, slain for the shedding of blood. Jehovah, as legislator for Israel, was far from recognizing the principle our author has advanced. He has mis-stated or magnified his fact, and attempted to pass it off for more than it is worth. The mitigation of an offence does not remove it entirely.

Still wider from the truth is he, in the statement of his next fact, when he says, that "every moral agent *necessarily* regards such an excuse as a *perfect justification*, in case it be sincerely and truly made." God certainly did not, in the case of the manslayer; nor in the case of the man who, with praise-worthy intentions to improve the breed of cattle, may have kept a ferocious animal, when, by accident, it escaped and gored a man. He certainly meant no wrong, but meant an allowable good. It is not the common judgment of men, that the absence of all design to injure, is "a *perfect justification*."

¹ p. 36.² p. 36.³ p. 36.

When he says, that "it is a saying as common as men are, and as true as common, that men are to be judged by their motives—that is, by their designs, intentions," the remark needs qualification. We do, indeed, thus estimate the degree of culpability attaching to actions; and in matters of an indifferent nature, so far as the mere action is concerned, we always advert to the intention; but it is not universally and absolutely true, that the intention determines all the guilt. A good intention cannot justify a wrong action. A blundering fool, or an ignorant quack, may kill us with good intentions; but reason and the law of God would be far from acquitting him because he was honest in his ignorance, and "used the best means in his power at the time." The form and character, as well as the degree of guilt, may vary from that of the murderer, who kills with malice prepense; but there is guilt nevertheless. Presumptuous, self-conceited ignorance, officious intermeddling, suggestions of acknowledged inexperience, impudent forwardness, attempts to judge when consciously unfitted for it, the employment of unauthorised means, and such like things, leave traces of guilt justly exposing to censure, even where there may have been what our author calls honest intention to do good.

We dissent, however, from his use of language. Sincerity and honesty may resemble each other in some respects, but the words are not synonymous. We look for something more in honesty than sincerity of intention. A man may sincerely intend to pay his debts, but if he does not carefully exert his intelligence, and study and strive industriously to employ the best and most appropriate means that he may be able to do so, he is not honest. We were once called, in great haste, to the bedside of a man apparently in the last gaspings of life. We had previously visited him in his disease, and did not account him dangerously ill; but now friends and family were all collected round his bed, where he lay cold and speechless, and the neighbors had crowded in, expecting every moment to see him breathe his last. On inquiry, we found that his wife, an ignorant and forward woman, but as "well meaning" and "honest" in our author's sense, as could well be found, had affectionately undertaken to assist the prescription of the physician. He had ordered an emetic of *tartrate of antimony*, and given his printed directions for administering it in consecutive spoonfuls of the solution at intervals; but she "honestly" had judged that if a tablespoonful at a time would do good, the entire dose at once would do much better, and, therefore, with the best "intention," had given the whole at once.

Moral obligation reaches beyond the intention; and although our author says, "courts of criminal law have always, in every enlightened country, assumed this as a first truth, and they al-

ways inquire into the *quo animo*, that is the intention, and judge accordingly;" yet do they not make the intention the absolute and exclusive rule of judgment. The degree of criminality is thus to be determined, for the better apportionment of punishment; but the law, too, as well as the facts and intention, must be taken into view, in the rendition of the judgment, guilty or not, when an accused stands charged with crime. There may be room for the exercise of mercy; but mercy always presupposes guilt in such cases. Such is the fact, and not in the unqualified manner in which our author states it.

His last fact is of like character. "The universally acknowledged truth that lunatics are not moral agents and responsible, for their conduct, is," he says, "but an illustration of the fact that the truth we are considering is regarded and assumed as a *first truth of reason*." To a certain extent, even lunatics are treated as responsible by those who have the care of them. But admit the author's assertion in its widest extent, and the conclusion he draws from it is too large. We are wont to regard such as destitute of the powers which qualify for moral agency. There are other things besides simple intention to be brought into view, in our estimate of the moral agency of lunatics. When lunacy assumes the character of malignancy, as it often does, so far from regarding the beings as innoxious or innocent, mankind hold them justly liable to confinement, and sometimes subject them to certain forms of punitive discipline. The vulgar notion is in unison with the scriptural style of speech upon the subject, which attributes to demoniacal influence much of that conduct, rightfully requiring a treatment for protection as from ferocious animals.

These are specimens of the manner in which our author, singularly enough, attempts to prove a first truth of reason. This would imply, at least, some doubt on the subject in his own mind whether, after all, moral obligation may not extend beyond mere intention. Indeed, he has admitted that indirectly it does, even "to the states of the sensibility," "to the states of the intellect," outward bodily actions, and, in short, "to everything about us over which the will has direct or indirect control."³ In reality therefore, nothing is gained, by his philosophy; nor would much mischief be apt to result from it with this admission, were it not that by means of his psychology, and his notions about the will, he so magnifies "the ultimate intention" as to leave the impression very distinctly on the minds of his readers, that if the intention only be right, all else will be so too. "Strictly speaking," says he, "all virtue and vice belong to the heart or intention. Where this is right all is regarded as right, and where this is wrong all is regarded as wrong."⁴ The application and

³ p. 37.³ p. 37.³ p. 39.⁴ p. 39.

use of his psychological views may be stated in a few words. "The muscles of the body are directly under the control of the will;" but "the sensibility is only indirectly controlled by the will. Feeling can be produced only by directing the attention and thoughts to those subjects that excite feeling by a *law of necessity*." "The moral law," therefore, "while strictly it legislates over intention only, yet in fact legislates over the whole being, *inasmuch as all our powers are directly or indirectly connected with intention, by a law of necessity*. Strictly speaking, however, *moral character belongs alone to the intention.*"¹

Our author has thus opened an inviting field for the exercise of his casuistry. We think that his efforts in the end, will be about as successful in "taking away the sin of the world," as have been those of the Jesuits, who, by directing the intention, transmute evil into good. For they, too, as Pascal with exquisite satire has shown, had discovered a wonderful principle by means of which they can "discharge *all* their duty both to God and man; for they satisfy the world, by permitting their actions, and conform to the Gospel, by purifying their intentions—allow men the external and material action, and give to God the internal and spiritual intention, and by their equitable division aim to harmonize divine and human laws." If the moral law extends directly to ultimate intention only, and if that intention being right, all else, by a law of necessity becomes right, as our author teaches, then it follows, that, as is the intention such will be the moral character. Grant, then, for the sake of the argument, that the ultimate intention is right; we ask, are there not interposing circumstances greatly affecting the choice of subordinate means for accomplishing that intention? Does the generic purpose of necessity sanctify all the specific executive volitions? If so, then have we indeed a short-hand and patent method of attaining to perfect holiness or entire sanctification, which even excels the Jesuits. But what shall we say of ignorance? Are there no wrong means, which may ignorantly be adopted, to accomplish a right end? Are there no sins of ignorance? Our Bible tells us there are; and that God took special care to provide atonement for them, as well as for other sins. But they are excluded from our author's inventory of human guilt. The ultimate intention, being all that moral law looks to, and the subordinate means of accomplishing it lying wholly within the range of executive volitions determined by a law of necessity, the Christian casuist has but to purify that, and perfect holiness, entire sanctification, is secured. Ignorance in this case is bliss. Oberlin has even surpassed the holy brotherhood of the order of Loyola!

According to our author, moral obligation exists only where there is knowledge, and that, in so far only as it is possessed.

¹ p. 39.

“In morals,” says he, “actual knowledge is indispensable to moral obligation. The maxim *ignorantia legis non excusat*, (ignorance of the law excuses no one), applies in morals to but a limited extent.” He says, that the Bible “plainly recognizes the principle that knowledge is indispensable to, and commensurate with, obligation;” and that, too, notwithstanding he had immediately before quoted the words of Christ, in reference to the ignorant offender, viz; “He that knew not and did commit things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes.” The amount of knowledge indispensable to the lowest degree or existence of moral obligation, our author says, is that of “the good, or valuable for their own sake. Moral obligation cannot exist where there is no knowledge of moral relations, of the valuable, the good; where there is no intellect to affirm oughtness or moral obligation—to affirm the rightness of willing good or the valuable, and the wrongness of willing evil, or of selfish willing.” Here again, we are constrained to wish he had studied more precision. So far as we can catch his idea, it is, that the rational creature must actually know that there is such a thing as the good or valuable, as a condition of his obligation to will it.” Of course, the rational creature must know what the valuable is; for the valuable in the abstract is a nonentity, and incapable of being made the object of choice. Now, the very point in question is, whether this moral obligation attaches directly to the subordinate choices, the executive volitions in the use of means, on the part of one who, in a particular case, is ignorant of the right and best and only true means to secure his ultimate end. Does the rational creature know it intuitively? Does he instinctively adopt it? Does the law of necessity so determine the subordinate choices, that there can be no mistake? Who will affirm these things? But if there may be mistake in the subordinate choices or executive volitions, induced through ignorance, is there no guilt attaching to the rational creature, through such mistake and ignorance? Our author answers, the law “only requires us to make the best use we can of all the light we have.” If so, then in a thousand instances, the end will sanctify the means, and men may “do evil that good may come,”—the very doctrine of the Jesuits!

We notice, in some further respects, our author's approximation to the loose morality of the Jesuitical doctors, in what he says about involuntary actions, and about the want of natural ability induced by ignorance. His idea is, that the states of the sensibility, that is, “our feelings,” being involuntary, “moral obligation cannot therefore directly extend to them.” The same he says is true of “the states of the intelligence.” “The phenomena of this faculty (are) under the law of necessity.” “The

¹ p. 191.
² p. 27.

³ p. 191.
⁴ p. 199.

⁵ Luke, 2: 48.
⁶ p. 35

⁷ p. 26.
⁸ p. 35.

states of the sensibility are connected with the actions of the will by a law of necessity." The law which obliges the attention, the feelings and the actions of the body, to obey the decisions of the will, is physical law, or the law of necessity—the will has the aid of the law of necessity or force, by which to control them."

The mind and will, according to our author, are free only in the choice of an ultimate end. Executive volitions in the employment of means for that end, and the states of the intelligence and sensibility, are under the law of necessity; and of course, moral obligation does not extend directly to them. Let us then take the man, whose choice or intention is right according to our author's view. The ultimate intention puts the whole machinery in motion. "The choice of an end secures, and even *necessitates*, while the choice of the end continues, the choice of the known necessary conditions and means." Of course, where it operates on ignorance, there will be liability to mistake, in the choice of means for its accomplishment, in many instances, as has already been remarked. But the error occurring by a law of necessity, there can be no guilt in it—there is nothing culpable. In like manner, "when the sensibility is exhausted, or when, *for any reason*, the right action of the will does not produce the required feelings," the will is nevertheless accepted as sufficient. "The Bible accepts the will for the deed invariably." It is all that is required according to our author. No matter how great may be the defect, *this* is "entire obedience."

Pascal introduces to his readers the Jesuit Doctor, quoting as follows to his interrogator, from "Father Bauny," on the authority of Aristotle. "An action cannot be deemed criminal, when it is involuntary. *Voluntarium est*, as we commonly say with the philosopher—(*Aristotle*, you know, said he, with great self-complacency, squeezing my hand,) *quod fit a principio cognocente singula in quibus est actio*; so that, when the will chooses or rejects inconsiderately, and without investigation, before the understanding has been able to discover the evil of complying or refusing, doing or neglecting an action, it is neither good nor bad, inasmuch as previous to this examination, this observance and reflection of the mind on the good or bad qualities of the object in view, the action is not voluntary." The Jesuitical philosopher is the more cautious of the two, in the application of the same principle.

Our author's system makes great allowance for ignorance. It will not, therefore, be surprising if it finds great favor from this source. "I maintain," says he, "that present ignorance is a present natural inability, as absolutely as the present want of a hand is present natural inability to use it; and I also maintain

¹ p. 38, 39.² p. 210.³ p. 44.⁴ p. 39.⁵ p. 38.

that the law of God requires nothing more of any human being, than that which he is at present naturally able to perform under the present circumstances of his being." And this, too, he maintains, notwithstanding he had previously admitted that "ignorance is often the effect of moral delinquency." "Neglect of duty," he says, "occasions ignorance, and this ignorance constitutes a natural inability to do that of which a man is utterly ignorant. The truth is, that this ignorance does constitute, while it remains, a natural inability to perform those duties of which the mind is ignorant; and all that can be required is, that from the present moment the mind should be diligently and perfectly engaged in acquiring what knowledge it can, and in perfectly obeying as fast as it can obtain the light. If this is not true, it is utter nonsense to talk about natural ability as being a *sine qua non* of moral obligation." This is bold enough. We are not at present concerned with the theology of these positions. A more favorable opportunity to notice it will occur elsewhere, when we trace the application he has made of his philosophy to the doctrines of the Gospel. But we cannot, in passing, withhold the remark, that on this subject the Bible teaches very differently from our author's philosophy; and also, that the moral law is thus lowered down exceedingly, and made to adapt itself to the condition of fallen and corrupt man, so as on the one hand actually to release from all obligation the reprobate who, by blinding his mind, and hardening his heart, has destroyed his power of perceiving truth, or, according to our author, through moral delinquency rendered himself ignorant, and, on the other hand, to make that perfect or entire obedience which falls immeasurably short of the divine requisition.

We feel constrained to refer our author, as the interrogator in Pascal's letters referred his Jesuit Doctor, to the sentiment of Augustine, in condemnation of the position which they hold in common, viz., that it is impossible to sin while in ignorance of what is right. "*Necesse est ut peccet, a quo ignoratur justitia.*" Ignorance of the law is the moral certainty of sin. Augustine draws from the same premises a conclusion directly the reverse of our author, and so does the word of God. "It is a people of no understanding, therefore he that made them will not have mercy on them, and he that formed them will show them no favor."³ Ignorance of his Lord's will did not exempt the erring servant from punishment.⁴ Even the pagan philosopher will reprove our theological professor. The Jansenist has vindicated the Stagarite, and distinguishing between ignorance of *fact*, and ignorance of *right*, quotes Aristotle as saying—"All the wicked are ignorant of what they ought to do, and what they ought to avoid; and it is this which renders them wicked and vicious.

¹ p. 11.² p. 9, 10.³ Isaiah 27 : 11.⁴ Luke 12 : 48.

On this account it cannot be said, that because a man is ignorant of what is proper to be done to discharge his duty, his conduct is therefore involuntary. For this ignorance, in the choice of good and evil, does not constitute an action involuntary, but vicious. The same may be said of him who is unacquainted with the rules of duty, as this is blame-worthy, and not excusable." "Do not," says the Jansenist, "expect any support from this prince of philosophers, and no longer oppose the prince of divines, who decides the point in the following words: 'They who sin through ignorance, commit the action with the consent of the will, though they have not the intention of committing sin; so that a sin of this description cannot be perpetrated without the will; but the will induces the action only, not the sin, which, however, does not prevent the action being sinful, its contrariety to the interdicting precepts being a sufficient crimination.'" We shall not be surprised if a lax morality, ere long, will pollute the churches and community infested with the new "Metaphysical Theology." Nay, we think we have already observed indications of its development. The views entertained and expressed by our author, on the subject of the "Foundation of Moral Obligation," cannot fail, in our judgment, to exert a pernicious influence on the interests of social morality, and not only to lower its standard, but utterly, in due season, to subvert the piety of the coming generation, among whom they shall be adopted, and carried out in their practical applications.

Having assumed that moral obligation extends directly only to the ultimate intention, and that this intention, to be intelligent, must have a reason, he affirms that reason to be "the highest well-being of God, and of the universe of sentient existences—in other words, *the well-being of God and of the universe* is the absolute and ultimate good, and, therefore, it should be chosen by every *moral agent*." This is the absolute good—that which is "intrinsically and infinitely valuable," and whose intrinsic and infinite value, he says, constitutes the true foundation of moral obligation. He explains himself as follows: "To admit and affirm that a thing is intrinsically and infinitely valuable, is the same as to affirm, that every moral agent who has the knowledge of this intrinsically and infinitely valuable thing, is under an obligation of infinite weight to choose it, for the reason that it is intrinsically or infinitely valuable, or, in other words, to choose it as an ultimate end." This is not the law, but the end proposed and required by it. The moral law, according to our author, is not the will of God, nor His command proposing and requiring that end to be chosen. He utterly repudiates the thought. He says—"The moral law is nothing else than the reason's idea or conception of that course of will-

¹ B. I. of his Retr. ch. 15.

² B. IV. p. 66.

³ p. 43.

⁴ p. 43.

ing and acting that is fit, proper, suitable to, and demanded by, the nature, relations, necessities, and circumstances of moral agents." "It is the law of nature—the law which the nature or constitution of every moral agent imposes on himself." "It is the rule imposed upon us, not by the arbitrary will of any being, but by our own intelligence." "The will of God cannot be the foundation of moral obligation in created moral agents." Such being his idea of moral law, moral obligation "is a responsibility imposed on the moral agent, by his own reason." The reason, the intelligence, is the lawgiver; and its judgment or idea of the intrinsically valuable, is the law of God. Of course "sin consists in being governed by the sensibility, instead of being governed by the law of God, as it lies revealed in the reason." "This," our author says, "is sin, and the whole of sin."

It is difficult to learn from our author what is moral law, what its source, what its authority, and whence it emanates. At one moment, it is the rule imposed on us by our own reason or intelligence. Then, again, it is the course of willing and acting, &c., which is "demanded"—another mode of expression to denote the imposing of a rule—by the nature, relations, necessities, and circumstances of moral agents. Reason, the nature, the relations, the necessities, the circumstances of moral agents, are, according to our author, all sources of moral law; but whether any, or which, is supreme, or co-ordinate in its legislative authority, we are not told.

We gather up, in a few words, the leading features of the author's system, which we have endeavored to give in his own language. The "foundation of moral obligation," is the reason for doing what the law requires. The reason for doing it, is identical with the reason why the law requires it. That of which moral law especially takes cognizance is "intention," or "the choice of an ultimate end." There can be no moral obligation to make choice of an end, unless there is something in that end which renders it deserving of being chosen for its own sake. In and of itself, it must be intrinsically valuable. This is "the highest well-being of God, and of the universe of sentient existences." The highest well-being of God and of the universe resolves itself, "in its last analysis," into "the satisfaction of universal mind, that results from having every demand [of the being fully met." The ultimate source, then, of moral law is the public good of the universe, and the authority which demands it, the universal mind.

Our author's great object, evidently, is to generalize and simplify, and thus to trace all moral obligation, invariably, to one and the same source. Moral law, and obedience to moral law,

¹ p. 45. ² p. 6. ³ p. 25. ⁴ p. 68. ⁵ p. 25. ⁶ p. 287. ⁷ p. 59.

he says, are, each, "one and indivisible"—the former requiring, and the latter consisting in, "one choice, one ultimate intention." Edwards's definition of virtue, an imperfect psychology, and his own exposition of one or two texts assumed as philosophical or metaphysical truths, have contributed to the structure of his system. But he has not been careful to distinguish things that differ. There is, we apprehend, a very appreciable difference between the ultimate obligation, its source, the best rule, and the immediate motive of virtue. The neglect of this distinction, as an accurate writer has remarked, has led to much confusion in moral investigations. The motive or consideration that induces the individual to act, determines, so far as the rational creature is concerned, the character and the value of the action. As moral law is the rule of action for a rational creature, it must commend itself, as the best and only proper guide of duty. In estimating its character, in this respect, it can lay no claim to be the best guide, unless it obviously is the most likely to lead to, or induce, those motives which just as they have an actuating influence in the mind, exalt it towards the highest point of human excellence. Of course, it will in itself furnish the best criterion of virtue, or, in other words, the best test to determine the moral character of an action.

Our author, therefore, in estimating moral virtue, has very properly noticed the ultimate choice or intention, as an important part or element. But what is ultimate intention? He defines it to be the choice of an end for what is valuable in the end itself. This resolves itself into two things, first the object or thing chosen or intended, and, second, the reason or motive which induces the choice. These he identifies. "That in the end which imposes obligation to choose it as an end, must be identical with the end itself."¹ "This reason is the end on which the choice ought to, and must, terminate, or the true end is not chosen."² Thus the immediate motive, the best rule, or ultimate obligation, are confounded; and the author leaps out of all embarrassment, by one dexterous effort; saying, "It is a first truth of reason, that whatever is intrinsically valuable should be chosen for that reason, or as an end."³ But we must not allow ourselves to be imposed upon in this way. It may be very convenient to fall back upon a first truth of reason, and attempt, by its aid, thus to escape from all perplexing interrogatories and objections. We, however, acknowledge no such supremacy. We worship not human reasoning; nor will we be deterred, by any imputation of sacrilege if we should pursue our author here to the very horns of his altar, regardless of any cries of absurdity, nonsense, and contradictions, by which he sometimes dogmatically attempts to silence a troublesome objection. We must, in all cases, see well

¹ p. 42.² p. 42.³ p. 43.

to it, that it is a first truth, and not a conclusion arrived at by reasoning.

If our author's language, quoted above, when applied to his theory, means anything, it means this, that we must choose the well being of God and of the universe, as being our ultimate obligation, because they are intrinsically and infinitely valuable in themselves. This is the demand of universal mind—the rightful legislation of the sovereign democracy of the universe of sentient existences. Of course we must know correctly in what consists that well being of God and of the universe, which this sovereign authority of universal mind demands, before we can choose it as an ultimate end. It is one thing to be convinced or to know, that, “the happiness” of God and of the universe, “the satisfaction of universal mind,” is in itself intrinsically valuable; and another and a different thing to know in what way we are to seek to promote it, or, in other words, what we are specifically to will and to do, in order that all the demands of the universe of sentient existences may be met and satisfied. To will good to the universe indefinitely, is like opposing sin in the abstract,—a thing easily done by a little aid from the imagination,—a sort of poetic illusion, indulging in which, we may flatter ourselves on account of our disinterested benevolence, and yet it be too lofty, too grand, too immensely extended, to be conversant with, and to be employed in particular details of actual, intelligent, well-directed effort to glorify God, or to benefit our fellow-men. There are, and must be, some specific acts and ways, in which benevolent intention shall be accomplished; and these must be known, or benevolence is of little efficiency and worth. If ignorant as to these things, not knowing how or in what the demands of universal mind, in its endless and complicated relations, necessities, and circumstances are to be met, our choice would not be intelligent; yea, would be impracticable; and, according to our author's admissions, we could be under no moral obligation whatever to choose them. “Until the end,” he says, “is apprehended, no idea or affirmation of obligation can exist respecting it.” The end cannot be a mere abstraction—a vague ideality. It must in all cases be something definite, distinct, intelligible, and practicable.

How is that end to be ascertained? Whence is the knowledge, essential to its existence, to be obtained? Has “the reason” a self-sufficient power to reveal it? Is its authority final and supreme? Neither the word of God, nor the experience of mankind, sanction the idea. What can we know of the satisfaction of God, and of the best interests of the universe, in the complicated relations of universal mind? Nothing, but as God Himself has made them known. He is our sole and rightful

sovereign lawgiver. We recognize no such vast democratic legislative authority, as universal mind. The Bible proclaims, "Jehovah is our lawgiver." We therefore rejoice that he has given us His law, made known His will. Mind and conscience feel bound to yield obedience to this. It is just as obviously a first truth, that God is to be obeyed, as that the demand of universal mind must be satisfied;—yea, much more distinct, definite, intelligible and practicable, and better adapted to men's constitutional convictions and common sense. The moral law comes to us commended as His law, bearing the impress of His own character. God being infinitely wise, just and good, and His law being the transcript of His own perfections—the reflection of His own excellence,—it is obviously apprehended, and felt to be the best guide, the proper rule of duty. Nor care we to look further.

Our author will perhaps reply, that this is what he means—that by a first truth of reason in this case, he understands nothing more nor less, than the instinctive, intuitive perception or conviction of the mind, that the well-being of God, and of the universe is in itself a thing infinitely valuable, and therefore should be chosen. It must be obvious, however, we think to every intelligent reader, that this is not, according to his own showing, "a first truth of reason." For it unquestionably resolves itself into another, which is a mere abstraction, that the valuable must always be chosen for its own intrinsic value. He admits that "the idea of the intrinsically valuable is *the condition* of moral obligation." On this perfect abstraction, which he calls a "first truth of reason," rests his foundation of moral obligation. As he presents it, it amounts to this, viz: that because we have the idea of the valuable; because also, we are so constituted that we instinctively judge in all cases, the valuable should be chosen for its own sake; and because, still further, the well being of God and the universe are in themselves of infinite value, therefore, we are obliged to make it our ultimate choice. We do not see in all this, that stamp of unity, nor that air of simplicity, which this theory claims for itself. Much less do we discern any practical value to commend it.

Human consciousness does not universally bear its attestations to such analyses of moral obligation. But even were it admitted, it leaves still a great gap to be filled—the very thing which we have shown is essential to its existence—the knowledge of those acts and duties on our part, by which the well being of God and of the universe is to be promoted, and sought by us. Our author thinks it sufficient, in answer to the question, in what the well-being of God and the universe consist, to say, in the mind of God and of the universe being satisfied. But still the question recurs, how are we to contribute to this satisfaction? By what means

shall knowledge sufficient to imply obligation and to direct action be obtained? Our author will not, certainly, say intuitively; nor, by processes of reasoning. He will doubtless reply, by the light of nature. But what is the light of nature? A revelation from God? Admit it. But what does that mean? What can it mean, but that God has so constituted the human mind, that it naturally, without any aid, in view of its relations to God and its fellow creatures, approves of, and feels obliged to perform, certain actions tending to their good, and to avoid those tending to their injury. This is what theologians have been accustomed to call the law of God "written on the heart," adopting the language of the apostle Paul, who says, that "when the Gentiles, which have not the law—the written or spoken revelation of the will of God—do by nature the things contained in the law, these having not the law, are a law unto themselves, which show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the meanwhile accusing or else excusing one another."¹ The idea is, that God who created man has so endowed him with rational powers, as a moral agent, and so constituted his relations to himself and his fellow creatures, that he perceives what tends both to please God, and to promote the welfare of his fellow-men; that so perceiving, he feels urged or pressed by motive to make these the end of his actions; and that in doing so, he consciously approves of his conduct, and in failing to do so, as consciously condemns it. Here still, however, it is to the will of God as revealed to man—a law of God of equal obligation with the written law,—that the apostle traces the source of moral obligation.

The idea of a revelation from God, as the means of knowing our duty, is distinctly brought into view. Whether it be as the light of nature, or as the written word, the moral law is regarded as the will of God—His revelation, making known to us the rule of duty. It is enough for us to apprehend His will—to know, in this and the other particular, that it is His good pleasure we should do this or that; and the motive consideration which prompts to action, and which we feel should be complied with, begins at once to affect us. We feel the pressure of moral obligation at every announcement of the will of God, and care not to inquire any further. To meet the good pleasure of God is an ultimate intention. It is much more intelligible and consonant with scriptural style of speech, than the ultimate end of our author, viz: to will good to God and to the universe. To do good to our fellow-men is one means of accomplishing the ultimate intention to please God. This His moral law, in great organic provisions, prescribes. The will of God or His moral law, as far as it is known, is felt to be the best, and indeed only safe and efficient guide, how to please Him, and to benefit

¹ Rom. 2: 14, 15.

our fellow-men. Making it our effort and aim to please Him, we feel that when he is pleased, we are pleased; and thus by our obedience we promote our own happiness. But this follows as a result, and is not the ultimate intention. Without allowing our imaginations, therefore, to range over the wide universe, or without even attempting to form any abstract notion of what is best upon the whole, or what even the public good requires, except as the revelation of God's will or law enables us to judge, we bow with cheerful submission, to His sovereign authority, which, as our great supreme Lord and Lawgiver, we feel is rightfully exercised over us.

The following expresses so clearly and so fully, what appears to us to be the plain common sense view of this subject, that we make no apology for giving it in the author's own language: "If it appears that to make the will of God our *rule* of duty, is the *best* way to promote our own worth and happiness, as well as the worth and happiness of others, this must be our *best rule*. We may, nevertheless, be acting in perfect consistence with this rule, when we are exerting ourselves for the good of others, or imposing restraints upon our selfish inclinations, with an explicit intention to promote the welfare of others, or to follow the dictates of conscience, without, for the time, any direct reference to the will of God as such. Benevolence, or a sense of duty, is, in this case, our *immediate motive*. The remotest obligation, in this case, is the same as before; but we can seldom find it necessary, even in theory, to revert to it as the ultimate obligation; for, if God is just and good, obedience to his will must be productive of our greatest good on the whole. He is perfectly just and good, and therefore, in the actual state of the case, and we need think of no other, the will of God may, with the utmost propriety be assumed, not only as the noblest *motive*, and the best *rule*, but also, as the *foundation*, and even (with very little departure from logical correctness, and with greater accordance with the feelings of the man who is accustomed to employ this rule) as *ultimate obligation* of duty."¹

Our author has attempted to maintain his theory in opposition to every other which he pronounces erroneous. In doing so, he has advanced something which we regard exceedingly exceptionable and dangerous. While he admits and proves, that God rightfully exercises an authority over us as moral governor, and that we are, therefore, bound to please Him, by obeying His law, he, nevertheless, resolves that authority of God into the tyrant's plea of necessity—something totally irrespective of His own nature, qualifications, and relations to the universe. The universe is, in effect, viewed by him as existing independently of God—apart from His wise, sovereign, and beneficent will, which ordained alike its origin, and all in the nature and relations of

¹ Dr. Ree's New Encyclopedia, Art. Mor. Phil.

things. He traces all the rightful authority of God to govern the universe, to the fact, that government is necessary for its highest good. How much special legislation has been justified by despots, precisely on this ground. "Unless," says he, "there is some necessity for government, the fact that God created the universe, can give Him no right to govern it." He affirms the same of the fact of His being its owner and sole proprietor. "Neither God, nor any other being, can own moral beings in such a sense as to have a right to govern them, when government is wholly unnecessary, and can result in no good whatever to God, or to His creatures. Government, in such a case, would be perfectly arbitrary and unreasonable, and consequently an unjust, tyrannical, and wicked act. God has no such right. No such right can by possibility in any case exist." He affirms the same of His qualifications to govern, found in His infinite attributes and resources. "The possession of these attributes cannot confer the right, independently of the necessity of government; for however well qualified He may be to govern, still, unless government is necessary to securing his own glory, and the highest well-being of the universe, he has no right to govern it." And yet, elsewhere he says, if not in contradiction of mere positions, certainly with great looseness of thought and language—"His relation to the universe as Creator and Preserver, when considered in connexion with His nature and attributes, confers on Him the right of universal government;" yea, "renders it obligatory on him;" affirming that "His honor," "His conscience," (to our mind an irreverent form of expression, not sanctioned by any precedent or authority in the sacred Scriptures), and "His happiness, must demand it." Still further, as if to show the utter futility, irrespective of its practical bearing and utility, of all he has said about the right of God to govern, being founded on necessity, he admits that "the sovereign, and not the subject, is to be the judge of what is necessary legislation and government." To what purpose then, we ask, is all this theorizing and reasoning about God's right to govern, when, according to the author's own admission, we, the rightful subjects of His moral government, must not presume to judge of any necessity on which the Divine legislation, in general, or in any special case, may be founded?

Such views are contrary to the feelings and common sense of mankind. The creature's dependence, and the importance, value, and necessity of the Divine care thence arising, (facts not to be mistaken or questioned), are easily and distinctly apprehended by the mass. Reasoning on impossible suppositions, and attempts to substitute logic for fact, are of no value, yea, dan-

1 p. 23.

2 p. 23.

3 p. 23.

4 p. 20.

5 p. 25.

gerous in matters of such high concernment, as, on the one hand, the Divine care, support, and protection—all the obligations of government—are the certain dictates of benevolence, that benevolence finding motives, or a reason, for the dependence and necessities of the rational creature, for the exercise of government; so, on the other hand, on the part of the rational creature, there grows out of that dependence, obligations of love and gratitude, to meet and fulfil the Divine will. A sense of such obligation is common to men. Just as the human mind recognizes, and apprehends as true, whenever presented, the idea of the existence of God, so does it this other idea, that we are under obligations to do His will, or please Him. It is a short, summary, practical, and satisfactory process, which the mass of mankind understand. It is one which is naturally and universally adopted, and, what is of still greater value, it is one which is everywhere recognized and sanctioned in the sacred Scriptures. "God has commanded, and I must therefore obey."

It is this fact, which has particularly excited our apprehensions and dissatisfaction in relation to our author's theory. The deductions of reason, the generalizations or abstractions of logic, we are accustomed to regard with suspicion and jealousy, whenever they conflict with, or are opposed by, any Scriptural facts, or the plain truths of the Bible. What it says on the subject of holy obedience, and of subjection to the authority of moral law, in its familiar and incidental allusions and forms of expression, we value infinitely more than all the reasonings and analyses of the logician and metaphysician. Although the present view we are taking of our author's theory does not immediately lead to it, or call for it, yet we cannot withhold a few facts and references, illustrative of the Scriptural style of speech on this subject. We cannot divorce religion from revelation; nor think that the authority of God's word resolves itself into the law which the reason imposes on itself; nor that evangelical piety will even gain anything by attempting to reduce its great facts and truths to the principles of natural religion, or to illustrate and explain the Gospel as a mere system of natural morality. God has distinctly apprised us, that He will estimate and finally decide upon men's character and conduct, by the actual respect which they shall have paid to His will. Matt. 7: 21; 12: 50. His sovereignty as a moral governor is asserted in the most explicit manner; and for its exercise He will not be interrogated and judged by man. Dan. 4: 35; Rom. 9: 19; Eph. 1: 5, 9, 11. His will or command is referred to, as an abundantly sufficient rule of duty.—Exod. 8: 27; 7: 2; 18: 23; 34: 11; Num. 9: 8; 24: 13; 36: 6; Deut. 4: 2; 12: 28; 7: 11; 8: 11; 10: 13; 11: 8, 27; 30: 8, 16; Jer. 9: 4; Ezra, 7: 23; Josh. 1: 9; Ps. 119: 4; Jer. 50: 21; Matt. 28: 20; Mark, 7: 9, 13; John, 15: 14;

2 Thess. 3 : 6, 12, &c. Even where reason can discern nothing satisfactory, the will or command of God is referred to, both as the rule and reason of duty, or submission.—Acts, 21 : 14 : Eph, 6 : 5, 7 ; John, 7 : 17. Obedience is made to consist in the intelligent respect to the will of God. Rom. 12 : 2 : Coll. 4 : 12 ; 1 Thess. 4 : 3, 5, 18 ; Heb. 10 : 36 : 1 Peter, 2 : 15 ; 3 : 17 ; 4 : 2, 19 ; Rom. 2 : 17, 18 ; Coll. 1 : 9, 10 ; Luke, 12 : 47, 48 : Heb. 13 : 21 ; Rev. 17 : 17. These are but a few examples. The Scriptures abound with them. Instructed as Christian men and ministers from this source, we rest in the supreme authority of God our moral governor, as a sufficient source of moral obligation and reason for obedience. His greatness, goodness, power, and wisdom, as Creator, Benefactor, and Preserver, and His rightful claim to us and all ours, as the sole legitimate and supreme proprietor of the universe, we feel, afford, both abundant and most satisfactory reasons and motives to yield obedience to His will. Ninety-nine hundredths and more, who have the light of the Gospel, and love the good word of God, as the man of their counsel and light unto their feet, turn away with dissatisfaction from metaphysical speculations here, and will not allow themselves to be reasoned out of their just sense of moral obligation, which they feel the will or law of God imposes. And not a few such will be shocked at the bold and irreverent manner, to say the least, in which our author has expressed himself on this subject. "The will of God cannot be the foundation of moral obligation in created moral agents."¹ "The fundamental reason why moral agents ought to act in conformity to the will of God, is plainly not the will of God itself. The will of no being can be law."² Our author presumes to penetrate the workings of the Divine mind, and logically to demonstrate the "secret things which belong unto the Lord." Regarding God himself as equally "a subject of moral obligation"³ with the creature, he attempts to estimate the reasons of His actions, making impossible suppositions for argument's sake, which sometimes assume the air and aspect of impiety and blasphemy, and would be so regarded, were they the ordinary conceptions of men that make no professions of religion. He virtually assumes that the human mind may legitimately claim to sit in judgment on God's legislation, remarking "if the will of God be the foundation of moral obligation, we have no standard by which to judge of the moral character of His actions, and cannot know whether He is worthy of praise or blame. He not only can change the nature of virtue and vice, but has a right to do so—is not Himself a subject of moral obligation, and has no moral character."⁴

Our author does, indeed, incidentally admit—but it is not with

¹ p. 68.² p. 68.³ p. 68.⁴ p. 68.

him pervading and influential thought,—that the infinite excellence of God, His wisdom, benevolence, rectitude and other perfections, which revelation has disclosed to us, influence and give character to His legislation. Yet he expresses himself often, in such way, as to make the impression on the reader, that it is in some eternal constitution of things, apart from and independent of God's sovereign ordination we are to trace the reason of His law, and not in himself—something “back of His will that is as binding upon Him, as upon His creatures.” How irreverent is all this! And how unlike to the holy breathings of the man whom God has held up to view in His word, as an example for the imitation of all ages!

Abraham once undertook to plead with God, in reference to a matter, in which, according to his limited and imperfect views, he could not see the equity of the Divine procedure. “Shall not the judge of all the earth do right?” But how deeply self-abased was he. What overpowering reverence and awful solemnity affected him as he gave utterance in prayer, to the thought implying his conviction, that God could not do wrong? He presumed not to sit in judgment and condemn the ways of God, although he could not understand the reason of the Divine severity, in a procedure which shocked both his sensibilities and his understanding. He was far from thus exalting his reason; and its promptings on the occasion, so far from being flippantly and irreverently uttered, prostrated him in the deepest self-abasement of spirit. And, as if God had intended for ever effectually to rebuke, if not to cure such rash, irreverent presuming to sit in judgment on His ways, as being inconsistent with the very nature of that faith and submission which He requires from his believing and obedient children, He commanded Abraham to slay as a sacrifice his only and dearly beloved son Isaac. Not one solitary reason was given for his obedience to this precept. On the contrary, abundant and answerable reasons could be given against it. It was obviously a direct and most flagrant violation of the moral law—an action immoral and infamous among men. Yet did Abraham essay to perform it. He could discern no other reason for his obedience than that “thus the Lord had commanded.” But this, to his mind, was sufficient and overpowering. Beyond the will of God he presumed, not for one moment to go in estimating his moral obligation.

This example of blind, unqualified obedience to the will of God, has been exhibited to the admiring gaze of all generations. Abraham has been extolled for his faith, which silenced reason. His conduct has been pronounced worthy of imitation, in our implicit and absolute obedience, notwithstanding infidel blasphemers have undertaken to sit in judgment on this procedure

¹ p. 68.

² Gen xviii, 25.

of God, and impiously to censure it. Our author's positions and logic would justify them in doing so. We cannot see how the morality of Abraham's obedience, or his moral obligation in the case, can be at all affirmed on his ethical principles. To say, as he has done, that God's "command is necessarily regarded by me as obligatory, not as an arbitrary requirement, (he can mean nothing else by this language, than a requirement resting exclusively on His will, without any reason *obvious to the creature*), but as revealing infallibly the true means or condition of securing the great and ultimate end, which I am to will for its intrinsic value," is but to beg the question; for, admit that we must, in any one case, take the command of God "as infallible proof that that which He commands is wise and benevolent in itself," then may we, and ought we, to do so in all, and to dismiss logic for His law, since our author says—"I necessarily regard his commandment as wise and benevolent; and it is only because I so regard it, that I affirm, or can affirm, my obligation to obey Him." Our author has not hesitated to say, that we necessarily regard God's command, not only as benevolent and wise "in itself," but as, in every instance, "commanded by Him for that reason," the thing commanded being always, "in itself," wise and benevolent. This, certainly, shuts up "the reason" to the will or law of God exclusively, and contradicts fact, as well as renders the author's whole theory nugatory. Was Abraham's killing Isaac a thing "in itself" wise and good?—and did God "command it for that reason?" If Abraham had been necessitated to believe it, he would have been necessitated to believe what was not true; and had he reasoned according to the theory of our author, he had rebelled outright against God, and claimed merit and virtue for so doing. "I necessarily regard God's commandment as wise and benevolent; and it is only because I so regard it, that I affirm, or can affirm, my obligation to obey him. This is part and parcel of my constitution. I cannot do otherwise. Should He command me to choose as an ultimate end, or for its own intrinsic value, that which my reason affirmed to be of no *intrinsic* value, (which is unquestionably the fact with regard to slaying my son), I could not possibly affirm my obligation to obey Him. Should He command me to do that which my reason affirmed to be unwise and malevolent (and there can be no denying that the slaying in cool blood, of my own son, is such), it were *impossible* for me to affirm my obligation to obey Him." What would have become of Abraham's faith and obedience to God, had he allowed himself to consult the law imposed upon the creature by his own reason or intelligence? Our author's theory would have justified his rebellion. But Abraham's ultimate choice was to please God. The way to do so, he knew and felt, was by doing His will—

obeying His command. He did not regard the slaying of Isaac as a thing in itself wise and good—intrinsically valuable; but he had the command of God; he, therefore, looked no further, and silenced all the objections of reason.

Our author does indeed throw in a qualifying word, when he denies that the will of God is the foundation of moral obligation; but it seems to us more like a covert attack on the sentiments of those who he condemns. It is the "*sovereign will of God*" of which he speaks. By sovereign, he evidently means arbitrary, capricious, will without reason, and seems to have a very special dislike to the word. But this is not the meaning of the word; nor is it used by those whose theological views he especially opposes, or indeed any who study precision, in this sense. The sovereign will of God is His will expressed in the enactments of His supreme authority. This we claim to be, as well the source of obligation, as the rule of duty, notwithstanding our author pronounces it "grossly inconsistent and nonsensical."

The ultimate end is not always the *chief* end. The phrase is ambiguous; but the chief end of a moral creature, as the Bible unequivocally teaches, ought ever to be to please God. Col. 1: 9, 10; 1 Thess. 2: 4; 1 John, 3: 22. To do His will is the way to please Him. His law is the revelation or expression of His will—His sovereign constitution,—in other words, the rule which He, in the exercise of His infinite wisdom and benevolence, has ordained, to direct us in seeking to accomplish the great end of our being. The Assembly's Shorter Catechism has well said, in answer to the first question, that "the chief end of man is to glorify God," &c. It is but what the apostle has said: "Whether ye eat or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God." 1 Cor. 10: 31. This is all plain, intelligible, scriptural, and adapted to the common sense of men. The good pleasure of God is the highest conceivable end. To go beyond it and talk of the interests of the universe, and of moral law, requiring us to will the well-being of God and of the universe, as though the universe was something higher than God, existing independently and irrespectively of His will, who, as we are explicitly told "worketh all things after the counsel of His own will;" Eph. 1: 11, and who, in His sovereign will, ordained all its relations, interests, adaptations, dependencies, and obligations, is a vain, presumptuous attempt, as it seems to us, to ascend above God, to be wise above what is written, and to erect a tribunal in the human mind, before which He and His ways must be tried. It may suit the unbelieving philosopher, who exalts reason, but is totally unbecoming in the theological professor, who should ever be guided by a "thus saith the Lord."

Our author happily is too much under the habitual pressure of this obligation, to bow with implicit, absolute, unqualified sub-

jection to the will of God, not to acknowledge it. He admits, that while "reason does not regard," as he says, "His command, as the foundation of the obligation to obey," it does, and ought to regard it "as infallible proof that that which He commands is wise and benevolent in itself, and commanded by Him for that reason;"¹ of course, in every possible instance. As a practical principle, therefore, our author's theory amounts to little or nothing of value. For he has himself to fall back upon the will of God, and to acknowledge its use, importance, and necessity, in actually determining obligation, where the reasonableness and fitness of circumstances cannot be known by us, and no other reason of obligation can be assigned than that it is the will of God. The mischievous bearing and tendency of his theory on many points of Christian doctrine and practice, we shall have occasion hereafter to notice and develop. At present we must enter our solemn and formal protest against it, as rash and dangerous, and tending to lose men's sense of obligation to God as the great moral governor of the world.

We deem it unnecessary, to follow our author, through his examination of different theories on the subject of the "foundation of moral obligation," in which self-interest, human happiness, utility, right, the moral excellence of God, moral order, the nature and relations of moral beings, and duty, have respectively an undue prominence given to them by their several advocates, as though the one idea met and solved all its phenomena. All things, then, have an influence, in making up our estimate of those obligations, which the law of God imposes, and may furnish motives to obedience. But nothing, whatever, so well meets all the circumstances of human nature, and its relations to, and dependence on God, as the plain common sense Bible view of the matter, which every child can understand, and which has heretofore been regarded orthodox; viz: that we are obliged to obey, because God commands. His will must be the standard by which to judge whether our actions are right or wrong. Wherever this is known by explicit precept or declaration, there can be no dispute, no doubt about our obligation in any case; it is a self-evident truth—that the will of a being infinitely wise, powerful and benevolent, must deserve our unqualified respect, and unhesitating obedience. Where, however, it is not thus known, and other criteria of virtue, which bring into view motives forming an essential part of moral excellence, there the mind is too apt to act upon them, as themselves the foundation of moral obligation. Happy is it for us, that we have the Gospel, the pure word of God, which will practically correct the errors of metaphysical theories on this subject. Yet it is of no slight importance what is the fundamental principle adopted. Some are more restricted,

¹p. 70.

more pliant, more accommodating than others ; and the morality of their advocates will thence take somewhat of its character. The theory will affect the practice.

It was the distinguishing trait of excellence in our Savior's moral character, that His leading and governing purpose, His habitual ultimate aim or end, was to do the will of God. "He came down from Heaven," said he, "not to do his own will but the will of Him that sent Him." John, 6 : 38. "It was His meat to do the will of Him that sent Him." John, 4 : 34 ; 5 : 30. As we resemble Him will it be our chief end also. Paul found his delight in doing the will of God. Rom. 7 : 22. Just as we make it our chief aim or object, to please or glorify God by doing His will, we include every other criterion of virtue, or rule of duty that is reasonable and just. Both reason and conscience, and the supposed tendency of actions, may in certain cases, assist us in estimating, and furnish motives exciting to, moral obligation. But the will of God, in some way made known, is the last point to which we must come, if we would judge whether reason is correct or conscience ought to govern us.

The will or law of God affords the only universal and invariable criterion of duty. We are not possessed of sufficient knowledge and experience to judge, under all circumstances, of the tendency of actions, or of their utility, much less of what the good of the universe may demand, or even the public good. The very dictates of conscience often vary in extent, in power, and in correctness, through the influence of fashion, philosophy, ignorance, example, prejudice, education, selfish interest, and public opinion. But he who makes the good pleasure of God his ultimate aim, or takes His will or law to guide him into the knowledge of the best and proper means of accomplishing it, has a fixed principle, that will not bend to the reasonings of the philosopher, to the promptings of passion, to the authority of the Church, to the dogmatism of the schools, or to the despotism of public opinion. It is firm, steady, and immutable as is the will of God. It is exalting, expanding, and ennobling in its influence on the mind. It is, in an eminent degree, the safest guide ; the rule which carries its own obligations ; that which the Scriptures everywhere commend and enforce ; and without which we shall assuredly err and fail in a thousand cases, with regard to our duty.

Our author has attempted to exalt the good of the universe including God, as our highest aim, and as inducing the ultimate obligation. But we see, in so doing, that which is of very dangerous tendency in morals. It resembles, too much, if it be not identical with, the mischievous element developed in Godwin's Political Justice, and tends in its practical results to similar dangerous applications which were made of it. However specious, at first sight, it may appear, to lay in it the foundation of moral obliga-

tion, it cannot fail, we think, to counteract the moral improvement of man, by checking it at its origin. It is a process of logic that hardens the heart. It in effect founds universal benevolence on the ruin of limited charities. He that imposes on himself with this abstraction or mere ideality, and makes the sum and substance of moral obligation to consist in willing good to God and to the universe, cannot fail to injure, if not eventually destroy his sense of obligation, attaching to the near relations of social life. For, if the highest good of the universe be the ultimate aim to which moral law obligates us, of course it follows, that every individual exertion should be so directed, as to produce the greatest possible amount of good to our species. Hence it will follow, that should we have, in a given case, power to save only one life, or to promote the happiness of but one individual, we owe our exertions to the stranger whose usefulness is much greater, and of more consequence to society, than to our wife, child, parent or friend, as the case may be. Thus, not only are the claims of self wholly excluded by the general principle; but the promptings of nature, the very kindlings of the passions and affections which God has implanted in us for the better preservation and for the happiness of society, must be extinguished. The beautiful order prescribed by the law of God, which begins with the near relations and extends to those more remote, becomes inverted; and all the obligations growing out of near relations, and in general, of limited social ties, must be lost sight of, or merged in that of the public good. Beginning with the near relations, and seeking to please God by doing good to our fellow-men, as we are brought in contact with any of our species, piety and benevolence find opportunity for their offices, and extend indefinitely. But seeking the good of the universe, with this logical abstraction occupying the thoughts, the heart is fortified against the impressions and motives to action, appropriate to the relations of family, kindred, neighborhood and country, and obligated to resist the impulse of any and every generous emotion, till the intellect has well considered what is the greatest economy, and best upon the whole. The question, in all such cases, by which to estimate duty, according to this theory, must not be, is he my father, child, relative, friend, neighbor or benefactor, but which is the most worthy or worthless member of society. What desolation may such a principle of moral obligation produce in the walks of social life! The public good becomes omnipotent—the Deity to be adored and obeyed. Not only when private interest interferes with the good of the universe must it be sacrificed; but the tenderest ties and all the obligations of near relationship must be rent asunder. The limited charities must give way, as being too selfish in their character, whenever the public good demands the sacrifice.

We admit that the conduct which the limited charities prescribe, must sometimes give way for that demanded by the general good. But who is to be the judge when they seem to conflict? Must we act in all cases regardless of their dictates? Certainly not. The law of God has settled that question, and left no room for us to judge in the case, by imposing obligations on us to respect the limited charities. General benevolence can never be developed but through the medium of the limited affections. Our author takes a fearful leap when he requires as the very foundation of moral obligation, as the element of virtue, that we will good to God and to the universe.

God's law requires us to love our neighbor as ourselves. Love to others flows from their fountain. As the child learns to distinguish objects around it, its parents, kindred, friends, acquaintances become the objects of the same sort of regard it cherishes for itself. As it forms the desire to do good to some, it learns to extend that desire to all. Such is the order of God's constitution. The confined charities form too important a part in the general system, to be on this account rejected as not being, on the whole, safe guides. The neglect of them, and of the obligations growing out of them, as must indubitably be the case, if we are to be determined in our estimate of moral obligation, by the greatest good of the universe would render human life a matter of mere calculation, and often of very erroneous calculation. The principle, if carried out, would utterly destroy society. The barbarities and butcheries of the French Revolution might all be justified upon this principle, as it certainly contributed no little to suggest and sanction them. Every attempt to make the highest good of the universe the paramount object of pursuit, conceding to human reason a right of judgment in the case, and its dictates supreme in the human breast, is to counteract the essential laws of our nature, and drive the ploughshare of ruin over all the bland, benignant charities of social life, and the obligations arising out of the more limited virtues. We should dread the diffusion and prevalence of such principles and philosophy, as we would the pestilential vapor or the scalding flood. And we think that some practical tendencies of this sort have, of late years, begun to manifest themselves precisely in the wake of this metaphysical morality. What means this ceaseless tendency to revolution in churches? This special hostility to the organization of those that are Presbyterian? This war proclaimed in certain quarters against all who oppose the views of our author, deemed by himself and others so essential to the greatest good? Whence this sundering of relations, and contempt of social obligations, and the avowed purpose to divide and scatter and destroy the churches which stand in the way of its progress? Whoso is wise may understand these things; and the prudent may observe them.

We think we descry the elements of revolution at work, and fear that the morality and theology of our author may be exerting, without his meaning it, a fearful and fatal influence toward the ultimate subversion, in many churches, of the great cardinal doctrines of the Gospel.

ARTICLE III.

ROMANISM AND BARBARISM.

By REV. HENRY P. TAPPAN, D.D., New York.

Barbarism the First Danger ; a Discourse for Home Missions.
By HORACE BUSHNELL, Pastor of the North Church, Hartford, Conn.

THE destiny of our country is a great problem, and one in which every Christian and philanthropist must be interested. The extent of territory, the rapidly increasing population, the extensive and important commercial relations, the vast accumulation of wealth, the political and religious institutions, form a power for good or evil, whose effects cannot be limited to this continent, if they do not extend to the whole human race. Those are poor philosophers, and, certainly not good Christians, who compute national destinies in the spirit of narrow, national competitions; and who cannot see that the well-being of each separate nation is connected with the well-being of all nations; that if France did not lie on the other side of the Channel, the entire history and condition of England would be changed, and that the extinction of America would deprive her of the noblest field for the spread of her race, her literature, her laws and her religion. If an ambitious Pleiad would blot out one of its sisters, the light and influence of the lost star will be withdrawn from the spheres of all the others, and the ambitious Pleiad will be no brighter, or more powerful, because there is a vacant spot in the heavens.

The destiny of our country! Why should we attempt to solve this problem?

Our aim is to see the point to which we are tending, that if the destiny a head, under the action of present elements, be not such

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ARTICLE I.

INFLUENCE OF COLLEGES, ESPECIALLY ON WESTERN EDUCATION AND CIVILIZATION.

By Rev. CHARLES WHITE, D.D., President of Wabash College, Indiana.

ALL who have become acquainted with American society, have observed that its most marked feature, is restless activity. Enterprise is more characteristic of us than a high civilization; a passion for the glitter and parade of wealth, more than a tendency to substantial, unostentatious investments and solid comforts. It has now become a universal statement and opinion, that a spirit of adventure and advancement, as also an actual forward and ascending movement, are no where in the country more apparent than in the Valley of the Mississippi. This ardor and progress, as is always the fact in new countries, respect the physical more than the intellectual; fortunes and honors more than facilities of knowledge and achievements of mind. All education is in a depressed condition. A large proportion of the population remains far below the highest and best forms of civilization. There is, however, at the present time, a very general and a very determined purpose on the part of the West to emerge, intellectually and morally, and place itself, at least on a level with the best educated and best ordered communities.

It will be the object of this discussion, to exhibit the capable influence of Western Colleges in assisting the existing auspicious movement in behalf of education and a superior civilization.

I. These Literary Institutions are peculiarly fitted and responsible for the introduction into the country, of a sound and thorough scholarship.

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dients and agencies are a fit and fair image to us of the elements and influences which Western Colleges are to aid in furnishing to the multitudes of intelligences, which shall struggle and grow, and thrill and rise and labor, upon this vast intellectual and moral theatre. It were better that our lakes were emptied into the sea, our railroads torn up, our rivers and canals left dry, our prairies turned to sterility, our bland clime changed into Northern rigors, than that our Colleges should be either extinguished or neglected. Our beautiful land, reposing between grand mountain ranges, would become as the valley of the shadow of death! The adversary would spread out his hand upon all her pleasant things. The Lord cover her with a cloud; in his anger cast down to the earth her beauty, and make her altars desolate.

Western Institutions of learning should enlarge and enrich themselves, for influence and accomplishment, with an energy and enthusiasm commensurate with the greatness and value of the service allotted to them. The West should cherish liberally her Colleges, as noble sources of her life, her honor, her usefulness. May she ever have those which are worthy of her confidence and her love!

ARTICLE II.

REVIEW OF FINNEY'S THEOLOGY.

By REV. GEORGE DUFFIELD, D. D., Pastor of First Presbyterian Church of Detroit, Mich.

Lectures on Systematic Theology, embracing Lectures on Moral Government, together with Atonement, Moral and Physical Depravity, Regeneration, Philosophical Theories, and Evidences of Regeneration. By REV. C. G. FINNEY, Professor of Theology in the Oberlin Collegiate Institute.

The proper office of philosophy is to explain facts. In matters of religion, its functions have sometimes been deemed both legitimate and necessary. Its influence and bearing upon the great cardinal doctrines of Revelation, as matter of history, is a subject of great interest. To examine and trace them, is an exercise attended with much profit. But it would require an entire life spent in study, by one of keen discrimination, and under circumstances propitious to investigation, to do the subject justice.

Amid the incessant cares and labors of active pastoral vocations, we feel almost afraid to make an effort for the purpose of exposing the difference between faith and philosophy. Yet is it essential to a faithful review of the two volumes already published, of the work whose title is given in the caption of this article.

In a former article, this subject has been adverted to, and a radical distinction has been taken between the facts revealed in the Bible as matters of faith, and the doctrines of Theology founded on or inferred from them. We have often wished, that some learned master Theologian, imbued with the spirit of faith, would unfold the manner in which metaphysical notions, definitions, and philosophical explanations, of the great cardinal facts of the gospel of the grace of God, have in different ages affected men's minds, in apprehending and exhibiting them. With the bearing of the Gnostic philosophy on Christianity, and its influence in the early ages of the Christian church, in developing the germs of popery, till expanded in the great anti-christian apostasy, those who have studied history and consulted the patristic writings cannot be ignorant. The controversies between Augustine and Pelagius, and between Calvinists and Armenians, furnish us striking illustrations of the manners in which the mind may be beguiled from the simplicity of faith. We fear that the author of the work on Systematic Theology, now under review, will be found, unintentionally and unconsciously to have "erred from the faith," through the influence of a favorite philosophy, assumed as his guide and infallible interpreter of the lively Oracles of God.

What that philosophy is, with its application to the great questions of the nature and foundation of moral obligation, has been unfolded, in a former article, to the reader's attention. Its Theological applications possess great importance, having been elaborated into a system of subtle and dangerous error, subversive of the gospel of our salvation, since that article was prepared. Another volume has been published by our author, in which those applications are more studiously and extensively made, and his Theological system worked into shape, by his philosophy of what our author has himself styled, "the dogma of a necessitated will; by assuming which," he says, "all the practical doctrines of Christianity have been embarrassed and perverted."

The doctrines which are to pass through the alembic of his philosophy, are moral depravity, ability and inability, justification before God, regeneration, sanctification, perfection and their cognate and correlate truths. Our decided conviction is, that our author, neither in his own mind, nor in his teachings, has drawn the line of distinction between what is revealed to us as matter of fact, upon the simple veracity and authority of God's word, and what is man's addition, made in the exercise of his own wisdom, by metaphysical and psychological assumptions

and definitions, or philosophical solutions of the mysteries of revelation. The reader will excuse us for adding somewhat on this point, inasmuch as it is necessary, alike to prevent ourselves from being misapprehended, and to correct what our author, in common with a large class of Theologians, seems to have assumed.

In the preface to his third volume, he says, "I have not yet been able to stereotype my theological views, and have ceased ever to expect to do so. The idea is preposterous. None but an Omniscient mind can continue to maintain a precise identity of views and opinions." True, most true, in so far as human reasonings and matters of mere opinion are concerned. How important, therefore, that, in the incessant fluctuations of the human mind, there should be found, in matters of eternal moment, some solid and immutable rock, on which we may cast anchor and feel safe! This we have alone in the Word of God, received as the rule and reason or foundation of faith.

The oracles of God, disclosing the "mystery of godliness," have been committed to "the Church of the living God, the pillar and ground of truth"—not for her ministry exclusively, nor for her authoritative and infallible exposition—but for preservation, circulation, and the use of all her members. They are, like God Himself, eternal and immutable. Thence we derive the true knowledge of Himself, and of the way of salvation through Jesus Christ. From no other source can it originally be obtained by erring mortals. In this respect, the men of one age have no advantage over another. What God says to us in His Word, He has said to our fathers, and to the generations before us, from the days of the Apostles down through every age. The veriest child need not err here, in any essential matter. The great facts and mysteries of redemption are not communicated as abstractions, but as simple narrative. Abstractions may suit the philosopher; narrative is adapted to the child, whose faith is not so likely to err as are the reasonings of the philosopher. The philosopher must come down to the level of the child, and believe with the same simple docile confidence, in the unerring testimony of God, if he would enter the kingdom of Heaven.¹

Science and philosophy are not essential to the apprehension of truth by faith; nor are they its exponents. To affirm that they are, is to give vantage ground, which never should be yielded to Papists, Puseyites, High-Churchmen, rationalistic divines, and all who authoritatively prescribe their dogmas for our credence. For if these things are important and essential in the exposition of the Scriptures, and the common sense reader is to be led and instructed by them, in his knowledge of the mind and will of God, the argument certainly will lie greatly in favor of the Church

¹ Finney's Syst. Theol., Vol. III., p. iii.

² Matt. xviii., 3.

—the council of her clergy, her great lights, her theological doctors. Not to expositors outside, but within the church, would we most naturally look. Here or in some concentrated Head, having the wisdom and authority of all, would infallibility most readily be placed. The common sense of mankind teaches them, that an ever fluctuating will or standard of opinion, will leave them subject to the strifes and disputes, the errors and impositions of every would-be Pope. Our author affirms, that no theologian should be afraid to change his views, his language, or his practice, in conformity with increasing light! "Should I refuse or fail to do this, I should need to blush for my folly and inconsistency, for I say again, that true Christian consistency implies progress in knowledge and holiness, and such changes in theory and practice, as are demanded by increasing light." As to points in *faith*, this is heresy of most dangerous character. The reverse is the Bible's account of this matter.

Having ascertained what God testifies, and thence learned and believed the facts, a change of views is unbelief. It is no more allowable for us to alter our belief, under such circumstances, than it is possible to change the facts. The faith of the child of God at this day, is, as far as it goes, the same with the apostle's. Here there neither is nor can be improvement, except in extending our knowledge of what God has testified, and in increasing our faith. But having once ascertained what God says, it is at our infinite peril that we dare to differ from Him, or alter, or modify our views as to the fact. He does not mean one thing this age and another the next—one thing to-day and another to-morrow. His word, unlike the opinions and philosophy of men, abideth for ever. "The counsel of the Lord that shall stand. "The testimony of the Lord is sure." Eternal and immutable like Himself is His Word. The Scriptural theologian is mainly concerned to know what is to be believed on that ground. This done, he must set it forth—not on human authority, not by the force of logical reasonings, nor by the explanations of philosophy—but from the *IPSE DIXIT* of Jehovah. His only and all sufficient argument, or reason for faith, is the same with the prophet's and apostle's: "Thus saith the Lord;" "Thus hath Jehovah said."

It is on this foundation alone, that the churches of the Reformation framed and claimed respect for their creeds or Confessions of Faith. They are of value and authority only as they set forth the facts or truths made known in the Scriptures. The Westminster Confession of Faith, as adopted by the Presbyterian churches in these United States, and as approved by the great body of New England Congregationalists, is but a summary of what those, who adopt them, believe to be the doctrines of the

¹ Vol. III. p. 4.

² Ps. xix. 7.

Bible on the various topics therein stated, or, in general, "the system of doctrine taught in the sacred Scriptures." They were not originally sent forth, by the Assembly of Divines who framed or systematized them; nor are they now adopted by the Ministers, Elders and Deacons at their ordination, or admission to office in Presbyterian churches, as the decretals or canons of the church, possessing any right to dictate the faith; nor as the prescriptions and dogmas of those invested with any inspired, oracular or divine, transmitted authority, to require the adoption of this or the other sentiment or opinion, and to make rules for the consciences of men. They are but the public avowal, made by the ministers, officers and members of the churches embracing them, of what they believe to be the truths affirmed in the sacred Scriptures.

We had supposed that this was well enough understood; and that no man would think of entering the Presbyterian church, and of making the profession of faith which is done at ordination or admission to a Presbytery, who did not, as the result of his careful examination and comparison with the Word of God, *sincerely* and *cordially* adopt these formulas as the exponents of his own faith. If, after an examination of its doctrines, a man cannot affirm that he believes the Confession of Faith to contain the system of doctrine taught in the sacred Scriptures, and sincerely and cordially adopt it as such, it certainly betrays the want of moral honesty, to say the least, for him to receive ordination and be installed as pastor, or be employed to labor, as stated supply, in a Presbyterian church. We cannot express ourselves in language too strong, condemning such conduct. It was, therefore, both a matter of surprise and grief to us, to read the following impassioned remarks of our author, reprobatng and denouncing "the form of sound words," which he once professed to receive and adopt as the confession of his faith.

"Hundreds of years since, when intellectual and moral science was a *wilderness*, (!!) an assembly of divines as they are called, *affecting* to cast off popery, undertook to *stereotype* the theology of the church, and to *think* for all future generations, thus making themselves popes *in perpetuum*. Every uninspired attempt to frame for the church an authoritative standard of *opinion*, which shall be regarded as an unquestionable exposition of the Word of God, is not only impious in itself, but it is also a tacit assumption of the fundamental dogma of papacy. The assembly of divines did *more* than to assume the necessity of a pope to give law to the opinions of men; they assumed to *create an immortal one*, or rather to *embalm* their own creed and preserve it as the *pope* of all generations. That the instrument framed by that assembly, should in the nineteenth century, be recognized as the *standard* of the church, or of an intelligent branch of it, is not

only amazing, but I must say, that it is highly *ridiculous*. It is as *absurd in theology as it would be in any other branch of science*, and as *injurious and stultifying as it is absurd and ridiculous*. It is better to have a living than a dead pope. If we must have an *authoritative expounder* of the Word of God, let us have a *living* one so as not to preclude the hope of improvement. 'A living dog is better than a dead lion;' so a living pope is better than a dead and stereotyped confession of faith that holds all men to subscribe to its unalterable dogmas and its unvarying terminology. Whether this was ever intended by its authors or not, such is the use made of the instrument in question."¹

All this is well understood. The impassioned tone of these remarks is even worse than the remarks themselves, and will not fail to make its unfavorable impression on the mind of every sober and dispassionate reader. Whatever our author believed, when a minister of the Presbyterian church, doubtless he did not knowingly hold and teach doctrines which he judged to be inconsistent with the system taught in its confession of faith. A change, however, has since come over his vision. He now claims to have received superior light, and demands the renunciation and reprobation of the symbols of the church, of which he once was an honored and beloved minister. The spirit of denunciation breathed in the above extract, shows how widely he has departed from the faith he once held in common with the Presbyterian church. He has assumed a solemn and fearful responsibility, and having avowed his reasons for so doing, has brought into notice a system of theology so essentially at variance, in all its leading features, with the Evangelical faith embodied in the Westminster Confession, that he is compelled to treat it with unmitigated scorn and contempt. He has thus made an issue for himself and the entire Presbyterian church, and on it demands investigation, whether those who adopt its confession or himself are nearest to the truth. Neither he nor his followers, therefore, should wonder if they are regarded with distrust, and the right hand of fellowship withdrawn from them. He has placed himself in a hostile attitude, and courts the acquittal and approbation of public opinion. His appeals, however, are not made directly to the Bible; but to modern progress in theology, to the increasing light of moral and intellectual science," as umpire to decide between himself and the brethren and churches he now denounces. The Westminster Assembly of Divines, the heroes of the glorious Reformation, the fathers of our American churches and their noble sons, the Edwards and Bellamys, and Hopkins, the Tenants and Davises, and Wetherspoons, and other great lights of this continent, were but dim twinkling tapers, obscured with the murky clouds, or

¹ III, pref. iii., iv.

lost in "the wilderness," of a false philosophy. Against all this we enter our solemn protest.

The appeal, in this issue, must be "to the law and to the testimony; if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them." In so far as biblical facts are concerned, that is, God's statement of what man is to believe, the progress of Theology must be, in extending the knowledge of those facts by the study, not of philosophy but of the sacred Scriptures; metaphysical reasonings and philosophy, can never originate a solitary truth for the apprehension of faith. Science may indeed aid us in discerning the bearing and reach, the power and value of faith. It may greatly embolden us in meeting and repelling the objections of infidels, and in exposing the fallacy of many of their deductions who reject the Word of God. It may invigorate our own minds, and furnish us abundant and admirable illustrations for the confirmation of our faith. But it cannot bring to light, or demonstrate one new truth pertaining to the being, nature, personal subsistences, character and providence of God,—the moral character, condition and relation of man as His rational creature and as regarded by Him,—the person, work, natures and offices of Jesus Christ,—the way of justification through His blood and righteousness by faith alone without the deeds of the law,—the deity, personality, mission and work of the Holy Spirit,—the regeneration, sanctification, redemption, filial relation and resurrection of the believer, and which is not to be found in the Scriptures. It may aid us also in presenting the truths of faith more vividly to the minds of others, and in fixing and deepening their impressions; but even here, attempts of this sort, often do but enfeeble and obscure. It is not because of its own intrinsic worth, but because of the great array of knowledge and of the almost endless expositions of philosophy in ever varying phase, that science possesses much of its value to the theologian, nor because it has ever actually imparted a new truth to faith. What new truths to faith, have all the theories and reasonings of Bacon, Locke, Reed, Stuart, Brown, Coleridge, Kant, Cousin, or the innumerable host of metaphysical writers, ever produced? The plain unsophisticated reader and student of his Bible, yea, the child that has learned his shorter Catechism and been led by it to the Word of God, and has apprehended the great truths of faith as drawn from this source, and set forth in that form of sound words, concerning the being and perfections of God, the guilt, fall, condemnation and ruin of man, the person, history, work and offices of Christ, as the great Author of eternal redemption, and such like, has thence obtained a much more vivid idea of Bible truth, than if he had studied the discourses of all these and hosts of other philosophers.

¹ Isaiah 8 : 20.

In so saying, we mean not to pour contempt on science and metaphysical philosophy. On the contrary let them be cherished and cultivated; but let them be taught their proper place. When God speaks, man is bound to believe; for the very simple reason, that He can neither deceive others nor be deceived Himself. All that He affirms is truth irrefragable and immutable. We are not to suspend our faith, till science and philosophy come in to confirm His statements, or explain to us what He means. He addresses us in His Word, mainly in the language of common sense, and in all matters of doubt and difficulty; where His meaning is not at once obvious, the Bible is to be its own interpreter. In things essential, the word of God is so plain, that the way-faring man, though a fool, need not err therein. Any explanations of facts or expositions of Bible truth, that God has not Himself given in the Scriptures, let them come from what source they may, can have no authoritative power over our faith. Astronomy, by its marvellous and astounding discoveries, may overwhelm us with ideas of the immensity of the Universe, and of the inconceivable antiquity of the stellar hosts, sweeping in their vast cycles of incomprehensible duration, and may thus assist us in swelling our conception of the infinite majesty, power and resources of God our Creator, and of His wisdom, care and incessant energy as our Preserver. But it does not, in the least degree, change the facts presented to our faith, that Jesus Christ made and preserves them all, and that for His glory they are and were created.¹ Geology, too, may boast of its discoveries, and discourse to us most learnedly of the structure and stratifications of our globe, of the pregnant and violent convulsions it has been thrown into by its own internal fires, of the fossiliferous rocks which have entombed whole genera of animals, etc., that existed anterior to man, of the inferior races that have flourished and perished, and prepared the way for him, of the great changes in climate, and in the constitution of the atmosphere that have wrought in it, of the various other phenomena which indicate the great antiquity of the earth, and of the convulsions to which it yet is destined. But these things cannot effect, in the least degree our faith, as to the fact that, "in the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth," &c, or the divine promise and covenant, that "neither shall all flesh be cut off any more by the waters of a flood; neither shall there any more be a flood to destroy the earth."²

Equally incapable is metaphysical philosophy or moral science, by any of its discoveries, to present to our faith any new truth, or anything incompatible with the revelations of the Bible. It may indeed introduce and sanction terms and phrases, whose import shall vary greatly, from one age to another, and as used by one

¹ Col. 1:16.² Gen. 1:1, 2.³ Gen. 9:2.

school and another, according to the psychological opinions prevalent; and it may define with frequent changes, the different terms of holy writ, in which God addresses himself to man, and thus make the Bible appear to speak in one age, what it did not in another. As for example, it may define life and law, power and faith, repentance and sin, understanding, reason, conscience and other "terminology" of the Bible, and by these means make various passages to change their meaning, and having done so, pronounce these things, discoveries in Theology. But against any such attempts to transmute the facts of Scripture and to pervert our faith, we solemnly protest.

It is precisely through this channel, that error has always entered. It is not to the schools; nor to this or the other philosophical divine or expositor of the Bible, that we are to appeal for definitions. It pertains not to tradition, to the church, to science or to philosophy, to furnish the glasses through which we are to read the Word of God, neither telescope nor microscope of human invention is here needed. The language of revelation is to be received and understood, in the sense in which God Himself used it. To ascertain this we must let God explain. As we compare spiritual things with spiritual, and let one part of Scripture throw light upon the other, can we, alone, arrive at the accurate knowledge of the truth; neither reason nor conscience possesses here original authority. Nor can any system of Theology, boast as it may, of its *lucidus ordo* in arrangement, of its admirable definitions, of its' psychological refinement, of its philosophical accuracy, of its advancement in science, and of its new and brilliant light and nomenclature, legitimately assume to present the facts of Scripture, authoritatively to our faith, other than as does the Scripture itself.

Amid the lumber of ages and the dark clouds of metaphysical philosophy, which have enshrouded the Divine Word, we may sometimes find it difficult, and need a knowledge of what is, in itself, of little value, and of no authority, to separate between the precious and the vile, "the good seed of the word," and the chaff—admixture of error—to determine what is the truth, as God has spoken it, and what is man's addition or transmutation. Hence has originated much of the labor, embarrassment and difficulty of exposition. Could we brush away the philosophy of ages, and come to the Bible, in the simple unadulterated import of its language, as God Himself expounds it, we should find that far less of this is needed than is wont to be imagined. The most vigilant and careful of us, are in danger of erring here, and of using Bible terms, not as God explains or defines them, but in the sense of our particular philosophy.

We object not to such exposition, provided we can fully distinguish between faith and philosophy, and do not ignorantly

and unconsciously pass off as Bible truth, what is the addition of our philosophy, or aver the meaning of God's statement to be identical with the complexion given to it by our psychological notions or metaphysical assumptions. So far as faith is concerned, it may sometimes prove a bliss to be ignorant of the endless contradictions of the schools. The plain common sense unsophisticated reader of the Bible, yea, even the simple docile child is more likely to apprehend its proper meaning than the erudite philosopher. The pride, contradictions and endless disputes among the men of science and wisdom, do not embarrass the child. No forest of perplexity must needs be first traversed; nor clouds of mist and darkness penetrated; nor labyrinth of errors previously traced. From the mazes of philosophy we instantly escape, the moment we are content to receive, as little children, the facts reported by God, "upon His exclusive testimony. It swelled the holy bosom of our adorable Redeemer with joyous exultation, that neither science nor philosophy were necessary, to the saving apprehension of the truth. Indeed it was the only thought during his sorrowful life, which seemed to take possession of His mind, and fill it with overflowing delight. "I thank thee," exclaimed He, "O Father, Lord of Heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes."¹

The apostle Paul has utterly disdained the position of our author on this subject, and borne his testimony against it, so pointedly, that we are greatly surprised at the boldness with which the claim is urged for "the application of reason in the explanation of the facts of *Revealed Theology*." And I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God." "My speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of men's wisdom, but in demonstration of the spirit and of power, that your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men." We speak not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth, comparing spiritual things with spiritual."² "I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the Revelation of Jesus Christ."³

Theology, as a science, has assumed endless cameleon hues. He that would be erudite here, must make himself acquainted with the philosophy by which Arians and Socinians, Pelagians and Semi-Pelagians, Manicheans and Mystics, Nominalists and Realists, Papists and Unitarians, Arminians, Antinomians and Calvinists, both Supra and Sublapsarians, and others, have excogitated their systems. We object not to study and erudition of this sort. On the contrary, we feel it, on some accounts, to

mat. XI. 25.

²F. Sys. Vol. II, p. 40.

³1 Cor. 2: 4, 5, 13.

⁴Gal. 2: 11, 12.

be very desirable, and have sometimes hoped, that some whose time and opportunities, whose station and vocation, as Biblical Professors, afford them facilities for it, would give us a regular history of theological science, shaped as it has been by the ever fluctuating philosophy of ages, and trace also the grand, important and radical distinctions between its dogmas and faith. The historian who shall himself be imbued deeply with the spirit of faith, and have imbibed, from the pure fountain of the Word of God, the revelations of Jesus Christ, as well as studied fully the progressive theology of real opinions—who will make the Bible his chart, and mark the channels of revealed truth, running down from age to age, while he projects the numerous shoals and quicksands, deposits and sunken rocks of error and philosophy in dogmatic theology—will render true service to the cause of evangelical religion. We need to be admonished continually, of the danger of erring, when, in the study of theological opinions, we are beguiled by natural, metaphysical, dogmatic, polemic, pastoral, or any other scientific systematic Theology, from the simplicity of Faith. How important, therefore, is the charge, and how often should we feel it pressed on our hearts and consciences, as by the voice of God, which Paul addressed to his beloved pupil, “O, Timothy, keep that which is committed to thy trust, avoiding profane and vain babblings, and oppositions of science, falsely so called; which some professing, have erred concerning the faith.”

The reader will excuse this digression, when he reflects that here lies the ground on which our author must be met, and that here only are found the tests by which we shall be able to judge whether he is right or wrong. If metaphysics and philosophy are to be the umpire, he may, as he does, claim his own to be superior to all others. But if faith is to be the arbiter—which will not, for one moment, be questioned by any friend of evangelical religion—then, whatever may be the philosophy, and however we may think to be in advance of all before us in theological science, those philosophical and metaphysical views, that place us in opposition to the plain facts revealed in the Scriptures, that is, to any cardinal, evangelical truth, must be at once abandoned as proved, *ipso facto*, to be both erroneous and criminal. Our author has invited and urged examination; that, as he says, “before I die, I may see whatever serious errors I may hold in theology, and correct them, if the Lord will,” desiring, “to subject them to the fullest criticism, that whatever is wrong in them may be thoroughly sifted out.”

It is from no love of controversy; nor because we have any feeling congenial with “those impertinent talkers and writers,

¹ 1 Tim., 6 : 20.

² Vol. III., p. v.

who *must have controversy*," that we presume to undertake this review; but because we are filled with uneasiness and alarm, in beholding a brother beloved, and once honored, both of God and man, as we verily thought, beguiled from the simplicity of faith, and brought, through the seductions of his philosophy, to pervert, yea, discard, some of the essential truths of the gospel of the grace of God, and to make open war upon the entire system of doctrine which he once professedly held, in common with us, as set forth in the Confession of Faith. How philosophy, by its assumptions and definitions, can do this thing, and utterly extinguish the light, life and power of the gospel, rendering the Scriptures but a dead letter, none can be at a loss to perceive, who will read attentively the Catechism of the Council of Trent. With much parade of Scripture, and apparent show of zeal for purity of doctrine and life, has Popery wrested and obscured the whole gospel of salvation by grace; rejected the precious truth of justification through the righteousness of Christ, by faith alone; and substituted for it, its own enslaving and soul-destroying system of personal holiness, as the foundation of acceptance with God; or, in other words, taught the conduciveness of human works to justification in His sight. If our author has not reared a system, as truly subversive of the same precious gospel, we shall be happy to be corrected, and rejoice to know that his philosophy has not turned him aside from the pillar and ground of truth—the great foundation of a sinner's hope. But, regarding it as fatal error, yea, blasphemy itself, on any pretext whatever, to associate with the righteousness of Jesus Christ, human works or obedience, as the ground of justification before God, we feel bound, by the love of Christ, and of His truth, stronger than any other love, to endeavor to guard against what appears to us to be the subtle influence of his claimed discovery, of a philosophy of a free will, which he places in contradistinction from what he calls a necessitated will, and which, he has plainly told us, has, through Edwards, and the hosts of Scottish and New England divines, embarrassed and perverted the practical doctrines of Christianity. He Himself has made the issue. Neither Popery nor Unitarianism ever made one more explicit and direct.

We give the first and chief place to the grand evangelical truth of justification before God, by faith alone, through the blood and righteousness of Jesus Christ, well and truly pronounced by Luther to be, *Articulus stantis aut cadentis ecclesie*. This doctrine is set forth in the Westminster Confession of Faith: still better in the Saybrook Platform, which we receive and believe, not as "authoritative expounders," but as being in full accordance with the sacred Scriptures. We have yet to learn, although at the risk of being pronounced by our author, "highly ridicu-

^a Vol. II., p. vi.

lous," that there is anything "absurd in theology," or unscriptural in the views of this subject, set forth in these admirable Confessions of Faith. In common with our brethren, we have adopted them, after careful examination and study, not as a form to gain admission to a church, or to receive ordination and settlement, but from full and cordial conviction of truth. To insinuate the charge of insincerity against "New School Presbyterians" adopting them, is, to say the least, in excessive bad taste. But to attempt to establish that charge, first by putting an improper Antinomian construction on the doctrines of the Confession—a construction disowned and abhorred—and then by affirming, that that construction unfolds their only fair and valid meaning, and thence, by inferring, that there must be insincerity on the part of those adopting them, who so disown and abhor the alleged meaning, betrays a spirit of uncharitableness, to say nothing of the sophistry, deserving the severest reprehension. This has been done at Oberlin recently; but it comes with very bad grace from those, who, were the same rule of judgment to be applied to themselves, would be proved to have acted hypocritically at their ordination, and to have lived in hypocrisy, by continuing for years to profess attachment to doctrines which they now say, are Antinomian, and *nothing else*, and which they never did believe. Constructive accusations and insinuations of this sort, sometimes rebound with killing power on those who make them.

On the subject of a sinner's justification before God, the testimony of the apostle Paul is both ample and decisive. His language is very plain and explicit. "A man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ." That we have not misapprehended his meaning, might be shown by the testimony of a long line of eminently devoted and useful reformers and ministers of Jesus Christ. To start with the Reformation, Luther says, "We are delivered from sin, justified and made inheritors of everlasting life, not for any of our own works and deserts, but for our faith, whereby we lay hold on Christ." His own account of his experimental apprehension and use of this glorious truth deserves attention.

"Though, as a monk, I was holy and irreproachable," says he, "my conscience was still filled with trouble and torment. I could not endure the expression—the righteous justice of God. I did not love that just and holy Being, who punishes sinners. I felt a secret anger against Him; I hated Him, because, not satisfied with terrifying by His law, and by the miseries of life, poor creatures, already ruined by original sin, He aggravated our sufferings by the gospel. But when, by the Spirit of God, I understood these words—when I learned how the justification of the sinner proceeds from God's mere mercy by the way of faith—then I felt

¹ Gal., 2: 16.

² Luther's Commentary on Galatians, p. 122.

myself born again as a new man, and I entered by an open door, into the very paradise of God.”¹

It was not as a theological abstraction, or scientific discovery, but as a living truth—a glorious fact which shed its benign and blissful influence over his whole future life—that Luther apprehended this fundamental point of the Christian faith. He imbibed it from the living fountain of eternal truth itself, ebullient in the Word of God. It became the means of his regeneration, and lifted him up from the deep degradation of his superstition and bondage. Just as this precious truth has shed its clear and brilliant light upon a people, has it transformed their character and taught them true rational liberty. No wonder that it became the watchword of the Reformation, and the tocsin of alarm to the supporters and slaves of Papal tyranny and oppression.

In all the writings of the early Reformers, it holds a conspicuous place. Calvin says, “We obtain justification before God solely by the intervention of the righteousness of Christ. For he must certainly be destitute of all righteousness of his own, who is taught to seek a righteousness out of himself. This is most clearly asserted by the apostle, when he says, ‘He hath made Him to be sin for us,’ &c. We see that our righteousness is not in ourselves, but in Christ, and that all our title to it rests solely in our being partakers of Christ.” Witsius expresses himself very plainly, also: “In locum perfectæ obedientiæ, quam lex ad justificationem postularet, evangelium non substituit nostram fidem, sed Christi obedientiam, qua jus legis impletum est.” “In the place of perfect obedience, which the law demands for justification, the gospel does not substitute our faith, but the obedience of Christ, by which the demand of the law is satisfied.” To these might be added the testimonies of *Gomarus Ursinus*, the author of the Heidelberg Catechism, *Paræus*, *Beza*, *Turretin*, *Stapfer*, *Hietterus*, *Melancthon*, *Piscator*, *Pietetus*, and the confessions of various continental Protestant churches, the French, Augsburg, Belgic, &c.; also of English and Scotch divines without end—all renouncing good works or human obedience, as the ground of justification, and affirming the blood and righteousness of Jesus Christ to be the reason of a sinner’s pardon and acceptance with God. Some express themselves more clearly and strongly than others; but the imputation of Christ’s Righteousness was regarded as much a constituent part of justification as forgiveness. Whatever philosophy may have been wrapped up in their use of the word imputation, the fact which they intended to assert by it, was the same, that we are justified in the sight of God, on account of Christ’s Righteousness, and not

¹ D’Aubigne’s Hist. of the Reformation, Vol. I., pp. 171, 172.

² Cal. Just. B. III., p. 23.

³ Wits. Econ. Fæd. p. 309, B. III., c. 8.

of our own. It formed the reason for it with God, and not man's obedience.

Our own great American divines were not of any different opinion. "We are no more," says Edwards, "justified by the voice of the law, or of him that judges according to it, by a mere pardon of sin, than Adam, our first surety, was justified by the law, at the first point of his existence, before he had fulfilled the obedience of law, or had so much as any trial whether he would fulfil it or not. If Adam had finished his course of obedience, he would have been justified; and certainly his justification would have implied something more than what is merely negative: he would have been approved of, as having fulfilled the righteousness of the law, and accordingly would have been adjudged to the reward of it."¹ Dr. Dwight is very pointed and full. "The justification of a sinner under the Gospel, consists in the *three following things*: pardoning his sins; acquitting him from the punishment which they have deserved; and entitling him to the rewards or blessings, due by law to perfect obedience only."² "The penitent is not partially justified on account of his own merit after he is sanctified." "The Scriptures no where teach us, that we are justified partly on account of our own righteousness, and partly on account of the righteousness of Christ." "The works of the best men never fulfil the demands of the law; and, therefore, cannot be the ground, either wholly or partially, of their justification." The believer is not accepted on account of his faith, considered as merit; or as furnishing a claim in the nature of a work of righteousness, sufficiently excellent to *deserve* justification, either wholly or partially."³ To these, others might be added, of still more modern date, but they are unnecessary, being of like tenor with the above.

Such is the general current of sentiment on this subject, among evangelical Protestant divines. It is fully sustained by the language and revelations of the Scriptures, whence these sentiments have been derived, especially such passages as the following: Rom. 1: 16, 17; 3: 23-25; 5: 1; Gal. 2: 14. The following *theses* we present to the reader, as detailing the Scriptural view of this subject.

1. The Scriptural idea of the justification of a sinner before God, implies the full pardon of sin, the acceptance of the person and a title to eternal life. Rom. 3: 25, 26; 5: 1.

2. The terms justified and justification, are used, in the Scriptures, not to signify that the sinner is *made* righteous, but *accounted* such. Rom. 3: 27, 28.

3. This of course is unmerited, an act of mere grace. Rom. 3: 24.

¹ Edwards' Works, Vol. V. p. 354.

² Dwight's Theology, pp. 301-2; 307, 308.

³Id. 341.

4. The ground or reason, why God graciously justifies a sinner, is nothing on the sinner's part, which, in any way, directly or indirectly, can entitle him to it; but wholly of the righteousness of Jesus Christ." Rom. 3 : 25, 26; 4 : 25; 8 : 34; 1 Pet. 2 : 24.

5. The righteousness of Jesus Christ is that conformity to law, which God has provided, in the person of the new Head or second Adam, as the public ground or reason of His gracious procedure in justifying sinners of the human family, and is appropriately and distinctively called, "The Righteousness of God," on this account. Rom. 1 : 16, 17; 3 : 25; 5 : 18.

6. That righteousness becomes effectual to the actual justification of sinners, in so far only as they are united to Christ—so related to Him as His seed, as to be one with Him or "in Him." Rom. 8 : 1; Eph. 1 : 5, 7; Phil. 3 : 8, 9; John 15 : 4, 5.

7. This relationship is the result of God's free, sovereign and eternal purpose, choice, or election. Eph. 1 : 4.

8. The relationship itself is that of children *adopted* of God, and loved as His—not a relation springing up, by any natural process, but from the free gift which God made of all Christ's people to Him. Eph. 1 : 5; John, 17 : 6, 23, 24.

9. The means by which this union and relation is fully and internally constituted, so as to bring the sinner into a justified state, to be loved and treated as adopted children, is faith. John, 1 : 12; Gal. 3 : 26.

10. This faith becomes efficacious to justify, not as an act of righteousness, but is accepted "for," instead of it. Gen. 15 : 6; Rom. 4 : 3; nor as a meritorious condition, or stipulated work or deed, to be performed previously, in order to entitle to it, which would be incompatible with grace. Rom. 4 : 16; 11 : 6; nor as it is in itself an excellent grace, an admirable virtue, a part of our goodness, holiness itself, or anything else attaching to us personal worth. Tit. 3 : 5-7. But,

11. Faith justifies, as it is the means of bringing the believer into actual, cordial union with Christ, and through Him and for His sake, thenceforth to be treated not as a subject of strict, legal government, the victim of law, the heir of wrath, condemned, accused, but a child of God, and sharing in the same rich, abounding love, the Father extends towards his only begotten Son, Jesus Christ, who is the first-born among many brethren. Gal. 3 : 5-6; John, 17 : 20-23.

Such is the view of Justification before God, which the Scriptures not only plainly teach, but which has been currently received by Protestant churches, and orthodox, evangelical Christians. Our author's view of the matter is distinctly and avowedly opposed to this. He says, "Justification must be in some sense a governmental act;"—which will not be denied. He in-

sists that it is not a forensic act—the act of a Judge—but entirely and exclusively that of the high Executive functionary of the universe. He assumes that God's dispensation of grace through Jesus Christ, our surety, and the Mediator of a better Testament, is, strictly speaking, a *mere* system of moral government, and has nothing more in it, or pertaining to it, than what is to be estimated on strict, legal or governmental principles. Naturally as Creator, God is moral Governor over his intelligent creatures, and man is but a subject, and nothing more. This the Deist teaches confidently. But Revelation goes further, and proclaims that the whole scheme of Redemption through Jesus Christ, is something above nature, which reason could never have devised or discovered, and which is not to be explained and accounted for on these natural principles. That man will, and must assuredly err, who sees nothing more in the gospel of the grace of God, than a mere abstract, general system of moral government.

“There have been,” says a profound writer of the last century, “in all ages of Christianity, a number of men, who, reckoning themselves greatly wiser than their neighbors, made it their business, instead of declaring the testimony of God, to reduce the gospel of Christ to a merely rational system, exactly suited to the natural state of the human powers, the measure of a sort of moral government: and they suppose that when that is once fairly revealed and notified, the great Creator and gracious Redeemer have no more to do with them, until they come to stand before His judgment-seat, to be rewarded or punished, according as their behavior has been good or bad, wise or foolish.”

Our author says, “It is of great importance to a right undertaking of gospel justification, to inquire whether justification be an act of the judicial, the legislative, or the executive department of government; that is, whether gospel justification consists in a strictly judicial or forensic proceeding, or whether it consists in pardon, or setting aside the execution of an incurred penalty, and is therefore properly an executive or legislative act.” He pronounces it a great mistake of Dr. Chalmers and those of his school, who hold that it is a forensic or judicial proceeding.” The term justify, is unquestionably forensic as Deut. 2, 1, plainly shows. Dr. Dwight has remarked that the word being taken from the business of judicial courts, “denotes the acquittal of a person tried by such a court upon an accusation of crime.”

It is not a mere synonyme for pardon. Release from punishment does not imply restoration to favor, nor place a man back in former relations as an accepted member of society, and entitled to as kind treatment, as if he had not sinned, much less does it re-instate him in former offices of trust and privilege. A sentence of justification is an acquittal from all charge, a very different

¹ Riccaltoun's Works, Vol. III. p. 96.

² Finney's text, Vol. III, p. 96.

³ Dwight's Theol. Vol. III, 301.

thing from pardon. It proclaims the man to be righteous, and in no wise liable to the charges made against him, entitled fully to all the rights, immunities and privileges pertinent to one who has not violated the law. This pardon does not. The justification of a believer, by God, restores him to the same liberty of access to God, and to all rights and privileges, which would have been pertinent to him, had he not offended. "That we should take the word," says Edwards, "in such a sense, and understand it as the judge's accepting a person, as having both a negative and positive righteousness belonging to him, and looking on him, therefore, as not only free from any obligation to punishment, but also as just and righteous, and so entitled to positive reward, is not only most agreeable to the etymology and natural import of the word, which signifies to pass one for righteous in judgment, but also manifestly agreeable to the force of the word as used in Scripture." Neither Dr. Chalmers nor any of "his school," hold that in the sinner's case, such an acquittal from all charge of guilt, which rendered him obnoxious to the punishment provided for in the law, and such a re-instatement in favor, privileges and communion with God, as if he had not sinned, can ever be had on the ground of personal innocence or perfect rectitude, but is an act of grace on the part of God—who is Judge, Lawgiver and Lord, all in one, on the ground of Christ's righteousness.

"The term is, therefore," says Dr. Dwight, "not used in the gospel, because its original meaning is intended here; but because this term figuratively used, better expresses *the thing intended* than any other. The act of God denoted by this term, as used in the gospel, so much resembles a forensic justification, or justification by law, that the word is *naturally*, and by an easy translation, adopted to express this act." It is in this sense Edwards uses the word, and with him, most orthodox American divines; and although both he and Dr. Chalmers were tenacious of theological technics "imputation" and "imputed," used to designate the act of God in respect of the reason of justification, yet when they explain themselves, they mean only, that in view of what Christ has suffered and done, God acquits, accepts and confers a title to eternal life, as really and fully, as if the believing sinner were himself righteous. The Lord, the Sovereign, Lawgiver, Judge and Executive—in the administration of His moral government—for the righteousness' sake of Christ, and through the love he bears to Him, withholds the penalty, cancels for ever all obligations past, present and to come, that bind the believer naturally to the endurance of everlasting woe, and places him in high unmerited and honorable relation to Himself as His Son and Heir. This is intelligible to the common sense of mankind, and will admit of very easy and familiar illustration.

² Edwards' Works, Vol. V. p. 354.

³ Dwight's Theol. Vol. III, p. 301.

A guilty child, cast out from his father's house, feels unhappy under his displeasure, but knows not how to satisfy or make amends for his flagrant offences, and wonders whether it is possible to conciliate him. His elder brother, whose character and conduct have peculiarly endeared him to that offended parent, is touched with sympathy, and deeply interested and affected on his behalf. He toils and suffers much, and renders such public satisfaction to the parents' injured law and authority, by his voluntary interposition and disinterested suffering, that the father, for his sake, consents to forgive¹ and to restore the discarded child. That child, accepted, restored and affected with a sense of his own just obnoxiousness to punishment and the evil of his ways, looks not to his penitential conduct as the reason of his forgiveness and acceptance, but feels that he is indebted to his brother's mediation, and that it is for his sake and through him he has been accepted. He cares not to philosophize about how this restoration has been effected, or the principle on which it has been done. It is alike his security and bliss to know, that on his brother's account—for his sake—he has been restored. So the humble Christian rests satisfied, and rejoices to know that it is for Jesus' sake, his elder Brother, on account of His worth and work, through the Father's love to Him, and delight in His perfect righteousness, that He is justified. Whether he can explain it fully or not, does not affect his faith. Our shorter Catechism attempts no explanation but simply states the fact, that God pardoneth all our sins, and accepteth us as righteous in His sight, only for the Righteousness of Christ, imputed to us and by faith alone."

After all the discussions on the subject of imputation, whether we decline the use of the term or are zealous for the technic, we must fall back upon what is obviously its common sense import, if we will not give up the radical overture of justification through the righteousness of Christ. One may define it to mean the legal connection between the act of one man and its desert in another; another may prefer to talk about a *legal union* in such way as to make the act of one man be regarded, in "the eye of the law," as the act of another. A third may contend for such an "*union* of representation," that upon the maxim *qui facit per alium facit per se*, the act of the substitute shall be regarded as the act of the principal. Attempts at philosophical accuracy here, have done mischief. Edwards has explained the thing with sufficient precision. "By Christ's Righteousness being imputed to us, is meant no other than this, that the Righteousness of Christ is accepted for us, and admitted instead of that perfect inherent Righteousness which ought to be in ourselves. Christ's

¹ Edwards' Works, Vol. V., p. 399.

perfect obedience shall be reckoned to our account, so that we shall have the benefit of it, as though we had performed it ourselves." A Scotch divine, of the last century, of note in his day, expresses himself to the same purport. "Imputing righteousness then should be the same as treating the person, whether righteous or not, in the same manner as if he was completely righteous," "not in a strict law sense, but what (is) as good as law, the mind and will of the only sovereign."

If men choose to philosophize upon this subject, and trying to make the justification of the believer plainer, by illustrations suggested by procedures of commercial justice, will prefer to say, that Christ's perfect personal obedience, shall be to the credit of the believing sinner, and become his personally by donation, and on that ground he is justified, because his proxy has obliged the law, or the principal in the bond has been paid by the endorser : or if they will prefer to say that the *person* of Christ was substituted for the *person* of the elect, so that He, acting "in their law, room and stead," suffered what they ought to have suffered, and did what they ought to have done, we freely confess that this is a depth of exposition, or philosophical explanation, which, however confidently they may believe and affirm it, we find not either in the Bible or the Confession of Faith ; nor presume to fathom ; nor can we see to be necessarily implied in the Scriptural use of the word impute. We would not here be wise above what is written ; nor make *illustrations* taken from commercial transactions among men the ground of *inferences* as to the nature of God's procedures in the justification of sinners.

Men understand practically, well enough, without any philosophical explanations, that it is a very common procedure, on the part of moral governors, to confer favors upon those who personally do not merit them, because of the personal worth or valuable services of another. In such cases there is some real or assumed relationship, between the deserving and the undeserving, that renders this a proper procedure. The children of a favorite at court, share in the benefits of his exaltation. Our regard for the parent is a reason often for our gracious treatment of his children. So the justification of believers, although an act of grace to them, accrues as the reward of its worth, as a favor which is awarded to them, as due not to them, but to Christ for His righteousness sake, and because of the relationship which they sustain to Him as His brethren. The love of the Father to Jesus Christ the Son, prompts a treatment for His sake, to which His people can lay no claim. Should we illustrate the subject as follows, we should render it intelligible to the common sense of men, and not perplex by any philosophical explanations.

The brethren of the heir apparent are found in rebellion against

¹ Riccaltoun's Works, Vol. III., p. 180, 186.

the government. Should the law take its course, and its penalty be executed, the forfeiture of their lives must be exacted. Their elder brother, their kinsman, redeemer, intercedes on their behalf. He is eminently devoted to the interests of the royal sovereign and father, and deeply interested for his honor and glory. He volunteers a series of services, designed to assert and to maintain his father's authority; subjects himself to much toil and suffering; devotes himself to the work of reconciling his brethren to that parent, against whom they have rebelled; undertakes to unfold to them his character, and the equity of his government; opposes himself to their prejudices and hostility; illustrates and magnifies before them the honor of his law; willingly falls a sacrifice through their hatred and malice; and by this means, brings them to repentance and reconciles them to their offended sovereign. In all this he has actually accomplished more for all the ends and purposes of a benignant government, done vastly more to support the sovereign's authority, to secure confidence in his administration, and expose the baseness, ingratitude, malignity and criminality of their rebellion, than if the penalty of the law had been fully executed on them. Throughout the whole of this devoted life of obedience, he pleads for their forgiveness, and in the last agonies of his dying moments still intercedes, praying, with his latest breath, father, forgive, they know not what they do. The royal sovereign, seeing all the great interests and ends of his government secured, through the loyal obedience and suffering of his devoted servant and son, being affected with intensest love for him, and knowing that this amazing proof of zeal for his honor and compassion for the rebellious—this voluntary sacrifice which he has made of himself to the justice and honor of his law and government, becomes available, and can be made efficient, to bring them to repentance, to restore their confidence, and thenceforth to render them his devoted subjects, issues his proclamation of pardon, and his act of grace, engaging to cancel their obligations to punishment, bestow on them unmerited favors, to endow them with a princely patrimony and to receive and treat them as his friends and children, the instant they accept the grace, and cordially return to their allegiance. Thus the monarch magnifies his grace. His public justice cannot be impeached. He indulges his love for his devoted servant and son, for whose sake he exercises his royal clemency, and thus doubly binds his once revolted subjects and children, by cords of love and gratitude to his sway. All this, as an illustration of the love and grace of God, through Jesus Christ, to the children of His adoption, is perfectly intelligible, and in accordance with the Scriptures. Faith is satisfied with a knowledge of the great facts—the bold outline of God's gracious procedures—and asks no more. Philosophy may attempt

to explain it more minutely, but it seems rather to bewilder and perplex. The explanation forms no part of the fact; nor is it essential to faith. Happy will it be for the churches and the cause of Christ, when theologians will learn the bounds of liberty here, and will concede it fully to each other in their explanations, without confounding them with the fact, reproaching each other for their differences of exposition, provided they hold "the faith once delivered to the saints."

Our author has noticed one particular exposition of the nature of imputation, and insists that the Confession of Faith cannot be interpreted in any other sense, than in what he pronounces Antinomianism. We must, forsooth, understand it in the sense he dictates for us; and if not we are insincere and adopt opinions "founded on a most false and nonsensical assumption," the merest Antinomians!! In this he greatly errs, as well in matter of fact as in modesty and charity. The apostle Paul has already admitted the fact, that the doctrine of justification by faith without the deeds of the law, as he taught it, might be, and actually was, misrepresented, and construed into a license for sin. And the objection, which he encountered was made even in stronger terms than our author employs. See Rom. 6: 1. It is his peculiar boast that his mode of presenting the doctrine of justification is not liable to such Antinomian objections. It is true that no *such* objection can be urged against his mode of presenting it, which makes justification depend upon "personal holiness as a condition of acceptance with God." But this praise is its condemnation, since it proves it to be radically, essentially different from the apostle Paul's teaching. That moment a man so states the doctrine of justification by faith without works, that the licentious spirit cannot find pretext for its objection, his doctrine, whatever it may be, cannot be identical with Paul's. For both in and ever since his day, the apostle's doctrine has been liable to this perversion and abuse. Our author's is as wide from it as heaven from earth. In meeting this objection and defending the doctrine, Paul, and the sacred writers, and the advocates of justification by faith alone without the deeds of the law, have recognized, and brought into view, important and radical distinctions, which our author seems to have never apprehended, or if he has, to have utterly disregarded."

The moral Law is regarded in different relations to man, as *written on the heart*, the law connatural with every man, the light or law of nature, *as the basis of the covenant constitution*, "the law or covenant of works," *as the foundation of the political constitution and ceremonial forms of the Jewish nation*, the Sinaiic Law or covenant—and *as the rule of life prescribed by Jesus Christ to his justified people*, "the law of faith the law of Christ,

¹Fin. Sys. III., v. 99.

²Vol. III., p. 106.

fellowship with God, unrestrained liberty of access to Him, Immortality and Eternal Life, form not the natural and necessary rewards of obedience to the law of God, as it is the law of nature—the law originally written on the heart. Our first parents were created and existed as intelligent conscious beings, for anything that appears to the contrary, and according to the plain Scriptural account of man's origin, anterior to their being placed in Eden. The formation of paradise for man, was no part of the original work of creation; but was a subsequent gratuitous procedure for his special benefit and happiness.¹ Whatever was done affecting his future prospects, was through a special arrangement that flowed entirely from God's sovereign pleasure. For anything that man could have known if left to the light of nature, his reason alone, he could have had no assured hope of it, much less founded a claim for eternal life, on his personal obedience to that light or law of nature. He might have naturally expected exemption from suffering, impunity, and present enjoyment, as long, and as far as he observed that law. He could not have known from this source anything with regard to an eternal state of existence, or how long it might please his Creator to allow him to continue in present obediential enjoyment. All the analogies he observed in creation around him, would not demonstrate to him his immortality. For anything he would learn from nature to the contrary, he might be but a transient creature, whose ephemeral existence was only of wider duration than those he saw undergoing continual and rapid changes and decays around him. The ignorance on this point, and the vain bewildered conjectures, contradictions, and reasonings of the heathen, who had lost all traditional knowledge on this subject, are proof conclusive of the insufficiency of the light or law of nature.

The Scriptures teach us, that man's knowledge of his own immortality, and his prospects for the future, came originally and gratuitously from God. He learned, on these high themes, just as he was taught, not by the light of nature, but by special revelation from God. It was subsequent to his creation—how long we are not told, nor is it of consequence to know—that God proposed to the first parents of the human race, the knowledge, means, and terms of life. In doing so, He ordained their perfect, personal obedience, as the condition of their exemption from death.

Abstinence from the fruit of the tree of knowledge, was made the test of their allegiance to God, and would secure their perpetuation in life. No simpler test could have been devised by man. It was not the suggestion, however, of natural reason, the moral dictate of unaided conscience, but was wholly arbitrary, resolvable into the good pleasure of God alone. The tree

¹ Gen. 1: 26; 2: 9.

of life was evidently symbolical, and sacramental in its character, designed to assure man of life, as the result and reward of his perfect obedience. See Gen. 2: 17, and 3: 22, 23. That life was illimitable and eternal, and not merely indefinitely and uncertainly prolonged, but to succeed, upon a change of constitution, when the condition should have been fulfilled, the test had been fully tried. For this is proved abundantly, not only by the perishable nature of the test prescribed, but especially by the declaration of the gospel, that what the law could not do, through the weakness of the flesh, Christ has done, who has not only brought immortality to light, but secured eternal life for them that believe. Rom. 8: 3. We take the facts as the Word of God unfolds them, and utterly reject and loathe the disguised infidelity, which, claiming to be a more rational interpreter, rejects all this, and affirms the mythic or allegorical character of the history, as given by Moses in the first three chapters of Genesis. With such interpretation, we have no sympathy; nor can we respect its teachers as ministers of the faith, though they may claim to be theological and learned professors, *cis* or *transatlantic*.

Here, then, we have the Divine arrangement first made, for bestowing eternal life on man, or, in other words, for establishing him, as fully and for ever justified in the sight of God. It was, indeed, founded on man's personal obedience; yet was it not a necessary appendage of the law of nature; but an arbitrary constitution, flowing entirely from the sovereign will and pleasure of the great Creator. It has been called the law of works, the law in its covenant form or relation, and is clearly distinguishable from the law as a natural rule of conduct. It was God's sovereign constitution, under which He was pleased to place the human race in His arrangements with our first parents, and by which, through His own act of gratuitous benignity, He might direct the hopes and aspirations of man toward eternal life, to be enjoyed, and assured to him eventually, in a state of perfect justification. To object against the covenant character of this constitution, that is, the fact of its involvency, promises, and specifying conditions for their fulfilment, because Adam was not consulted and asked to give his consent, is the veriest impertinence, if not bordering on impiety; for the assent or consent of man, to any and every arrangement which God should propose to him for his conduct and benefit, is part and parcel of that absolute obedience required from him by the very law of his creation. He is not an independent being, on equal terms, to treat with God.

This constitution was a great public procedure, designed by God to have a bearing on the relations, the character, the destiny of Adam's progeny. He, as the head of his race, a public person, was tried; and the relations of his offspring to God, and their

condition and character, were to be affected by his conduct. It is not conceivable how any of the race to be developed from Adam, would have ever been placed, in circumstances more propitious and favorable for the success of the trial, than was Adam. All the attendant circumstances and correlate ordinations of God, mentioned by Moses, show, that they were organic in their character, and that God had designedly arranged everything, so that in trying him, He tried all his natural offspring. Men may reason and object as they choose, on this subject; but the fact is unquestionable and can never be gainsaid, that his offspring are treated, as Adam himself deserved to be treated, and that, too, before any actual personal transgression of theirs has been developed. For, on his failure, God, not only drove him out of Paradise, but all his offspring have, with him, thenceforth been excluded from it; they are born into the world which God has cursed for his sake; and death reigns over all, as well the infant that never knew the difference between good and evil, as the first father himself, who subjected his race to its tyranny. Not one of all his progeny has ever been placed in equally favorable circumstances with him. Let men talk as they please about a system of moral government, and try to read their condition and destiny by the light of nature, leaving out of view the public character and relations of the first parent, the facts remain for ever undeniable, that we have been exiled from Paradise, along with him, and that none have ever been suffered to re-enter, and attempt what Adam failed to do. Such was the connection or relation, between him and his posterity, that, as Paul affirms, "by the offence of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation."

The law or covenant of works violated by Adam, has been in a constant process of execution. His act has attainted his race. All possibility of a man's justifying himself before God, on Adamic ground, has for ever ceased. It may as truly be said of the forfeiture of eternal life, exacted on all our mortal race, as it was, according to the old English law, of the traitor's offspring.

"By his treason standst thou not attained,
Corrupted, and exempt from ancient gentry?"

Under the Sinaitic covenant, the Lord proclaimed the moral law, and made it the basis of that constitution, according to which He assumed the Jewish nation into a political compact with Himself, as their Lawgiver and Judge. Its great design is to foreshadow and prepare the way for the coming and kingdom of the promised Messiah. While it held forth obedience as the condition of justification, it was not with the design, or expectation on the part of God, that man would fulfil it. The very proclamation of it

Rom. 5 : 18.

filled the whole multitude with horror and consternation, and made them beg for a mediator, some constituted head and organ, through whom they might approach to a communion with God. See Exod. 20: 1-19, and Heb. 12: 18-21. To this, it will be objected; but the apostle has anticipated the objection: "Wherefore, then, serveth the law?" He is speaking of the law, under the Sinaitic covenant, and he answers promptly and pointedly, "It was added, because of transgressions." It was not proposed by God as an entire, independent rule of righteousness, to which alone they were to look, who sought for justification before Him. It was a mere appendage to something else. That was the Abrahamic covenant, or constitution, in which justification is held forth by faith in the promised seed—"the covenant that was confirmed before of God in Christ." Its object was to show what that righteousness is, which men must produce in order to their justification before God, and thus contrasting it with their transgressions, for ever kill all their proud hopes of meriting His favor by their own works, and make them look to a Mediator. "Before faith came," says the apostle, "we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith, which should afterwards be revealed. Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster, to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith." Thus we see, that to the former promises made to Abraham and the fathers, the Lord added a fiery law, promulged from Sinai, in thunder and lightning, with a terrible voice, to stiff-necked, self-righteous Israel, by which to break down their pride and haughtiness, and make them sigh and long for the promised Redeemer, "who of God is made unto us wisdom and righteousness, and sanctification and redemption." So Christ used the law as a covenant of works, to kill the pride and self-righteousness of the young man,* who thought, by his good deeds, to merit eternal life. His perfect morality was but a development of selfishness.

But for the covenant of grace confirmed in Christ, the human race had universally and eternally perished, for anything that we can learn, to the contrary, from the Word of God, or that the human mind, unaided by revelation, would have discovered or demonstrated for itself. He fulfilled all righteousness; and sinners now are to turn away from the fiery, condemning law, as the covenant of works, and look to Christ, to be justified through Him, the new and glorious Head of His believing people, and on the ground of His deserving. He "hath redeemed us from the curse of the law being made a curse for us." "By the obedience of one, shall many be justified." Surely shall one say, "In the Lord have I righteousness and strength, even to Him shall men

¹ Gal. 3: 19.² Gal. 3: 17.³ Gal. 3: 23, 24.⁴ 1 Cor. 1: 30.⁵ Mat. 19: 16-22.⁶ Gal. 3: 13.⁷ Rom. 5: 19.

come" for justification. "In the Lord shall all the seed of Israel be justified, and shall glory."¹

Neither the covenant of works, nor the covenant of grace, at all affect our natural and rightful obligations, as rational creatures, to obey the moral law of God. To this obedience, justification before God, so as to entitle to eternal life, never was promised. All God's arrangements for man's attaining to it, have been made through a publicly constituted or covenant Head—first through Adam, next through Christ, the second Adam. Both were procedures of Divine sovereignty, and we can know nothing of justification unto eternal life, but as we learn it from the revelation of God. Adam's failure to attain to it by his obedience, and our forfeiture of it through him, did not and could not destroy our natural obligations to obey the law. No more does Christ's perfect obedience, and our justification through Him, and restoration to the eternal life, forfeited in Adam. We are "not without law to God, but under the law to Christ."² But this natural and rightful obedience, which we personally owe to God, can never form the ground of our justification before Him. "For if there had been a law given, which could have given life, verily righteousness"—that conformity to law which justifies before God—"should have been by the law."³ We are all under one or other of the public constitutions which God has ordained for men's justification unto eternal life—the moral law as it was ordained with Adam, or the moral law, as it is ordained in Christ. Naturally, we all lie under the former; but its motive influence is not sufficient to secure from us that perfect obedience which was made the condition of justification. Clinging to it, with the young man in the gospel, Christ is rejected, and the sinner perishes. "As many as are of the works of the law, are under the curse."⁴ It is only by the cordial choice of, and confident reliance on, Jesus Christ, as the Lord our Righteousness, that we pass from under the broken constitution—the violated law, threatening curse, and are brought into union with Him. There is no other means of escape from the desert of Adam's sin being visited on us his children, but by our being found in Christ, being united to Him by faith, and so made partakers of the benefit of His righteousness. Our relationship to the law must be changed; but this change does not affect or change our natural obligations. They remain for ever the same, and follow us, whether on earth, in heaven, or in hell. But to these natural obligations, no promise of justification unto eternal life, has ever been annexed; and to teach, that justification before God is to be attained through our own personal, perfect obedience to the law, is, if we at all

¹ Isai. 45: 24, 25.

² Gal. 3: 21.

³ 1 Cor. 10: 21.

⁴ Gal. 3: 10.

understand the Word of God, to subvert the gospel of Jesus Christ, and to destroy the souls and hopes of men for ever.

Our author seems to have lost sight of these different relations, in which men may stand to the law, and of the distinctions on this subject, so clearly made, in the Scriptures, when he insists upon perfect, personal obedience to the law, as the ground or condition of immutable justification before God. According to his view, there is no security whatever for the believer, whether on earth or in heaven, but what he can find in his own perfect holiness or obedience to the law. He is not fully justified at any moment, and cannot be fully assured of his admission to eternal life. The utmost he can dare to hope is, that, possibly, probably, by persevering in perfect obedience, he may, in the end, be fully justified. Verily, this is to bring back the thunders and tempest, the smoke, and lightnings and terrors of Sinai; and by throwing men upon their own deeds, to drive to utter despair, the more humble and self-diffident, who cannot, with our author, and the deluded victims of an offensive spiritual pride, flatter themselves that their ways are found "perfect before God."

He defines justification before God, to be "an *ultimate* treatment of the sinner as just"—not a present, full acquittal and acceptance with God. And so confident is he, that he tells us, "Sinners cannot possibly be justified *in any other sense*." The apostle differs from him, most pointedly and radically; for he makes justification before God, a Divine procedure, so certain and so complete, upon the very first exercise of faith, as not only to be known by the believer as a veritable fact already taken place, but also to become efficient as a cause, operating to produce its appropriate and blissful results or fruits. "Being justified by faith, we have peace with God," &c.

Christ, in fact, according to our author, has no other part or office to do in our justification, than to secure a "governmental decree of pardon or amnesty," which places us in a condition to justify ourselves by our own personal obedience. For so far as justification by Christ is concerned, he makes it to consist wholly in pardon. At one moment, he says, the sinner is justified by faith, and yet talks of an *ultimate* justification, on the ground of personal obedience; and that obedience, he insists, must be perfect, for he will not admit, that anything short of perfection is obedience at all, or that God *can* accept anything else. "Nothing," says he, "can be virtue, that is not just what the moral law demands. That is, nothing *short* of what it requires can be, in any sense, virtue. The common idea seems to be, that a kind of obedience is rendered to God by Christians, which is true religion, and which, on Christ's account, is accepted of God, which, after

¹ Fin. Sys. III.. p. 98.

² Rom. 5: 6.

all, comes indefinitely short of full or entire obedience at any moment; that the gospel has, somehow, brought men, that is, Christians, into such relations, that God really accepts of them an imperfect obedience, something far below what His law requires; that Christians are accepted and justified while they render at best but a partial obedience, and while they sin more or less at every moment. Now this appears to me as radical an error as can well be taught. The advocates of this theory hold, that Christians are justified, that is, that they are pardoned and accepted, and treated as just, though at every moment sinning, by coming short of rendering that obedience which the moral law demands. They do not pretend that they are justified at any moment by the law, for that at every moment condemns them for present sin, but that they are justified by grace, not in the sense that they are made really and personally righteous by grace, but that grace pardons and accepts, and, in this sense, justifies them, when they are in the present commission of an indefinite amount of sin; that *grace* accounts them righteous, while in fact they are continually sinning; that they are fully pardoned and acquitted, while at the same time committing sin. While voluntarily withholding full obedience, their partial obedience is accepted, and the sin of withholding full obedience is forgiven. God accepts what the sinner has a mind to give, and forgives what he voluntarily withholds. This is no caricature.”¹

We greatly differ from our author. It is not only a provoking irritating caricature, but an impudent sophistical sneer, and never would have been indulged by one, who did not allow himself to ride over rough-shod, and to take delight in trampling under his feet, the distinctions which the apostle Paul and evangelical theologians after him, from his day down, have recognized between things that differ, viz, the law of God as a covenant of works or means of justification, and the law of God as the covenant of grace or law of faith, which proffers justification without deeds of righteousness, and who did not confound with both, the natural obligations to obedience, which, so far as the question of justification is concerned, are neither here nor there, in any way altered or affected, nor made the pivot on which turn acceptance with God, admission to a justified state as adopted children, and a title to eternal life. The discriminating reader will not fail to detect in the above extracts, the sophistical use he makes of familiar forms of speech, such expressions as, “sinning,” “committing sin,” “withholding full obedience,” “what the sinner has a mind to give,” &c, and in the popular sense of voluntary and deliberate offences, and thus charging on those whose sentiments he condemns, statements and admission which

¹Fin. Syst., II., pp. 178, 179.

they do not make, in the sense he attributes to them. The advocates of justification by faith without works, are as cautious and zealous as our author, if not more so, in teaching, that the mind of the sinner who is justified by faith, is in such state, that he cannot willingly and deliberately do what he knows to be sin, or refuse to do what he knows to be his duty, while they are far, very far, from admitting or representing as our author does, that this is perfect obedience, or "the full entire obedience," to use his own favorite phrase, which the law requires. So far from Antinomian tendencies and predilections, their morality and piety and spirituality will not suffer by comparison with those who make more display, and whose censoriousness and uncharitableness have become proverbial.

The views he slanders are those of the Westminster Confession of Faith, which teaches that "believers be not under the law as a covenant of works to be justified or condemned," and they are in accordance with the apostle Paul's, for he says of himself, "I through the law, am dead to the law, that I might live unto God. I do not frustrate the grace of God, for if righteousness come by the law then Christ is dead in vain." "Now we are delivered from the law, that being dead wherein we were held." It has been well remarked,⁴ that if as to any set of men, the justifying and condemning power be removed from that law which God gave to Adam, as a covenant of works, and to all mankind in him; then the *covenant form* of that law is done away as to them, so that there is not a covenant of works in being as to them, to have a commanding power over them. But such is the case of believers, that law can neither justify them nor condemn; therefore there is no covenant of works in being between God and them, to have a commanding power over them; our Lord Jesus blotted out the handwriting, took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross." How well does this agree with the apostles doctrine and illustrations! "Wherefore my brethren ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ, that ye should be married to another, even to him, who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God." The first husband, the first head is dead to us; or we are dead to it, that is, the covenant relation is destroyed. "Ye are not under the law but under grace." This death to the law as a covenant of works, or divorce from the first husband, is effected by Christ. Our Lord Jesus put Himself under the commanding power of the law as a covenant of works, and gave it *perfect* obedience, to deliver His people from under it. "God sent forth his son made of a woman made under the law to redeem them that were under the law." That they never should put their necks under that yoke again,

²Chap. 19; Sec. 6.³Gal. 2; 19, 21.⁵Rom. 7; 6.⁴Marrow of Modern Divinity, p. 169.⁴Col. 2; 16.⁶Rom. 7; 4.⁷Gal. 4, 5.

cannot but be highly dishonoring to this crucified Christ, who disarmed the law of its thunders, defaced the obligation of it as a covenant, and as it were ground the stones on which it was written to powder.¹ All this will doubtless appear unmeaning and ridiculous to our author.

His experience runs not in this way at all. He has indeed very correctly said of it, "this is certainly another gospel from the one I am circulating. It is not a difference merely on some speculative or theoretic point. It is a point fundamental to the gospel, and to salvation if any one can be." Thus He has deliberately and solemnly made the fearful issue, and separated himself from the hosts of his Presbyterian and Congregational brethren, from the Reformers and the multitudes of holy and devoted men in past ages, who lived and died in the faith of this very doctrine which he calls Antinomianism, and which as taught by the apostle Paul, was slandered by unbelievers in the very same way he does our faith. How widely and fundamentally he differs, we proceed to show from his own statements.

He objects to the common phraseology that "the law regards Christ's obedience as ours on the ground that He obeyed for us," because the legal maxim, that what a man does by another he does by himself, does not apply except in cases where one acts in behalf of another by his own consent, which was not the case with the obedience of Christ." That Christ acted in behalf of His sheep, suffered too, and died on their behalf, are facts of unquestionable verity. "I lay down my life says the Saviour," for the sheep," "Jesus was made a surety of a better testament." A surety is one who undertakes for another to make good his obligations. Christ is surety for God to sinners, pledging the oath and promises of the Father, and engaging in the exercise of that power and authority with which He is invested to make men good.² Even Socinians admit this. But He is especially surety for men to God, and so is Mediator between God and man, who gave Himself a ransom for all,³ "was made a curse for us,"⁴ "was made sin for us,"⁵ "was wounded for our transgressions and bruised for our iniquities."⁶ God has constituted Him a public Head, "given Him for a covenant of the people," and authorized Him to act for all that will accept His proffered services. He offers Himself as Sponsor or Surety for us, and our consent to Him, and trust in Him, as our Prophet, Priest, and King, in the various offices He performs, gives us at once the benefit of His suretiship.

The objection that Christ's obedience cannot avail for us, because He has not been appointed by us, seems to be worse than

¹ Charnock's Works, II., p. 531. ² Fin. Syst. III., p. 155. ³ III., p. 99.
⁴ John 10; 15, ⁵ Heb. 7; 22. ⁶ Heb. 6; 17, 18, John 10; 25, 37, 38, 6; 39, 40.
⁷ 1 Tim. 2; 5, 6, ⁸ Gal. 3; 13. ⁹ 2 Cor. 8; 21. ¹⁰ 2 Isai. 53; 5.

futile. It would have been the very height of impiety for us, to propose a substitute to meet our obligations, and make amends for our failure, unless God had intimated His will. If He, in infinite grace, has been pleased so to do, to withhold our consent would be the veriest pride and madness. A government acts for the interests of its subjects. Even in our own, where representation is carried out more explicitly and formally by the choice of electors, the government, in matters of vital moment, acts for us, and where our consent is not asked. Minor children and females, have no opportunity of expressing their consent or dissent. Their parents and husbands act for them. A dying father appoints one to act, and render all services in law necessary, for his children's welfare. Their refusal cordially to submit to such procedures, would be accounted just as criminal as it would be injurious to their interests. The consent of the minor does not vest more authority in the acting Executor or Justice appointed of the father, than the law had given him. If he discharges his trust so as to conciliate the confidence, and gain the consent of those for whom he acts, it does indeed magnify his grace and benevolence, his wisdom and care, but gives him no authority he did not previously possess. It is thus with our Lord Jesus Christ. He acts for us and manages our interest, when in our impotence and guilt we oppose Him; nor does He desist in reference to those given Him, put under His care, by the Father, for whom He has been appointed guardian and trustee, till He overcomes their enmity, by the manifestation of His love and excellence, and winning their hearts, sways them, as well with their full consent, as by the appointment of the Father. The proofs of the fact, that He performs such invaluable services, as guardian, shepherd, justice, sponsor or representative of His people, according to the Father's deed of trust, are abundant in the Scriptures. In his dying moments He performed the surety's service and prayed, "Father forgive them for they know not what they do."¹ "Deliver him from going down to the pit; I have found a ransom."² "He was delivered for our offences and raised again for our Justification."³ "When we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son, much more being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life."⁴ "Who is he that condemneth? it is Christ that died, yea rather is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, to make intercession for us."⁵ "He hath made us accepted in the Beloved."⁶ "The Father hath committed all judgment into my hand."⁷ "And ye are complete in Him, which is the Head."⁸ Jesus was made surety of a better testament."⁹ We confess that with such and other proof of the fact of His being constituted by the Father,

¹ Luke 23; 34.² Job, 33; 24.³ Rom. 4; 25.⁴ Rom. 8; 34.⁵ Eph. 1; 6.⁶ John 6; 22.⁷ Col. 2; 10.⁸ Heb. 7; 22.

the great Administrator of the covenant of grace, our sensibilities have been greatly shocked, by the flippant, dogmatic and supercilious manner, in which our author's philosophy has led him to set aside the surety work of Christ, and all His active obedience, as the reason with God, or ground of our justification in His sight.

But this is not the worst. He affirms that it is "a most false and nonsensical assumption, that Christ owed no obedience to the law in His own person. This is an infinite mistake." The obedience of the blessed Redeemer, he makes to be as truly and fully necessary for his own personal justification by the law, as is the personal obedience of man for his justification on the same basis. His public office and relation as mediator and surety are totally overlooked, and He is placed by our author, precisely on the same ground, that any one of our mortal race occupies, in his natural condition, as the subject of God's moral government. "It was naturally impossible for *Him*, and is naturally impossible for *any being*, to perform a work of supererogation, that is, to be more benevolent than the law of God requires him to be. This is, and must be, as true of God, as it is of any other being. Would not Christ have sinned, had He not been perfectly benevolent? If He would, it follows that He owed obedience to the law, as really as any other being. Indeed, a being that owed no obedience to the moral law, must be wholly incapable of virtue; for what is virtue but obedience to the moral law? But if Christ owed personal obedience to the moral law, then His obedience would no more than justify himself. He did no more than this. He could do no more. It was *naturally impossible* for Him, then, to obey in our behalf." Thus does he, by his philosophy, set aside the whole mediatorial obedience of Christ, as a nullity and impossibility. We can scarcely restrain the feelings of abhorrence, with which the presumption and rashness of our author, in carrying out his theory, lead him to express himself on a theme, so vitally dear and infinitely important to our hopes of acceptance with God and eternal life. The death of Christ was on His part an *act* of obedience. "This commandment have I received of my Father," says He, viz. that "He should lay down His life for His sheep." He "became obedient unto death, even the death of the Cross." This act of obedience did not grow out of His personal obligations as a subject of mere moral government. It was a public work, incident and essential to His mediatorial and surety character, office, and relation, and to which He voluntarily engaged Himself, in the gracious covenant of redemption. To characterize, as our author does, the views of those who so understand and represent it, as if they made it a work of supererogation, we will not say, is an attempt to use the

¹ Fin. Sys. III., p. 99.

² Fin. Sys., III., 100.

³ John 10: 18.

⁴ Phil. 2: 8.

odium theologicum among Protestants, but looks very much like it. It is, in fact, to our mind, a most disgusting and offensive caricature, of a radical truth of the ever-blessed gospel of salvation.

The reader will not fail to perceive here, how he uses both his philosophy and sophistry in maintaining his positions. With him, the sum total and perfection of obedience, is good-will or willing good to God and to the universe. Christ was under obligations to be perfectly benevolent, both as man and as God. His obedience would not possibly exceed these; therefore His obedience would be for none other than Himself, to meet and sustain His own personal obligations. Consequently, everything beyond this, being more than moral law required, must be a work of supererogation. His object is, by the *argumentum ducens in absurdum*, to prove, that the obedience of Christ can have no place in our justification. But his argument proves too much; for it proves, that neither can the death of Christ have place in our justification, or pardon, as he uses the word, since that death was an act of obedience, by the showing of Christ Himself. See John, 10 : 18. But here again our author's errors can be traced to the fact of his attempting to simplify, by confounding things that differ.

The above extract, which is of kindred character with many that might be added, betrays the fact, that he either has totally lost sight of, or cares not to make, the distinction already noticed, and in the sacred Scriptures constantly kept in view, between natural obligations binding us personally to keep the moral law, and official obligations binding to certain acts and services rendered necessary in particular public offices and arbitrarily constituted relations, and which pertain not to any natural relationship. It pertained not to Christ as God—was not an obligation pressing Him as a Divine person, to assume human nature into union with Himself, and be made under the law and under the curse. Neither did it pertain to Him as man, to make the suicidal sacrifice of Himself, of which He speaks. John, 10 : 18. But assuming the office and relationship of Surety and Mediator, in that character and relation, He owned and met obligations, from which naturally He was exempt; but which obligations were assumed not for Himself, only for His people. The eternal Son of God, the second person of the adorable Trinity, as God equal with the Father, was not, and could not be, naturally, under moral obligations to perform the acts and services, and to accomplish the death, to which He devoted Himself.

Whatever view we may take of His benevolence in this matter, the Scriptures are so unequivocal and pointed, and clear, that we are perfectly amazed our author has not seen and pondered what they affirm, viz. that the whole, from beginning to end, was a procedure of grace. Nor will we allow him here to confound

between grace and benevolence; for the Scriptures are just as clear in distinguishing between them, and in making grace a matter of pure, unobligated favor, flowing freely from the sovereign pleasure of God. "The grace of Christ" is something characteristically different from natural good will or benevolent regards. Our first parent and public head, having failed and lost the inheritance promised on condition of his obedience, God was under no moral obligations to provide another: much less was the Eternal Son, the second person of the Godhead, under moral obligations, to assume human nature into union with His Divine nature, and thus place Himself in, and adapt Himself to, the circumstances and condition, in which a public person or Head must appear and act, if fallen man is to be ever rescued. The Son of God, however, having most graciously undertaken thus to assume man's nature, and place Himself in new relations to His fallen creatures, to appear and act as a new public Head, the second Adam, a Surety, Mediator, Redeemer, Deliverer, Prophet, Priest, King, &c., did, by that very fact, undertake to perform important obligations, which naturally pertain to Him. In other words, His mediatorial office and relation, His being constituted the second Adam, involved services and looked to sufferings and acts, to which, as Son of God, He was under no obligation to devote Himself, nor was the Father to require from Him.

Our author loses sight entirely of the mystery of His person. His human nature never existed separate from His divine. His personal Deity never was united to a human person. The man Christ Jesus was the Son of God; and the Son of God was the man Christ Jesus. These are correlate terms, to denote the same person, although in different respects of nature. Our author, by his philosophy, and reasonings, places Him in the condition and under the obligations of a mere creature—of one descending from Adam "by ordinary generation." Here, we lament to say, he has been led presumptuously astray by his philosophy. Exercising a simple, childlike faith in the testimony of God—looking to religion as revealed in the Bible, and not as it lies in the natural reason—taking the Scriptures as a communication from God, instead of exalting his philosophy of free-will and moral government, as he has defined them,—and being content to sit at the feet of Jesus, and learning of Him, instead of rising above Him, and judging both Him, and His obligation, by the rule of his own cogitation, our brother would certainly have perceived, that the scheme of redemption is not a system of mere natural moral government—that it existed not eternally in the nature of things—but that it proceeds from the free and sovereign love and grace of God, electing a portion of the fallen, ruined, guilty human race, and providing and ordaining for them a new and glorious Head, on condition of whose faithful discharge of the

duties and service required of Him, those, who were by nature children of wrath, and heirs of the curse, should be adopted in Him, as the sons and daughters of the Lord Almighty, justified for ever in His sight, and brought into and established, eternally, in a new and exalted relation to the Most High, far more glorious and blessed, than would have been secured, or had been originally proposed, by the obedience of their first and fallen head. See Eph. 1 : 3-10. "God the Father so loved the world as to give his only begotten Son," &c. God the Son most freely gave Himself and consecrated Himself to the work of saving those whom the Father gave to Him, as the reward of His purchase. See John, 17 : 6, 11, 19, 20, 21. Placed in a new and peculiar relation by this covenant of redemption, peculiar services devolved on Him for the justification and salvation of those who were given to Him by the Father. As the newly constituted covenant Head, He voluntarily received commands, and assumed obligations, which pertained not to Him, as the Eternal Son. See John, 6 : 37-40 ; 10 : 14-18. This glorious covenant (see Psalms, 89 : 3) seems to have been lost sight of by our author, in the mazes of his philosophy.

So far from the obligations binding our blessed Redeemer to obedience, being wholly for Himself, His whole life and discourses prove that they were not natural to Him as the Son of God, but were voluntarily assumed, and for the discharge of which He qualified Himself, by taking upon Him our nature, that He might have somewhat to offer, and by His obedience, merit the reward promised of the Father, which was to be for ever exalted and established as the second Adam, the Lord of the new creation, and Head over all things to His Church. See Heb. 10 : 5-13, and Phil. 2 : 5-11. Losing sight of this official public relation of Christ, our author has yielded himself to the guidance of his philosophy, and been led into a labyrinth of confusion and error. Having taken a metaphysical position, as to the nature and ground of moral obligation, which necessitates him, for consistency's sake, to make, by a process of generalization, both God and man's moral obligations to be of like character; neglecting to distinguish between things that differ, and resolving God's special revelations of grace in the scheme of redemption through Jesus Christ, into a system of mere moral government, he is ever found conflicting with the Scriptures. Denying that the obedience of Christ was rendered on behalf of His people, as their covenant Head or Surety, through whom alone God deals with us and for us, he is necessitated to make justification mere pardon. Yet this is not done openly and fully; for at one moment he identifies "pardoning and restoring to favor," which things are not identical, and at the next, makes them to differ, averring, that

¹ John 3 ; 16.

“justification consists,” not in the laws pronouncing the sinner just, but in his being *ultimately*, governmentally treated as if he were just.” Present pardon, according to his own admission, cannot justify. The sinner is not, in fact, and fully, justified when he believes; but “ultimately” he will be. When or how long before he will be “*ultimately*, governmentally treated as just,” however, he does not say. This we are left to infer, from his various positions or assertions advanced, while discussing the subject. Thence we learn, that it is only when, and while, perfect obedience is rendered by men in their own persons, that they are justified. And here he brings in his doctrine of perfection, or entire sanctification, substituting the holiness of the believer for the righteousness of Christ.

“The Bible,” says he, “everywhere represents justified persons as sanctified, and always, expressly or impliedly, conditions justification upon sanctification.” “By sanctification being a condition of justification, the following things are intended. 1. That present, full and entire consecration of heart and life to God and His service, is an unalterable condition of present pardon, of past sin, and of present acceptance with God. 2. That the penitent soul remains justified no longer than this full-hearted consecration continues.” The phrases “full-hearted consecration,” “entire consecration of heart and life,” “full, present obedience,” “entire obedience,” “universal obedience,” “sincerity,” “obedience,” and such like, used by our author, when speaking of the condition of justification, are, with him, the synonymes of absolute perfection of moral character, utter sinlessness, living without sin. “That he cannot be justified by the law, while there is a particle of sin in him,” he says, “is too plain to need proof. But can he be pardoned and accepted, and then justified, in the gospel sense, while sin, any degree of sin, remains in him? Certainly not. For the law, unless it be repealed, and Antinomianism be true, continues to condemn, while there is any degree of sin in him.” A man, therefore, must become perfectly holy in order to forgiveness, in the very first instance; and the slightest deviation afterwards, throws him at once back as fully under the condemnation of the law, as he was at the first. To such absurdity and error is he led by disregarding the different relations in which God has been pleased to give the moral law to men.

The following passage shows how utterly he abhors, and slanderously he reproaches, the distinction to which we have referred. “If I understand the powers of the Presbyterian confession of faith, they regarded justification *as a state* remitting from the relation of an adopted child of God, which state is entered by faith alone, and held that justification is not con-

² Fin. Sys., III., p. 98.

³ Fin Sys., II., p. 183.

⁴ Id. III., p. 107.

ditionated upon obedience for the time being, but that a person in this state may (as they hold that all in this life in fact do) sin daily, and even continually, yet without condemnation by the law, their sin bringing them only under his fatherly displeasure, and subjecting them to the necessity of repentance, as a condition of his fatherly favor, but not as a condition of pardon or of ultimate salvation. They seem to have regarded the child of God as no longer under moral government, in such a sense that sin was imputed to him, this having been imputed to Christ and Christ's righteousness so literally imputed to him, that do what he may after the first act of faith, he is accounted and treated in his person as wholly righteous. If this is not Antinomianism, I know not what is; since they hold that all who once believed will certainly be saved, yet that their perseverance in holy obedience to the end is in no case a condition of final justification, but that this is conditioned upon the first act of faith alone. They support their position with quotations from Scripture as *much in point* as is *common* for them. (How very modest, but still more so what follows.) When I read that Confession of Faith I am ashamed, not to say *indignant*, at the *loose* and often *ridiculous* manner (strange language and charges from one so remarkably loose and incorrect himself in the use of language) in which its framers and abettors quote Scripture in support of some of its *nonsensical* positions. They often rely on proof texts, that in their meaning and spirit have not the remotest allusion to the point, in support of which they are quoted. I have tried to understand the subject of justification, as it is taught in the Bible, without going in to labored speculations or to theological technicalities.⁷¹ How true this may be, the reader will judge. But to us it is very obvious that he has not gone to his Bible, and studied it as a whole, and taken his views entirely thence; but has actually gone into the most labored speculations, seeking to generalise and simplify, and to reduce the whole of God's complicated and wonderful dispensations of grace, into a mere natural system of moral government. Throughout the whole of his two volumes he has attempted but little of Scriptural exposition, but having stated his positions, and reasoned out his conclusions, in the light of his philosophy, has piled together heaps of texts, for which he has apologized to his readers. And well might he do so, in view of the manner in which he has applied passages to his purpose, without reference to their connection, or to the great outline and scheme pervading the word of God. Professor Morgan has in one place been introduced to do this work for him, by way of answering Dr. Beecher.⁷²

We, too, object to technicalities when addressing impenitent men, who have never read their Bible attentively, and are unac-

⁷¹ Fin. Sys. III., 159, 160.

⁷² Fin. Sys. III., 106, 156.

quainted with the convenient forms of speech among theologians. But when Theology is the subject expressly treated, and that for the instruction of theological students, candidates for the gospel ministry, a sneer at technicalities, will be understood and passed for what it is worth.

Our author shall speak for himself. "The following," says he, "is a succinct and true account of the matter: (viz: the justification of a sinner before God,) upon condition of the mediatorial death and work of Christ, (which work, of course, according to his own showing as above noticed, was obedience for Himself that could no more than justify Himself,) the penitent and believing soul is freely pardoned and received to favor, as if he had not sinned, *while he remains* penitent and believing, *subject however* to condemnation and eternal death, unless he holds fast the beginning of his confidence to the end of life." Language cannot possibly affirm, more clearly and pointedly, that the believer justifies himself by his own personal obedience. In doing so he departs, as wide as the poles, from those whose confession of faith he pronounces "fabulous and better befitting a romance than a system of theology." He carries out his doctrine boldly, and tracing the details of human obedience, makes each specific part a condition of justification before God." "Repentance, also, is a condition of our justification. "Faith in Christ is another condition of our justification." "Sanctification is another condition of justification." "Perseverance in faith and obedience, or in consecration to God, is also an unalterable condition of justification or of pardon or acceptance with God."

Here, again, our author has lost sight of, or does not care to notice the distinction—so common and carefully made, among those whom he so charitably denounces as Antinomians—between the condition, and the indispensable evidences of a justified state. Faith, repentance, sanctification, perseverance in holy obedience, and maintaining our confidence and steadfastness in him unto the end, are all regarded as essential tokens or proofs of a gracious state, the evidences that pardon and acceptance with God are truly had, and that we are the children of his adoption. The difference is radical between these things, as traits of character, the accompaniments or results of justification, the offerings of love, and as *conditions* of justification. So far as the developments of holiness are concerned, the former is a much more efficient mode of securing them, than the latter. Our author's zeal here is out of place. He must not attribute, as do many of his followers, all the holiness abroad, to the influence of his system. As much conscientiousness, zeal and devotedness to God, with far more of fidelity to Jesus Christ and to covenant engagements, of humility, and far less of self-conceit, and

¹ Fin. Syst., III., p. 160. ² III., p. 103. ³ III., p. 108. ⁴ III., p. 155.

spiritual pride, and a vastly better morality, may be found among those whom he reprobates as Antinomians, than among modern theological quacks and pretenders to perfection.

In all his extended attempt to apply his philosophy to the doctrine of justification by faith, he has not defined carefully the meaning in which he uses the word condition. This, in a work on systematic theology, to say the least, is a great defect. The word, it is well known, is variously used; sometimes to denote, "the state in which things are put or placed together;" sometimes "the qualities attributes or properties of persons or things whether good or bad;" either general or particular, accidental or inherent, physical or moral;" sometimes "the whole or partial circumstances under which anything is done or required to be done;" and at others, "the actions, services, or previous terms, which, it is agreed, or covenanted, bargained or stipulated, shall be performed by one party to entitle to or secure other things to be done by another party." In which particular sense he employs the word, it does not always appear; but the idea that "would most naturally" be suggested to the ordinary reader is the latter. It would seem, that he designed, occasionally, to use it as it is employed in philosophy. But even in this "sense," he is far from being explicit and careful in its use. In speaking of some accident, or circumstance, which is *not essential to the thing*, but which is yet necessary to its production, we are apt to say of it, that it is a condition without which, *a sine qua non* as light, is a condition of vision, without which, though a man have good eyes, he cannot see objects, and air, of life, without which, though a man have good lungs, and be in health, he cannot even breathe. Reconciliation to God, confidence in Him, repentance, love and holiness, may thus be styled indispensable to justification and salvation; but not at all in the popular sense of the term as meritorious terms or works or duties prerequisite and conducing to it. Those whom he condemns as Antinomians, admit and teach, that faith, repentance, love and new obedience characterize a justified state, and that as qualities, attributes, properties, indispensably necessary as evidences of the fact of justification, as its invariable accompaniments, they may, in the philosophic sense of the word, be called conditions; but they deprecate the use of the term, because this is not its popular sense, and is eminently calculated, to engender and foster a self-righteous spirit, and to lead into dangerous practical error.

Edwards says: "Here, if I may humbly express what seems evident to me, though faith be indeed the condition of justification, so as nothing else is, yet this matter is not clearly and sufficiently explained by saying, that faith is the *condition* of justification; and that because the word seems ambiguous, both in common use, and also as used in divinity. In one sense, Christ

alone performs the condition of our justification and salvation; in another sense, faith is the condition of justification; and in another sense, other qualifications and acts are conditions of salvation and justification. There is a difference between being justified by a thing, and that thing universally, necessarily, and inseparably attending justification; for so do a great many things that we are not said to be justified by. It is not the inseparable connection with justification that the Holy Ghost would signify, or that is naturally signified by such a phrase.”

Our author's views of the nature of justification, determine his meaning of the word condition. It is in the sense, not of a *sine qua non*, that he uses it, but of things previously to be done by man, before God can perform His part; for he says, roundly, and without qualification,—as his objection to a full and free present, immutable and eternal justification by God, inseparable from that faith in Jesus Christ, which changes the relation of the believer to the penalty of the law, and to its commanding power as a covenant of works,—that “it is Antinomianism” —“impossible it should be true, for God is not the author of the moral law, and He cannot abrogate it, either as to its precept or to its penalty,” “inconsistent with forgiveness or pardon,” renders it, “out of place for one who has once believed to ask for the pardon of sin,” “a downright insult to God and apostacy from Christ,” “wrong and impious,” to do so, and at war with the whole Bible.” “The Bible,” he says, “in almost every variety of manner, represents perseverance in faith and obedience to the end, as a *condition* of *ultimate* justification and final salvation,” confounding relations and things that differ. Not one of the passages he cites, without comment or attempt at exposition, to sustain these objections and positions, prove them at all.

We have endeavored fully and faithfully to present our author's views, as they seem to us to stand in contrast with the Scriptures, and with the faith of the Reformed churches, and of the men of whom the world is not worthy. The manner in which his philosophy has effected and transformed his ideas of justification, and led him forward in ruthless censure and condemnation of “the faith once delivered to the saints,” has been made apparent. Starting with his philosophical ideas of the nature and ground of moral obligation, and assuming the gospel to be a mere system of moral government, according to which, God treats with individuals, solely and exclusively, on their own personal responsibility, instead of its being a gracious constitution, providing for favors through a public or federal Head, he has obliterated, from his creed, the precious doctrine of justification by faith, through the righteousness of Christ, without the deeds of the law.

¹ Edwards' Works, Vol. V. p. 356.

² Id. p. 156.

³ Fin. Sys., III., p. 153.

⁴ Id. p. 157.

[To be continued.]

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ARTICLE I.

PULPIT ELOQUENCE AS AFFECTED BY DIVINE
INFLUENCE.

By REV. J. FEW SMITH, Prof. of Sacred Rhetoric and Pastoral Theology, in the Theological Seminary, Auburn, N. Y.

ELOQUENCE has always held a high place in human estimation. The orator commands admiration. He wields a mighty power. It is a great thing to rule the minds and hearts of men; and this is his prerogative. It is his to stir up the deep waters of the soul; to summon every passion from its secret chamber, and arouse it to activity; to throw burning coals upon the conscience, and dart the lightning flashes of truth in upon the mind. And it is a noble sight to look upon, and it may well enkindle the loftiest ambition, to behold a man master of eloquence, swaying assembled thousands; fastening upon himself every eye in the vast assembly, looking through each eye, into the heart, throwing his own thoughts and feelings into their souls, convincing their reason, deciding their judgment, and carrying them as one man with himself. Eloquence has had such triumphs; and they are among the proudest that human intellect has ever achieved: and, therefore, it is a great and noble thing to be truly eloquent. It is a noble thing to be the defender of innocence; the asserter of justice; the advocate of truth: to convince men's understanding, and to persuade them to that which is right:—and this is the province of Eloquence; for Eloquence, in its highest form, is speaking well in behalf of that which is right.

What is true of Eloquence in general, loses none of its force when applied to the particular department of Pulpit Eloquence. There, too, it is a noble power, commanding admiration; and there especially it is speaking well in behalf of that which is

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To conclude, all that can be done for oratory in education is merely preparatory. We might as well try to make poets as to make orators. We may prescribe fitting and genial studies and exercises, but the orator, as well as the poet, can alone make himself, or must be made by an inspiration from heaven.

ARTICLE VII.

REVIEW OF FINNEY'S THEOLOGY.

By REV. GEORGE DUFFIELD, D. D., Detroit, Michigan.

Lectures on Systematic Theology, embracing Lectures on Moral Government, Atonement, Moral and Physical Depravity, Regeneration, Philosophical Theories, and Evidences of Regeneration. By REV. C. G. FINNEY, Professor of Theology, in the Oberlin Collegiate Institute.

[Continued from p. 452.]

SANCTIFICATION.

“Some theologians,” says our author, “have made justification a condition of sanctification instead of making sanctification a condition of justification. But this, we shall see, is an erroneous view of the subject. The mistake is founded in a misapprehension of the nature both of justification and of sanctification. They make sanctification to consist in something else than in the will's entire subjection or consecration to God; and justification they regard as a forensic transaction, conditioned on the first act of faith in Christ. Whole-hearted obedience to God, or entire conformity to his law, they regard as a very rare, and many of them, as an impractical attainment in this life. Hence they conditionate justification upon simple faith, not regarding faith as at all implying present conformity of heart to the law of God. It would seem, from the very use of language, that they lay very little stress upon personal holiness, as a condition of acceptance with God.” If our author means, as it would seem he does from his use of language, to insinuate or charge that the theologians he refers to are not careful and zealous to inculcate the necessity of holiness,

Sys. Theol. III. p. 106.

and its reality as an indispensable evidence of a justified state, or that their teaching and preaching do not secure conscientious and devoted lives of new obedience, he insinuates and charges what he cannot prove. The piety and morality of the men he thus reproaches, and of their churches generally, will not lose anything in comparison with those that affiliate and sympathize with him and his school. The *odium theologicum* is a very weak argument, and what we would not expect from one who claims to be perfect. The above extract does express the truth, that the theologians referred to deny sanctification to be the *condition* of justification. But our author uses it with evident intent to be understood, that they who deny and oppose the doctrine of entire sanctification as he teaches it, are, to some degree, indifferent, or at least far less concerned about holiness of heart and life, and the obligation to maintain it, than he and his school are. For he says "that it is Antinomianism," and that "a denial of (his) doctrine prepares the minds of ministers to temporize and wink at great iniquity in their churches." This is grievous slander. We will not return the compliment as broadly as it has been given, but must remark that so far as our observation has gone, we have witnessed so much manœuvring and deception, and such developments of rampant censoriousness, spiritual pride, self-conceit and lying slander, in connexion with this doctrine, on the part of its advocates, that we should be on our guard, and put no confidence in the man or the church, that professes "entire sanctification," as taught by our author and his school. Nor are we at all surprised that it should be so. For, having affirmed of themselves what is false before God, the power of perceiving truth has, as its legitimate punishment, been so far impaired, that they now cease to be aware when they depart from truth before men.

Our author assumes that there is, and can be, no other effectual provision made for the holiness of men, but that which makes sanctification the condition of justification. This is the common assumption of all unsanctified minds; and it operates powerfully and extensively to keep men from trusting in Jesus Christ, and looking confidently for the grace of God unto eternal life. We do indeed, in common with the theologians whom our author condemns and traduces, deny that sanctification is the condition of justification, in the ordinary acceptation of the term "condition," nor do we think it either necessary or efficacious to secure holiness of heart and life, to assume and teach that it is. On the contrary, we have found and believe that this very idea, the precedence of holiness as a condition of justification, operates as an efficient barrier in the way of the sinner's being brought to Christ, and powerfully, in some who think they have come to Him, to secure the developments of spiritual pride, or self-right-

¹I.II † p. 155.

¹p. 225.

teousness, or censoriousness. The theologians condemned by our author, and the Confession of Faith so bitterly denounced by him, are very careful to teach that, coincident with justification, and by the very actings of the faith that justifies, the Spirit of God regenerates, and ever thereafter sanctifies. While they discard works or deeds of law, as the precedent condition of justification, they as positively affirm, that the faith which justifies is not mere science like the faith of devils, but such a realizing apprehension and belief of the great facts testified by Jesus Christ, concerning Himself, His Father, and the way of justification through him, as will bring the motive influence that may be drawn from the excellence, grace, and love of God in Christ, to bear upon the mind and heart, in determining to and promoting holiness. Its natural and certain tendency in this way, they plainly and pointedly urge from the Word of God, as it "works by love, purifies the heart, and overcomes the world." Appropriate fruits or good works, prove the genuineness of faith and the fact of justification, which is very different from their being the precedent condition. Our author either confounds or identifies these things, and in the boldest manner so perfectly inverts the order of God's operations in the justification and salvation of men, as to make them justify themselves, always and only in so far as they become and keep themselves perfectly holy. "The Bible everywhere represents justified persons as sanctified, and always expressly or impliedly conditionates justification upon sanctification. 1 Cor. 6 : 11 : And such were some of you ; but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified, in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God."¹

We have here both the author's view plainly stated, and his attempt as a biblical expositor, to prove it. Because the apostle, in his detail of facts, evidencing the great change wrought in the character and state of the converts at Corinth, puts sanctification before justification, therefore he infers that the former is the condition of the latter! The apostle, designing to contrast their present and former character and state, most naturally begins with the developments in their actions and habits which give evidence of their state, and thus traces them to their proper source. A different design would have suggested a different course. Designing to prove the fact of a man's being in a living state, we should naturally say he moves, walks, thinks, and lives, placing the cause last. So regeneration and sanctification are stated first as the consequents or accompaniments and proofs of justification. We apply his mode of reasoning, and prove from the apostle the very reverse of our author's inference. "God has chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the truth."² Does sanctification of the Spirit precede faith as its con-

¹ Sys. Div. III. p. 107.

² II. Thess. 2 : 13.

dition? So Peter writes, "Elect through sanctification of the Spirit unto obedience and sprinkling unto the blood of Christ." Does sanctification precede obedience, and do both precede the application of Christ's atonement as the condition? Our author's inference is a perfect non-sequitur; nor can he find a fitter specimen to his purpose, although he says that the passage in Corinthians is "but a specimen of the manner in which justified persons are spoken of in the Bible." As little to his purpose is his next quotation, from Rom. 6: 1, which does indeed prove that "they only are justified who walk after the Spirit." But this walking after the Spirit is the immediate, certain result, and necessary evidence, not the condition of justification. He confounds regeneration with sanctification, not, however, as the cause with its effect, the one being characteristically different from the other; but makes them to differ, only as a higher and a lower state. For, in reply to the anticipated objection, that the Scriptures speak of sanctification as a thing that comes after regeneration, and to be sought and arrived at, by the Christian, he affirms, that the word is used in a "higher sense," to denote "a *state* of being settled, established in faith, rooted and grounded in love, being *so confirmed* in the faith and obedience of the gospel, as to hold on in the way of life steadfastly, immovably, always abounding in the work of the Lord."

In his third volume our author has laid out all his force on this subject, which, as it is the peculiarity of his school, he makes "a fundamental question in theology."

He has transformed, by his philosophy, the meaning of language, with which the ears of Christians have been long familiar and wrought confusion only. Holiness, sanctification and obedience, have all their place in his nomenclature, and are retained still as technics; but they mean not in his lips what they have done among evangelical Christians. Along with them he has introduced others, which, according to his system are the synonymes of these, but have become the preferred phrases, and, with some boasters of perfection, the merest cantings—such as "entire sanctification," "entire obedience," "entire consecration of will," "of heart," "of life to God," "full-hearted consecration," "sincerity," "honesty of intention," "moral perfection." These are all used as convertible terms for "holiness," and holiness as another phrase for perfect sinlessness. They all serve the purposes of logical subtlety, by which to reach a conclusion uniformly aimed at. It is both painful and alarming to see what a troop of expressions he marshals around him, and how by his philosophy they become the merest engines of sophistry, by which to give scope and power to error. Already have we met with some of his disciples, who have played most skilfully with them,

¹I. Pet. 1: 2.

²Fin. The. III. 107.

and had learned so to identify in their use of the terms, holiness, perfection, entire sanctification, etc., that those who reject the doctrine and pretence of perfection, have been denounced and slandered as opposed to holiness and strangers to the grace of sanctification.

Our author makes no distinction here, except between "*present* full obedience, or entire consecration to God," and "*continual abiding* consecration, or obedience to God." The former he calls sanctification, the latter "entire sanctification," which last expression is the preferred equivalent for "sinless perfection." In defining sanctification he is careful to affirm that "it does not imply any constitutional change of either soul or body,"—"is not a phenomenon or state of the intelligence,"—"belongs to neither the reason, conscience, nor understanding,"—"is not a mere feeling of any kind,"—"is not a desire an appetite, a passion, a propensity, an emotion, nor indeed any *kind* or *degree* of feeling,—is not a state or phenomenon of the sensibility,"—but "is a phenomenon of the will or a voluntary state of mind."¹ The terms $\sigma\upsilon\gamma\gamma\alpha\tau\alpha\iota$ and $\acute{\alpha}\gamma\iota\omega\sigma\alpha\iota$ translated "to sanctify," he says are used by the inspired writers "to represent the act of consecrating one's self or anything else to the service of God and to the highest well-being of the universe,"—"not only an act of the will, but an ultimate act or choice, as distinguished from a mere volition or executive act of the will." "Sanctification as a *state* differing from a holy *act*," he says, "is a *standing ultimate intention* and exactly synonymous or identical with a state of obedience or conformity to the law of God." "Sanctification consists in the will's devoting or consecrating itself and the whole being, all we are and have, so far as powers, susceptibilities, possessions, are under the control of the will to the service of God, or which is the same thing, to the highest interests of God and of being. Sanctification, then, is nothing more or less than entire obedience for the time being to the law."²

This description does not accord with the Scriptural account of sanctification. A very essential element, entering into the Scriptural representation of its nature, has been lost sight of by our author in his description of it. The influence and agency of the Spirit of God are radically important, so much so, and so essential, that the sanctification of men is truly and appropriately His work. There is a consecration, other than that of man's own voluntary and entire surrender of himself to God, which the word is sometimes used to denote, and which enters into the Scriptural account of sanctification. Those whom God has given to Jesus Christ, having elected them from the mass of the human family that they should be holy, are set apart, in God's purpose, and have a new and peculiar relation to the new Covenant-Head and Redeemer assigned to them. See Eph. 1 : 4, 5. He claims to be the author

¹ III. p. 199.² III. p. 200.

III. p. 200.

of their sanctification, Ex. 31 : 13; Lev. 20 : 8. Beside this setting them apart for Himself, He further consecrates them by the gift of His Spirit, by whose influence the divine agency is efficiently carried out for their sanctification. "Because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation, *through sanctification of the Spirit.*"¹ This sanctifying agency of the Spirit precedes obedience, and is designed as the means of securing it. So far from the sanctification of a sinful man originating and consisting in the sovereign choice of his own free-will, the Bible teaches, that there is an exercise of divine sovereignty, to which it is to be traced as to its prime source and efficient cause. Peter styles Christians "elect through sanctification of the Spirit unto obedience."² Here the sanctification of the Spirit precedes and prepares the way for holy obedience, as the means does the end. *Ἐν ἁγιασμῷ πνεύματος*, "by the sanctification or sanctifying influences of the Spirit." *Ἐἰς ὑπακοήν*, *i. e.* in order that they should obey the gospel.³ The Spirit employs appropriate means in this work, which, in general, is the truth, the word of God. See John 17 : 17, 19. The Shorter Catechism and Confession of Faith have well and truly, therefore, assigned the first and most conspicuous place in the sanctification of the sinner, to the agency of the Holy Spirit. And we consider it a capital error—a radical and fatal defect in our author's system—that the influence and agency of the Spirit in this work, are made to stand so far in the back-ground, and are so indistinctly defined. There is a work of the Spirit in our sanctification, as appropriate and essential as is the consecration of ourselves to God, carried out in a life of new and holy obedience. According to the Scriptures, as set forth in the Shorter Catechism, the Spirit begins the work in our effectual calling, by convincing us of our sin and misery, by enlightening our minds in the knowledge of Christ, by renewing our wills, and thus persuading and enabling us to embrace Him as He is freely offered to us in the gospel, for all purposes of salvation. The work thus begun He carries on by renewing us more and more into the image of Christ. Mere arguments taken from the promises and threatenings of the Word, no power of mere human suasion, no enticing words of human wisdom or eloquence, will ever prove sufficient, without that demonstration of the Spirit which makes our faith to stand, not in the wisdom of men but in the power of God.⁴ Thus bringing us to faith and unfeigned repentance, we are "sealed with that holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession,"⁴ and renewed more and more in life and vigor, through all the parts, powers, and passions of our nature, into the image of God, Eph. 4 : 24; Col. 3 : 10, in knowledge, righteousness, and holiness.

Our author fails to give any definite views, at all answerable to

¹ II. The. 2 : 13.

² I. Pet. 1 : 2.

³ Bloomfield.

⁴ I. Cor. 2 : 4, 5.

the importance of the subject, to the work of the Holy Spirit in the sanctification of the sinner. So far as we can gather from him, the Spirit's work in sanctification consists in simple illumination. He does indeed talk of the indwelling of the Spirit,—but we have searched in vain for anything beyond His revealing Christ or presenting the truth. His language sometimes is so mystical as to have a strong bearing towards fanaticism. “When the will, the intellect, and the sensibility,” says he, “are yielded to Him, He develops the intelligence and the sensibility by clear revelations of himself in all his offices and relations to the soul, confirms the will, mellows and chastens the sensibility by these divine revelations to the intelligence.”¹ What these revelations are, and how they are made; whether independently of the written Word, by some miraculous afflatus or inspiration, by an inward infallible light or monitor, or through the prayerful and believing perusal and use of the Scriptures, we are not informed. There is a strange blending of his philosophy and experience. Occasionally he makes some excellent remarks, which would find a cordial assent from the truly spiritual-minded, were it not that incidentally the admixtures of his philosophy, betray a design directly at war with Christian experience, viz. to prove their perfection in holiness. We give the reader the following extracts as an example. “It is one thing to have thoughts and ideas and opinions concerning Christ, and an entirely different thing to know Christ, as He is revealed by the Holy Spirit. All the relations of Christ imply corresponding necessities in us. When the Holy Spirit has revealed to us the necessity, and Christ as exactly suited to fully meet that necessity, and urged his acceptance in that relation, until we have appropriated him by faith, a great work is done”²—“O how infinitely blind he is to the fulness and glory of Christ, who does not know himself and know Christ, as both are revealed by the Holy Spirit. When we are led by the Holy Spirit to look down into the abyss of our own emptiness—to behold the horrible pit and miry clay of our own habits, and fleshly, and worldly, and infernal entanglements—when we see in the light of God that our emptiness and necessities are infinite, then and not till then are we prepared to cast off self, and put on Christ. The glory and fulness of Christ are not discovered (disclosed?) to the soul until it discovers its *need* of Him. But when self, in all its loathsomeness and *helplessness*, is fully revealed, until hope is utterly extinct, as it respects *every kind and degree of help* in ourselves, and when Christ, the all in all, is revealed to the soul as its all-sufficient portion and salvation, then, and not till then does the soul know its salvation. This knowledge is the indispensable condition of appropriating faith, or of that act of receiving Christ, or that committal of all to Him, that takes Christ

¹ Eph. 1: 13, 14.² III. 255; 256.

home to dwell in the heart by faith, and to preside over all its states and actions. It is one thing to theorize and speculate and opine about Christ, and an infinitely different thing to *know* him as he is revealed by the Holy Spirit. When Christ is fully revealed to the soul by the Comforter, it will never again doubt the attainability and reality of entire sanctification in this life." Multitudes have known and rejoiced in Christ as their all-sufficient Saviour, experiencing His strength and grace from day to day, answerable to their appropriating faith, who have also glorified God on account of it, who nevertheless could not for one moment allow the thought of their sinlessness or perfect holiness to take possession of them.

Our author expresses himself, often, with such exceeding looseness on the subject of the Spirit's revelations, through which, he says, "entire sanctification" here ensues, that it is impossible to know what he means. Thus, speaking of the Spirit revealing Christ as the Life, without ever giving any distinct idea of what life is, he employs language which, if it came from the lips of an old school theologian, he would denounce as heresy and Antinomianism. "He enthrones himself with our own consent in the heart, and through the heart he extends his influence and his life to all our spiritual being;—he lives *in us as really and truly, as we live in our own bodies*;—he as really reigns *in our will*, and consequently in our emotions, by our own free consent, as our wills reign in our own bodies. Cannot our brethren understand that *this* is sanctification, and that nothing else is?" Speaking of Christ as the believer's sanctification, he says, "When He is apprehended and embraced as the soul's sanctification, he rules in and reigns over the soul in so high a sense, that he, as it were, develops his own holiness in us. He, as it were, swallows us up—so enfolds (if I may so say) *our wills and our souls in his*, that we are willingly led captive by him. We will and do, *as He wills within us*. What! has it come to this, that the church doubt and reject the doctrine of entire sanctification in this life?" "The Holy Spirit sanctifies only by revealing Christ to us as *our sanctification*?" "Christ is revealed and apprehended as the soul's substitute, surety, life, and salvation, in respect to the particular besetment and weakness of which it has had so full and so humiliating a revelation."

The Spirit of Christ and our spirit must embrace each other, and enter into an everlasting covenant with each other. There must be a mutual giving of self and receiving of each other, a blending of spirits in such a sense as is intended by Paul in the passage already quoted. He that is joined to the Lord is one spirit."

¹ III. p. 260.

² III. p. 262.
³ III. p. 265.

⁴ III. p. 273.
⁵ III. p. 271.

⁶ III. p. 264.

The foregoing extracts are taken from the author's comments on the relations of Christ, which, from sixty-one different specimens given, he seems to think are as numerous and as various, as the different titles used to designate Him. We might add much of the same sort, showing a want of unity and consistency, the absence of any distinct and definite thought flowing throughout, and a confusion, desultoriness, and frequent destitution of meaning. Nothing stronger can be found in the writings of theologians, whom it has been customary with many to denounce as Antinomian. The following from Marshall on sanctification, is in perfect keeping with the above extracts from our author. "Another great mystery in the way of sanctification, is, the glorious manner of our fellowship with Christ, in receiving an holy frame of heart from him. It is by our being in Christ, and having Christ himself in us, and that not merely by his universal presence as he is God, but by such a close union, as that we are one spirit and one flesh with him, which is a privilege peculiar to them that are truly sanctified."¹ Boston says, "Believers, regenerate persons, who fiducially credit Him and rely on Him, have put on Christ. Gal. 3: 27. If that be not enough, he is in them. John 17: 23. Formed in them, as the child in the mother's belly. Gal. 4: 19."² Our author says, "The spirit of Christ, then, or the real Deity of Christ dwells in the truly spiritual believer. Christ not only in heaven, but Christ within us; as really and truly inhabiting our bodies as we do, as really in us, as we are in ourselves, is the teaching of the Bible, and must be spiritually apprehended, by a divine personal and inward revelation, to secure our abiding in him."³ Nothing stronger can be found in Harvey, Booth, or Crisp, who have been denounced as Antinomians. Much explanation is needed by our author, to deliver himself from the allegations he has indulged in so freely, against those whom he pronounces Antinomians.

It is easy to see, that the Antinomian and fanatic could both express themselves in our author's language, and with him claim to be "entirely sanctified" or perfect. The former claims that, by faith, he yields himself up entirely to Christ, so consecrates himself, and is so united to Him, that Christ henceforth lives in him, and he can no longer sin; that, in fact, nothing he does can be sin, being so united to Christ and one with Him, as to be complete in Him. Our author says, "whenever Christ is apprehended and received in any relation, in that relation he is full and perfect, so that we are complete in him."⁴ The fanatic says, that he has a special revelation, enjoys an inward light, so that he cannot be mistaken or err; the light within renders him, while under its influence, infallible, yea as truly in-

Marshall on Sanct. p. 47.

² Fourfold State, p. 197.

³ Sys. Th. III. p. 294.

⁴ III. p. 279.

spired as ever were the prophets and apostles, so that resistance to it is resistance to God. Our author says, "We receive the Holy Spirit, who offers himself as an *indwelling light* and guide, and who is received by simple faith." The leading and guiding of the Spirit which are by the knowledge of Jesus Christ, vouchsafed or imparted through the word of God, are precious facts, well known in the experience of Christians, and fully established by the Scriptures. Rom. 8:14; Psalm 73:24; Eph. 1:17. But his attempts at explanation, only produce perplexity and confusion. "Light certainly," says he, "appears to be of two kinds, as every *spiritual* mind knows, physical and spiritual. Physical or natural light reveals or makes manifest physical objects, through the fleshly organ the eye; spiritual light is no less real light than physical. In the presence of spiritual light the mind *directly* sees spiritual truths and objects, as in the presence of material or natural light, it distinctly sees material objects. The mind has an eye or seeing faculty, which uses the material eye and natural light to discern material objects. It is not the eye that sees. It is always the mind that sees. The eye and the light are conditions of seeing the material universe, but it is always the mind that sees. So the mind *directly* sees spiritual realities in the presence of spiritual light. But what is light? What is natural and what is spiritual light? Are they really identical or are they essentially different?" Our author declines all "philosophical speculations upon this subject," but remarks, "that whatever spiritual light is, the mind, under certain circumstances, *cannot discern the difference, if DIFFERENCE THERE IS*, between them. Was that spiritual or physical light which the disciples saw on the mount of transfiguration—which Paul and his companions saw, on their way to Damascus? What light is that which falls upon the mental eye of the believer, when he draws so near to God as not, at the moment, to at all distinguish the glory that surrounds him from material light? What was that light, which made the face of Moses shine with such brightness, that the people were unable to behold it? And what is that light, which lights up the countenance of a believer when he comes direct and fresh from the mount of communion with God? There is often a *visible light* in his countenance. What is that light which often shines upon the pages of the Bible, making its spiritual meaning as manifest to the mind as the letters and words are?"

The reader can draw his own inferences from these quotations. Our author carefully distinguishes between the doctrinal light or light of truth, which Christ reveals by His Spirit, and the inward spiritual light which emanates from Christ, and is as real as the physical, and which he denies to be metaphorical or figurative.

¹Sys. Theol. III. p. 318.

²III. p. 256.

³III. p. 289.

“What,” says he, “is the source of spiritual light? The Bible says Christ is. But what does this mean? When it is said that He is the true light, does it mean only that he is the teacher of true doctrine; or does it mean that he is the light in which true doctrine is apprehended, or its spiritual import understood; that he shines through and upon all spiritual doctrine, and causes its spiritual import to be apprehended, and that the presence of his light, or in other words, his own presence, is a condition of any doctrines being spiritually understood? He is no doubt the essential light.” “Whoever has a true spiritual, and personal acquaintance with Christ, as God, knows that Christ is light; that his being called light is *not a mere figure of speech*.”¹ According to his idea there is an *elemental* light, which, if not identical, is not distinguishable from material light, and which is as necessary to the perception of spiritual truth as the latter is to corporeal vision. “You can no more doubt,” says he, “the time that you see the true spiritual import of the words (of the Bible), than that you see the words themselves.” “At other times the letter is as distinctly visible as before, and yet there is *no possibility* of discerning the spirit of the Bible” (all man’s natural ability which our author makes of so great account, and which he affirms to be sufficient for perfect obedience to the law, to the contrary notwithstanding!!!) “The Bible,” he says, “everywhere abounds with evidence, that spiritual light exists, and that its presence is a condition (of course, according to his own showing, a *necessary* condition) of apprehending the reality and presence of spiritual objects.” How completely in these views does he contradict himself, and all he has said of man’s full power, without the Spirit’s aid, to keep the law of God perfectly! He can no more believe, or do any other duty, which implies the perception of spiritual truth and objects, without this spiritual light, without this revelation of Christ, than can the man in darkness see and act, in reference to natural objects around him: that is, the sanctification of the man depends, according to this his showing, absolutely upon the Lord’s imparting light to him. Had our author expressed himself so as to convey the idea of the light essential to spiritual discernment, which is given in the Scriptures, we should have understood him, and rejoiced in his asserting a precious truth, as far removed from fanaticism, as it is from human sufficiency. “Whatsoever doth make manifest is light,”² is Paul’s simple account of it. “God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.”³ Knowledge is light, in the scriptural sense of the word, equally in reference to spiritual as to other things. The knowledge of Christ and the way of salvation can

¹ III. 291.² Eph. 5: 13.³ II. Cor. 4: 6.

never be obtained by the unaided reason, or excogitated by the unrenewed mind.¹ For this we depend upon Christ. He has embodied, in His Word, all we can or need to know in order to sanctification; and the Spirit, by His own appropriate and peculiar teachings, brings our minds to the knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus Christ: how, precisely, it is not for us to explain. But the Saviour himself has said, "the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, He shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you."² Beyond this, viz.: the revelations of the written Word, we have no promise of the Spirit's teaching, nor a right to expect His illumination. It is by means of the truth taught in the Word of God, and apprehended by faith, that the Spirit enlightens and sanctifies. To assert or lay claim to any other influence of the Spirit, as a light within, or revelation from God, independent of and apart from His illumination by the Word of God, is the very element of fanaticism. Our author confidently teaches, that spiritual light is an element or medium, if not *sui generis*, yet as really and truly as natural light, and scarcely distinguishable the one from the other, except in the greater glory of its effulgence. The office of the Spirit, it would seem according to him, in the sanctification of the man, is to create the light, or shed it down on the pages of the Word of God, or pour it around us, just as it is of the natural sun, to diffuse his beams for our irradiation. "All truth in doctrine is only a reflection of Christ—a radiation upon the intelligence from Christ." "Look steadily in the direction from which the light emanates, until the Holy Spirit enables you to apprehend the essential truth, and the true light that enlightens every man."³ Do not mistake a dim reflection of the sun for the sun himself." Our author has forbidden us to understand this as metaphorical illustration. "I say, to a spiritual mind, these are not mere figures of speech, they are understood by those who walk in the light of Christ, to mean what they say."⁴ Inasmuch, therefore, as the existence and presence of this divine light, is just as necessary to render spiritual vision or discernment possible, as is the physical or natural light to corporeal vision, and it is the office of the Spirit to supply this light; we see not how our author, according to his showing, can escape from the charge he brings against the "Old School," who, he says, "seem to have regarded sanctification as brought about by a physical cleansing."⁵ The only difference between his views and this, is, that he is more specific in explaining the physical process of sanctification. According to him, the cleansing is produced by a law of necessity through the spiritual light which is poured

¹ I Cor. 2: 14.² John 14: 26.³ Sys. Theol. III. 288.⁴ III. 291.⁵ III. 317.

around by the revelation of Christ, which is "no less real light than physical;" and, as he has said, not at the moment distinguishable "from material light." By all this he means, and must and can only be understood to mean, that the process of entire sanctification by the Spirit, is through a special revelation, and that revelation as direct and personal, as independent, miraculous, and infallible, as was ever imparted by inspiration to the prophets. Of course it would be very wrong for a man thus illuminated and inspired, to question the accuracy of his views for a moment, and as wrong in others to dissent from and reject them, when given forth oracularly by the recipient; just as wrong as to reject the word of God himself. This is fanaticism; and if it has not led to extravagance and wildness in our author, it is owing to other causes than its own sanitive virtue. Certain it is, that it has led to asserted claims to perfection, extravagance, and excesses, among some who have adopted his views, and must, ere long, develop itself in still greater follies and evils, on the part of those who may not have the piety and other influences that restrain our author. The mysticism of Halyburton is not for a moment to be compared with it. His "reason of true faith," asserted in opposition to Locke's views, is far more intelligible, and by no means as liable to mischievous perversion as our author's "inward light" and "revelations" by the Spirit of "Christ within us." Dreams, visions, ecstasies, rhapsodies, trances, and all the other appliances of the precursors of new sects, not even excepting the insane reveries of Swedenborg, must all follow, in due season, where this element of fanaticism, which he has incorporated in his system, is brought fully into action in its practical applications. Habitual neglect of the Bible, conceited ignorance, the despotism of opinion, the phrenzy of impulses, consciousness, denunciation, and practical claims of infallibility, must sooner or later throw their shades upon the developments of that "entire sanctification" which our author advocates.

There is yet one other aspect of the subject which deserves attention, and that is the manner in which he lowers the standard by which to judge of perfect holiness, and the ease with which he adapts the claims of the law to the debilitated powers of man, so as to make it in fact a sliding-scale, suited to each one's varying capacities, and varying in its acquirements at any and every moment of his life. To this he is compelled, by a logical necessity. His philosophy has rendered him special aid in this perilous work. The reader will bear in mind, that this philosophy is, according to his own showing, that of free-will exercising its own sovereignty, in opposition to what he calls the philosophy of a necessitated will; that is, of a will determined certainly by motive influences from without operating anterior

to, and exerting their efficiency in its own acts. Such motive influences are inconsistent with his view of free-will. Liberty, according to his philosophy, consists in full (of course he means equal) power at any and every moment to do right or wrong. The possession of *this* power of sovereign self-determination is with him a *sine quâ* non of moral obligation. "Moral obligation (too) respects the ultimate intention *only*." "Moral law requires nothing more than honesty of intention." "Sincerity or honesty of intention is moral perfection—it is obedience to the law."¹ "Sin and holiness are attributes of acts of will only."² "Moral character belongs *solely* to the ultimate intention of the mind."³ In other words, "holiness consists in the supreme ultimate intention, choice or willing of the highest well-being of God, and the highest good of his kingdom."⁴ Obedience, entire obedience, will-obedience, holiness, entire sanctification, are all, as we have shown, synonymes with our author. They all mean the same thing with him. "If conscious honesty of intention, both as it respects the kind and degree of intention according to the degree of light possessed, be not *entire obedience* to moral law, then there is no being in heaven or in earth who can know himself to be entirely obedient."⁵ "Where this intention exists, *there can be no sin*."⁶ No one who is truly honest in pursuing the highest good of being, *ever did or can mistake his duty* in any such sense as to commit sin."⁷ Here, then, we have sincerity of intention as the sum total, the essence and perfection of moral character and conduct. If this be not to degrade the claims of the law, we know not what will. Arminians' views of Christian perfection are much less exceptionable in this respect; for they affirm, that through Christ the law has been so modified, as to admit sincerity in lieu of, or as, perfect obedience. But our author, by a bold stroke of his philosophy, makes it the very thing itself.

The reader will have patience with us while we present him with a few further quotations bearing on this subject. "It is plain that men are naturally able to be entirely sanctified, in the sense of rendering entire and continual obedience to God; for the ability is the condition of the obligation to do so. But what is implied in ability to be as holy as God requires us to be? The ready and plain answer to this question is—(1) The possession of the powers and susceptibilities of moral agents. (2) Sufficient knowledge or light to reveal to us the whole of duty. (3) And also to reveal to us clearly the way and means of overcoming any and every difficulty or temptation that lies in our way. The first we all possess. The second we also possess; for *nothing strictly is or can be duty* that is not revealed or made known to

¹ II. 36.² III. 13.³ II. 153.⁴ II. 167.⁵ II. 162.⁶ II. 163.⁷ II. p. 149.

us. The third is proffered to us, upon condition that we receive the Holy Spirit, who offers himself as an indwelling light and guide, and who is received by simple faith."¹ It will be perceived how our author here slides off—by the use of phrases not of the same import, as convertible terms, identical in their meaning,—into the most fallacious sophistry. According to his view the whole of man's duty is not what God has specifically, in detail, enjoined in His law and expounded in His Word, but just so much and no more than the man at the time actually knows,—his willing the good of God and of the universe as far as he understands it! If light is not had, or the knowledge of duty in any particular, there is no obligation, and can be no sin. In other words, he is perfect if he sincerely wills good to God and to the universe, as far as he knows, notwithstanding he may fail in many important respects, to do what the law of God has detailed to be the duty of man. It may be the duty of others, but being ignorant, it is not his. Thus, perfection or entire sanctification ranges from the least possible amount of known duty, to the widest extent in which the Spirit of God can reveal our duty. Verily ignorance here is bliss; for the less a man knows, the less of moral obligation rests upon him, and the ease of perfect obedience—"entire sanctification"—becomes proportionally greater. He may omit many required duties, and do many things that are forbidden; but if he happily is ignorant, no sin attaches to him.

This is exceedingly accommodating to sinful man in more respects than one. Our author admits that our powers are greatly debilitated in consequence of transgression, and that the law, consequently, according to his view, does not and cannot claim so much of us as it would have done had not our faculties been injured by sin. "The law cannot," says he, "require us to love God or man as well as we might have been able to love them, had we always improved all our time in obtaining all the knowledge we could in regard to their nature, character, and interests." "If entire obedience is to be understood as implying that we love God as much as we should, had we all the knowledge *we might have had*, then I repeat it, there is not a saint on earth or in heaven, nor ever will be, that is entirely obedient." "The law of God does not imply or suppose that our powers are in a perfect state; that our strength of body or mind is what it would have been had we never sinned. But it simply requires us to use what strength we have." "Entire obedience does not imply the same degree of faith that might have been exercised, but for our ignorance and sin." It follows, therefore, from our author's position, that sin actually diminishes man's obligations to his Creator, and that long continued and confirmed habits of sinful indulgence and

¹ III. p. 256.² II. p. 199.³ II. p. 200.

ignorance, wasting his powers, is much the easiest and most direct way to perfection, by lessening continually the amount of love and service and faith that will be due from him to God. It follows also, that if the Spirit of God does not reveal to the believer, more than he does, and can naturally know at any time, he is free from all obligation binding to a wider extent of obedience. We see not why Socrates and Plato and Anaxagoras and other Greek moralists, should not be found to have attained to "entire sanctification;" yea, more of the pagans than of professing Christians who have had such superior light. And such is probably our author's real belief, for he says, "The heathen are not under obligation to believe in Christ and *thousands of other things*, of which they have no knowledge. Perfection in a heathen would imply much less faith than in a christian."

We take issue with our author on this subject, and regard his scheme as directly opposed to the Saviour's teaching, and as falling within the range of His condemnation. The servant that knew not his lord's will, and therefore did it not, was not excused but punished,² though with fewer stripes than the other. God attributes the deeper degrees of depravity and obnoxiousness to punishment,³ to those who by their corruption have destroyed their power of perceiving truth. The law of God varies not with light and knowledge. The degree of culpability may, but not the existence and extent of moral obligation. It matters not whether through ignorance or pretext of benevolence or philosophy it may not be done, "whosoever shall break one of the least commandments of God, contained in the moral law or law of the ten commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven."⁴ The Law remains immutable in all its precepts, and is not of fluctuating variant obligation. We see not but that the Hindoo who sincerely immolates his parent or offspring or himself, as an offering for the good of his god—the only god he knows in the universe around him—upon our author's principles, is performing a pious deed and giving proof of "entire sanctification."

The doctrine he teaches on this subject is very grateful to the unrenewed heart. We have encountered it in the lips of impenitent men, who, as a defence against the desires of the Saviour upon their confidence and obedience, have alleged,—“we need the illumination of the Spirit to reveal to us what we do not know of Christ and the way of salvation through Him, as well as our duty toward Him. This Spirit we have never received, nor has His influence been imparted to us. We know nothing about faith; what it is, or how it becomes our duty, and therefore cannot be guilty of resisting the Spirit. We have not in fact the ability to believe; and therefore God does not, under such circumstances,

¹ II. p. 200.² Luke 12: 48.³ Isaiah 27: 11.⁴ Mat. 1: 19.

require us to be as holy as He does others who know more. Should He give us the Spirit, and pour into our minds His light, we confess that then we should own our obligations, and our guilt would be great in rejecting Him." Thus by accommodating the claims of the law to their particular knowledge and circumstances, they quieted their consciences, and flattered themselves they were in no danger, or, were better than many others. Our author's mode of expressing himself in reference to "ability to be as holy as God requires," is in accordance with such views. "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; neither can he know them because they are spiritually discerned." Of course he ought not to be blamed for ignorant disobedience.

To the extent of his ignorance he is free from sin, since, according to our author, his obligations tally with his knowledge. His philosophy here has betrayed him into as many absurdities, and as much nonsense, as he has freely charged against those who affirm that "no mere man is able in this life perfectly to keep the commandments of God." "Men," says he, "are naturally able to be entirely sanctified, in the sense of rendering entire and continual obedience, for the ability is the condition of the obligation to do so." He cannot mean by the phrase "naturally able," what the theologians he condemns call "natural ability." For this "natural ability," he says, "is no ability at all." He knows no ability, nor admits of such a thing, except and only where a man's will has power of itself to will in accordance with or in opposition to moral obligation. When, therefore, he says that men are "naturally able to be entirely sanctified," he must and can only mean, that left to themselves, without any extensive aid of the Spirit of God, or the redemption through Jesus Christ—without the gospel and its influences—they can be perfectly holy—an assertion directly at war with the declaration of the apostle, "not that we are sufficient of ourselves, to think any thing as of ourselves," and of Christ "as the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine, no more can ye except ye abide in me—without me ye can do nothing." Of what use would the gospel be, and where would be its necessity, if men are naturally able to be entirely sanctified, unless, indeed, our author should respond, that it is to secure and develop a higher style or degree of perfect holiness. Every act of obedience in order to be such at all, to be justly accounted holiness, according to his view, must be perfect, "nothing is holiness short of full obedience for the time being, to the moral law," a right ultimate intention gives it that perfection. The execution of the intention follows by a law of necessity, God and not man being responsible

¹ 1 Cor. 2: 14.

² 2 Cor. 5: 3.

³ Sys. Theol., III. p. 256.

⁴ John 15: 4, 5.

⁵ III. p. 15.

⁶ III. p. 197.

for that, and the latter is therefore free from sin. If the machinery of man's intellect and sensibility shall fail to work right, when his free-will has put it in motion, and given it the impulse of a right intention, he is not to blame! Nature does not, however, make adequate provision to prevent such failures. The mind is not sufficiently enlightened, nor the sensibilities always under the control of the reason, to prevent them from coming short of the glory of God. In all things men in their natural estate offend. This is the universal experience. Perfection, therefore, by the natural constitution, is not thence to be expected, and must be of inferior grade. Our author admits that we need Divine aid for its development; and affirms, that the gospel makes full provision for the highest forms and degrees of holiness in this present mortal life, so as to render man's actual attainment to "entire sanctification," to unsullied perfection here, an object of rational pursuit and reasonable expectation. This he teaches is done by the revelation of Christ to our faith by the Holy Spirit, whose office it is to supply "the light and grace we need," and yet he pours utter contempt on the idea of gracious ability, "*a gracious ability to obey a command is an absurdity and an impossibility.*" The extent to which we need light and grace, our author shows, and especially in respect "of Christ in all his offices and relations, governmental, spiritual, and mixed," and not only so, but he says explicitly, "we need the revelation of Christ to our souls in all these relations, in *such power* as to induce in us that appropriating faith without which Christ is not, and cannot be, our salvation." Here he introduces another new element of power necessary to secure entire sanctification, notwithstanding he has boldly affirmed, that naturally men possess full ability for the perfection of holiness. But what that power of revelation is, he has not explained. Yet has he spoken in terms most unenviable and disgusting on this subject. "We need to have Christ so revealed as to so completely ravish and engross our affections, that *we would sooner cut our own throats*, or suffer others to cut them, than to sin against Him!" Of this "power in truth," he says the mind of man, before it apprehends Christ as revealed by the Spirit, can form no conception; and he declines all attempts to explain it. "If this is unintelligible to you, I cannot help it. The Holy Spirit can explain and make you see it, I cannot." We ask not that he would explain the fact. The humble, spiritual-minded Christian, who lives by faith upon Jesus Christ, experiences the powerful influence of the Spirit through the truth, renewing and sanctifying him from day to day, and cares not to perplex himself about the *quo modo* of the Spirit's operations and influence, as He works in Him "to will and to do according to His good pleasure." But it is both proper for us to ask, and necessary for our author to ex-

¹ III. p. 44.

² III. p. 359.

³ III. p. 287.

plain how, according to his philosophy of free-will, and this asserted identity of liberty with full power to render entire obedience, he can consistently insist upon man's need of such a power of the Spirit's revelations as he contends for in order to "entire sanctification."

We have searched in vain for information or hint, from our author, as to what is that power of the Spirit's revelation of Christ to our souls, which effectually induces appropriating faith. It cannot be the power of our own wills, which, with our author, is all-sufficient, but evidently something exerting an influence over them. It cannot be the determining efficient motive power that controls the will, for according to our author's philosophy, the will itself is the moving power, and to be operated on and swayed from without, is inconsistent with his definition of liberty. We are pleased to see these inconsistencies; for they prove that his experience triumphs over his philosophy. Never should we choose the Saviour, and appropriate him for our pardon, justification, &c., if the power of the spirit did not enable us to do so. Every true child of God knows, as our author admits, "the utter emptiness, worse than uselessness, of our resolutions and self-originated efforts," and that it is only as he ventures in faith on Him who saith, "my grace is sufficient for thee, for my strength is made perfect in weakness,"¹ that he can feel himself braced up and so confirmed in the way of holiness, that he can say "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me."² The Spirit's illumination and influence are indispensable to holiness of heart and of life, which fact is totally at war with the idea of our being naturally able, as our author affirms, by willing the good of God and of the universe, to perfect holiness.

His great effort, however, is to prove that with the promised help of the Spirit, notwithstanding our need and helplessness, in our natural state, we may, and can attain to sinless perfection. "It is not our design to enter into discussions had on this subject. Suffice it to say that our author differs radically, in his views of what constitutes perfect holiness, "entire sanctification," from the great body of the Christian church. Making obedience and holiness to consist in ultimate intention may be in accordance with his philosophy, but is not with the showing of the Scriptures or the experience of Christians. Because man's intention is honest and right, he is not therefore perfect in the sight of God. There may be great embarrassment, difficulties, and temptations in the way of carrying out and executing that intention, which, while they do not destroy it, frustrate or render defective its accomplishment. These things are incident to our fallen condition, nor should we comfort ourselves with the thought of our sinfulness, however conscious of sincerity and right intentions, because the

¹ III. p. 271.² Cor. 13 : 9.³ Phil. 4 : 13.

executive volitions are the mere result of necessity, for which not we, but God or the constitution of our nature, are responsible. Responsibility in detail cannot thus be avoided. The finishing of the work is as essential as the beginning, and to predicate perfection and sinlessness of ourselves because of a governing purpose or will to seek the good of God and of the universe, is to change the very nature of perfection, and to introduce confusion into the thoughts and minds of those, who feel the constant pressure of obligation to employ those spiritual weapons which become "mighty through God (alone), to the pulling down of strong holds, casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of Christ, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of faith." If our author chooses to call any one act, or series of acts perfect, which are praiseworthy before men, but with God become acceptable through Jesus Christ alone, and not because of their intrinsic innocence and holiness, and thence to affirm that "entire sanctification," or sinlessness pertain to our state and character, we must object as much to the truthfulness of his theology and experience, as to the correctness of his logic and metaphysics. The analogy of experience, the testimony of Scripture, and the fruits developing among those who think themselves perfect, constrain us to condemn our author's views and reasonings, and so far from accounting them an improvement and proof of progress in true theology, to reject them as being eminently calculated to subvert evangelical holiness. The Papal apostacy arose out of notions of holiness differing from the Scriptures, taken from the Gnostic philosophy; and we shall anticipate as veritable an apostacy from the faith once delivered to the saints in due season, where our author's views and definitions of its nature, as worked up in his system, shall be reduced to practice.

We have devoted, thus far, attention to the topics of justification and sanctification, before any other applications which our author has made of his "philosophy of a free-will." Their intrinsic and radical importance required it. With those of depravity, inability, and regeneration, we shall conclude this review. Being cognate doctrines, we shall consider them together.

In defining depravity, he says, that it "*always implies a departure from a state of original integrity, or from conformity to the laws of the being who is the subject of depravity.*"¹ Has the child, departed from a state of original integrity, when, according to our author, it just becomes depraved? His definition is defective; for it applies only to the case of our first parents, and it is erroneous; for it implies the *original integrity* of the infant. This depravity, he says, may be physical or moral,—the former being "predicated of body or of mind, and the latter, "of free-

¹ Finney's Theology, II. p. 447.

will, not of the faculty itself, but of its free action." "Physical depravity," he says, "may be predicated of all the powers and involuntary states of mind, of the intelligence, of the sensibility, and of the *faculty* of the will."¹ "Whether this, in all cases is, and must be caused by the state of the bodily organization, that is, whether it is always and necessarily to be ascribed to the depraved state of the brain and nervous system, it is impossible for us to know. It may, for aught we know, in some instances at least, be a depravity or derangement of *the substance of the mind* itself."² "The sensibility or feeling department of the mind may be sadly and physically depraved." "Whether this depravity belong exclusively to the body, or to both in connection, I will not," continues he, "venture to affirm. In the present state of our *or of my* knowledge, I dare not hazard an affirmation on the subject. The human body is certainly in a state of physical depravity. The *human mind* also certainly manifests *physical depravity*." Yet with such affirmations, strong enough for those zealous advocates of the doctrine of original sin, whose zeal on the subject greatly offends our author; he nevertheless refuses to admit, that this depravity has any causative influence or bearing upon, or connection with the developments of moral depravity, that has the relation of a cause to it. Although man is, both intellectually and corporeally, physically depraved, yet does he stand, according to our author, precisely in the same relation to the law with Adam before he fell, so that he of right looks to his personal obedience to it, as the condition of justification. But while his powers have confessedly been greatly deteriorated by physical depravity, that law he teaches is so adapted to this his enfeebled and fallen state, that, anterior to any intentional acts of will, he is as free from sin or moral depravity as was Adam before he fell; notwithstanding he may not by any means compare with him in holy developments. His physical depravity may have diminished his moral power to the merest *modicum* of ability; but then the law looks for no more than what he hath. No moral depravity attaches to him; nothing for which he can be justly disapproved of and condemned by an holy God, unless or until he intentionally wills wrong. "Moral depravity cannot," says he, "be predicated of any involuntary acts or states of mind. These, surely, cannot be violations of moral law, for moral law legislates only over free, intelligent (he means intentional) choices." And thus he reasons, in the circle of his philosophy: "Moral depravity implies moral obligation; moral obligation implies moral agency; and moral agency implies intelligence, or knowledge of moral relations. Moral agency implies moral law, or the development of the idea of duty, and a knowledge of what duty is."³ This "moral depravity," he affirms, "can only

¹ II. p. 458.² II. p. 449.³ II. p. 449.

be predicated of *violations* of moral law," reasoning still in the circle of his philosophy. "It cannot," he adds, "consist in any attribute of nature or constitution, nor in any lapsed and fallen state of nature, for this is physical and not moral depravity." "It cannot consist in anything that is a part of mind or body, nor in any involuntary action or *state* of either mind or body. It cannot consist in anything back of choice, and that *sustains to choice the relation of a cause*." Moral depravity then, strictly speaking, can *only* be predicated by selfish ultimate intention."¹

Such are our author's views of moral depravity. The will being absolutely free or independent; that is, no causal influence whatever determining its acts or volitions—such influences being inconsistent with his notion of its liberty,—in its *acts* and in its *acts alone*, can moral depravity be found. We have seen that he makes holiness or love, which in his metaphysical sense, he pronounces to be the whole of obedience, the fulfilling of the law,—to be always and only "good-will, choice, the choice of an end, the choice of the highest well-being of God and of the universe of sentient existence." So depravity or selfishness, according to him, is always and only wrong choice, wrong intention, "the choice of self-indulgence or self-gratification as an end." It cannot be predicated as a property of the man, nor of any state of mind, that, in the nature of things, is anterior to, and exerts a causal influence in determining the acts of the will.

This view of depravity is as directly and fundamentally opposed to the orthodox faith of evangelical churches, as it is to the Edwardean philosophy, which has so eminently distinguished and served to illustrate the theology of New England, since the days of the illustrious man whose name it bears. It has been customary to predicate moral depravity of the moral agent or being himself, and also of that state of mind which, existing anterior to the choice of the will, operates as a cause to determine it in its choices. We hold that it is perfectly legitimate to do so; and to affirm that it consists, *wholly and exclusively*, in acts of will entirely self-originated and dependent on no cause whatever, but the simple volition itself, is as wide from the record of consciousness and the representations of Scripture, as it is from the showing of any sane and intelligible philosophy.

It is not the faculty of the will that causes its own acts, any more than it is the leg or foot or hand that causes its motions. It is the intelligent moral agent that wills—the soul or mind itself acting in the use and exercise of the faculty or power to will with which God has endowed it. There is a causal power that lies back of choice; or, if our author is offended with this language—that exists, and in the nature of things operates, anterior to choice. In so saying, we mean not that there is a law of necessity, nor that moral causes operate by the same fixed and

¹ II. p. 550.

invariable rule with physical laws or causes, nor was this Edwards' idea as attributed to him by our author, when he speaks of a moral necessity and the certainty superinduced on the will's acts as opposed to its absolute independent self-determining power. Our author, in denying any such cause, or power, or "thing back of choice, and that sustains to choice the relation of a cause," deranges the import of the Christian world's nomenclature on the subject, and makes the soul, the moral being, man himself a mere succession of acts—a chain of exercises.

The fallacy and absurdity of this philosophy, Dr. Dwight has so fully and irrefutably exposed, that it would be a work of supererogation in us, to do any thing more than to refer our doubtful readers to his able discourse on the subject,¹ and to require our author to meet and refute his arguments before he expects or demands that we assent to his assumption. Much of what is found there is applicable to our author's theory, and deserves his careful study. He may probably here reply, as he commonly does, when his language and positions are condemned, and the subject is stated with more precision—that he means nothing else. We trust he does; for this will relieve some of his theological inconsistencies and contradictions. But we are under no obligations to understand him, and certainly deserve not to be condemned should we misunderstand him, if he will use language and make such unqualified assertions as he does. We feel that such men as Edwards and Dwight, and others, whose arguments and illustrations have satisfied the profoundest theologians, are deserving of some respect; and that his arrogance and self-conceit must be extravagant indeed, who will oracularly pronounce them "nonsensical philosophy." Our author has not succeeded in so identifying his views with those called "new school," and in commending *his* philosophy to general confidence, as to give the force of logical demonstration to his charge, that to affirm that anything back of choice, exerting a causal influence to determine the will, is "old schoolism," nor that any argument so constructed, shall be accounted the *ducens in absurdum*; nor that to predicate moral depravity of such cause, is to identify moral with physical depravity, and *thus* embarrass and prevent the truth by the philosophical dogma of a necessitated will.

The soul or mind, unless our author makes it to consist in a chain of exercises, unquestionably lies back of its acts or volitions. Whatever influences that soul or mind to will or act thus or thus, is called, in ordinary parlance, and rightly may be considered, a cause of such actions or volitions. The veriest child understands this thing; and when its cries or tears or urgent persuasion have induced its little brother or sister to comply with its wishes, or do its requirement, will afterwards, most naturally and truly say, "I made you do so." The "efficiency" of motive

¹ Dwight's Theology, vol. I. Sermon XXIV.

considerations of the mind determining it to will and act, even when urged by the Spirit of God, he denies, and professes himself unable to understand what it can mean.¹ But the fact is too well established for his philosophy to gainsay or resist. He may flout and sneer as he pleases, at the idea of a causal influence determining the will; but the Bible everywhere assumes it—human consciousness affirms it—and universal Christian experience confirms the avowal of the apostle, that “it is God that worketh in us, both to will and to do of His good pleasure.”² There are causes immediate and *ad intra*, and there are others remote, *ab extra*, which often together operate to induce the mind, thus and to will. If our author denies it, and maintains that liberty of will is will wholly uninfluenced, exclusively self-determined, absolutely self-originated, then does he shut out the mind or soul of man from being affected by any determining influence and motive power or sway whatever, whether human or divine. The mere objective presentation of truth, which, if we understand our author, is all that he believes the Spirit of God does for the conversion of men and curing of their depravity, is not per se a motive power or influence. Our author, as we have seen, under other circumstances, is constrained to admit that motive power is something more than objective presentation of truth, and that on the part of our Redeemer, consists in *so* presenting truth, *so* revealing Christ “that He as really reigns in our will, and consequently in our emotions by our own free consent, as our wills reign in our bodies.”³ We desire no stronger language to express the causal power of an influence or agency brought to bear upon the mind to determine its will—what we have called efficient influence, motive power, power that excites and moves and determines to act. Notwithstanding all his professions of ignorance, and of inability to understand the *efficiency* of motive power excited on the mind, he has himself defined it with sufficient accuracy to enable us to cite himself in proof of the very thing he denies. “It is efficient in the sense of being a *prevailing* influence.”⁴ Such language is absolutely unmeaning, unless it be understood, as commonly it is, to imply that there is some connection between the motive influence or objective consideration or truth presented to the mind, and the mind's being affected by it, so as to determine its volition, and which connection being of like nature with that which exists between the cause and its effect, justifies men in saying, the one produced or caused the other. It is mere trifling evasion, and wholly unworthy of the subject, to claim that the word cause, when applied to moral themes, *must* be understood to mean a physical necessity. We have never supposed that Edwards either believed or taught the doctrine of “a

¹ Finney's Reply to “Warning against Error,” p. 44, 45.

² Phil. 2: 13.

³ III. p. 273.

III. p. 298.

necessitated will," as our author affirms. His moral certainty is not a physical necessity; and when he illustrates that certainty, by a reference to things physically necessary, he traces the resemblance, not in the mode of operating, but in the certainty with which one event gives rise to or causes the other. It is no more his idea, as we have ever understood him, that the true and proper freedom of the will, which characterizes man as a responsible creature, is destroyed by the certainty superinduced on choice, than is it our author's—if he admits any efficiency in the Spirit's influence—that its liberty is destroyed by "a prevailing influence," the determining power of motive.

Whatever there may be in the particular mood or state of mind itself, adapting it to the impressions and motive influences, either from external objects or inward suggestions, inviting, inclining, or urging to wrong, *i. e.* to selfish or sinful acts, must not be overlooked, in estimating the causes which may have a determining influence on its choice or volitions. Our author, in his philosophy, assumes that the habitude, the mood, the adaptness or prepared state of the mind for being affected agreeably or disagreeably, when moral subjects are presented to it, depends on simple will, on previous choice, or ultimate intention. If the ultimate intention and choice are right, by a law of necessity it carries the whole will with it. Intellect and sensibility alike are obsequious to it. The will is absolute, and has supreme controlling power. Here is the very point on which we think he needs most carefully to review his philosophical theory of the laws of mental operations. Dogmas and ambiguous definitions may bewilder and divert attention from the report of consciousness. But no one can calmly and dispassionately attend to what passes in his own mind, without discovering that the will has no such supremacy—is not so absolutely independent and self-determining in its power, as to control both intellect and sensibility by its volitions. On the contrary, both intellect and sensibility exert an incessant power on it; and when the ultimate choice or intention of our author, on which he confers such omnipotent energies, is carefully examined, it will be found, that there enter into it other elements than simple choice. Both intellect and sensibilities operate, in determining, or contribute to form the choice.

Why do some objects and thoughts affect pleasurable, and others painfully, so as to excite instinctively, desire for the one and disgust for the other? Not always nor mainly because of the ultimate choice. Certain sensations or emotions at first involuntarily excited, are pleasurable or painful, independently of any ruling purpose or ultimate intention. It is not the ultimate choice, the supreme intention either to gratify self or to glorify God, that adapts the mind for pleasurable and painful emo-

tions. There is something in objects themselves, and their suitability to affect the mind, and to excite various passions and affections, in themselves pleasurable or painful, that must not be overlooked. This power of objects, in exciting and affecting, may be greatly promoted and strengthened by indulgence, or weakened by resistance; but it depends not, primarily and mainly, on the mere state of the will.

The mind is not a simple existence without properties. Its susceptibilities or capability of being affected and roused to action by various feelings and emotions, and of putting forth its energies in various ways, conformably with the nature of external objects and circumstances, or internal suggestions exciting its passions and affections, have ever been an interesting region for observation and research, and legitimately afford the foundation of metaphysical science. It is foreign from our purpose and unnecessary in this review, to enter into the details of different psychological systems that have, in different ages, found favor among the learned. We are mainly and only concerned with the facts on which such systems rest. To the susceptibilities or capability of being affected, conformably with the nature of external objects, in the various emotions or feelings they excite, some have given the generic name of taste, which they have sometimes called a faculty, and regarded it as that which they understand the Scriptures generally to mean by the word heart. Others have given them the generic name of disposition, in like manner. Both have distinguished them from the ultimate choice or intention, although they have spoken of them as intimately, and often, inseparably connected with different states of the will.

These emotions and susceptibilities, in their natural developments in man, are universally found in a disordered state. He is not affected pleurably by what ought, and was originally designed of God thus to affect him. The knowledge of God in whom his soul should take delight, and for the enjoyment of whom he was created, does not naturally so affect him but contrariwise. The apostle says of the pagan world, that "they did not like to retain God in their knowledge." The senses, appetites, passions and affections, as they are excited by innumerable objects, lead away from God; and the thought of Him gives trouble. The love of God does not arise spontaneously in the heart; nor is it certain to be awakened by the contemplation of His character. The restraints of His fear are cast out: and, instead of choosing Him as their portion, and seeking to promote His honor and glory, men naturally choose that which God disapproves and forbids. From the earliest period of man's accountable existence, it is so. "The wicked go astray from the womb, speaking lies." "Every imagination of the thought of man's heart is only evil,

¹ Rom. 1: 28.

² Psal 58: 3.

and that continually.”¹ This is the Scriptural account of the race.

If asked why it is so, we must, from the word of God, reply, that “by one man’s disobedience, many were made sinners.”² It has been the result of the sin and apostacy of our first parents; the certain and invariable consequence of the moral depravity of the first pair, eventuating uniformly in each successive generation, according to the operation and provisions of that moral system, technically called the law of the Covenant of works, ordained as the original and natural constitution for the race. The tendency of fallen man, in his natural state is ever to sin. Of this tendency orthodox standards and divines predicate moral depravity as of a property, appropriate to, and characteristic of the race. They mean not a physical necessity to sin, but a state of mind and heart appropriate to, and characteristic of man as a fallen creature—as the descendant of a fallen and apostate parent, which, naturally, from the first period of moral individual accountability he refuses to submit to, or be directed by God, or, if our author pleases, in which he acts out his natural selfishness. Our author is constrained to use language inconsistent with his theory or philosophy, which is eminently calculated to mislead his reader, confounding choice with disposition, yea, identifying the import of these terms, which do not, and are not used generally to designate precisely the same mental state, or state of the will. Thus, in his definition of selfishness, with his characteristic want of precision, he says, “selfishness, be it remembered, consists in a *disposition* or choice to gratify the propensities, desires, and feelings.”³ The choice and the disposition, the consent of the will, and the passion, affection, emotion, or feeling, determining choice in any given case, are characteristically different. *Choice* is the selection or election between two or more objects or ends regarded as good or evil. *Consent* is the yielding to some present impulse, before the attention may have summoned an opposing thought, motive, or object to the mind. To both these distinguishable states of mind and will, feeling may be related. Our author identifies them, and them again with disposition, defining selfishness as above, to consist in the merest abstraction; a generic choice to gratify the affections, passions, and propensities, irrespectively of any moving influence of the particular objects, suggestions, or considerations exciting them and tending to determine the will in its choices specifically in detail, and irrespectively also of any foundation or reason, in the natural adaptedness of the mind or soul to be thus affected and moved rather than otherwise. Why the actings of mind and will should uniformly and naturally in man, from the very first moment of moral agency, be selfish and opposed to God, is a question of es-

¹ Gen. 6: 5² Rom. 5: 19.³ II. p. 451.

stantial importance, which ought not to be lost sight of in an attempt to explain the native moral depravity of our race.

We attempt not to explain this phenomenon. Philosophy fails us here, as it does in a thousand other things, when we inquire into the rationale of the fact. The fact itself, as reported by consciousness, and confirmed by Scripture and observation, is sufficiently humbling and alarming. Our author's theory or supposition, that moral depravity is to be traced to that state of physical depravity in which men are born, is not new, but may be traced under a different phase in the old Manichean philosophy. That he should be so bitter against "old school" theology, on this subject, is to us a matter of no little surprise, since we question whether any of that class of theologians whom he stigmatizes as teaching the philosophy of a "necessitated will," would go farther than he does himself. "As the human mind," says he, "in this state of existence is dependent upon the body for all its manifestations, and as the human body is universally in a state of greater or less physical depravity or disease, it follows that the manifestations of mind, thus dependent on a physically depraved organization, will be physically depraved manifestations. Especially is this true of the human sensibility. The appetites, passions, and propensities, are in a state of most unhealthy development. This is too evident and too much a matter of universal notoriety to need proof or illustration. Every person of reflection has observed that the human mind is greatly *out of balance* in consequence of the *monstrous* development of the sensibility. The appetites, passions, and propensities have been indulged, and the intelligence and conscience stultified by selfishness. Selfishness be it remembered, consists in a *disposition* or choice to gratify the propensities, desires, and feelings. This of course and of *necessity* produces just the unhealthy and monstrous developments which we daily see." If this is not tracing moral depravity to physical, as its appropriate and proximate cause, we know not how language could more certainly express it. We may misunderstand his meaning, but we certainly do not his language. If he will make disposition and choice synonymous; if he will not discriminate between the different states of the will itself, or rather the mind in willing, over all which moral law rightfully claims authority to direct and control, as the mind passes from the initiatory excitement or movement of appetite or feeling that obtains consent, through prolonged and increased excitement, choice, and purpose, till it ripens into determined will and act; and if he will make all and every degree of voluntariness identical with choice or ultimate intention, he must not expect others to receive and respect his teachings, or that his brethren shall be held obnoxious to his censures for misunderstanding him. The word

¹ II. p. 451.

disposition is not a synonyme with *choice*. Nor can the particular states of mind, or of the man, as a moral agent, indicated by these expressions, be correctly pronounced the same. He may affect to disregard distinctions and definitions perspicuously made, and claim the right to use words in his own sense.¹ But as we have already said, we resist and protest against his assumption of such liberty. Words here have as fixed and definite meaning as the things, or facts they represent remain unchanged in their nature; and the attempt to employ well defined technics in new senses, and different from their established import, and thus to slide in the errors of philosophy to corrupt the faith, is but to follow the example of many who have wrested and perverted the sacred Scriptures. We regard it as an effort of no trifling nature.

However metaphysicians may judge, men generally do not confound the disposition with choice, but regard it as something related and antecedent to choice—"that which both adapts and prepares the mind to be affected and excited in a uniform way, by a particular object, and tends to determine the choice for it. The word disposition is used in different senses, according to the nature of the subject, but always to denote some fixed and influential tendency appropriate and peculiar to the nature of the being. It is used in a *physiological* sense to denote that tendency to certain acts, rather than others, which depends on the arrangement and distribution of the various solid and fluid parts of the animal body. It is properly the result of organization, and varies according to the particular animal temperament which gives a fitness or tendency to be moved by certain animal affections and propensities, rather than others. Thus we say of this one and another, that they are of a choleric or melancholy or sanguine or nervous disposition. In a *psychological* sense it is used to denote that habitude or state of mind adapted or answerable to, and compliant with the animal affections and propensities, and which gives a fitness or tendency to the man to be moved by them, rather than otherwise. Thus the varieties of mental disposition develop themselves through the different animal propensities and tendencies which have ascendancy; and men are said to be vindictive, fierce, gloomy, gentle, despondent, confiding, generous, timid, courageous, &c. &c., according as they evince a readiness or proneness to be by such passions and affections excited and moved. *Morally* considered, disposition implies, not only the actual voluntariness of the mind in yielding to certain propensities, but also that yielding tendency itself, which fits and prepares the moral being to be easily and uniformly affected, excited, and moved by them.

Our author thinks that he sufficiently explains such mental and moral phenomena, by his "philosophy of free-will," which limits

¹ See his Reply to "Warning against Error," p. 39.

moral accountability to the choice or ultimate intention. It is the man's purpose or choice to gratify self; and finding, or judging that the indulgence of this and the other passion and affection for the time being contributes to such enjoyment, he chooses that to which it prompts as a means to an end. His volitions, in accordance with passion, thus becoming executive, according to our author, follow a law of necessity. His guilt or crime, therefore, according to this philosophy, does not consist directly in being vindictive, irascible, ambitious, envious, lascivious, lustful, &c., but in the original controlling choice that brought this law of necessity into efficient action. Here and here only lay the wrong! Let a man therefore but plead, as many do, that they did not know it was wrong—that they did not know what they were doing, that passion controlled and transported them, and he must, upon our author's principles, stand acquitted of guilt. The plea of insanity will become more frequent, and be yet more successfully urged before our courts, to acquit from outrageous crime, just as our author's philosophy becomes current and of authority.

Our Saviour's rule of judgment is very different. "Whoso looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart." According to our author, the crime being the ultimate intention or choice, the guilt in this case, would consist in having first chosen or intended to commit adultery, and thus looking on the woman to accomplish it. The desire follows a law of necessity, and is not in itself criminal, being, according to our author, involuntary, and only indirectly under the control of the will. The idea of desire being a state of mind which of itself in any way implies guilt, or of which moral obligation can directly be predicated, he utterly repudiates.² He condemns Edwards in unmeasured terms for assuming it. He unhesitatingly pronounces it error, legitimately flowing from his "assumption of the Locke school of philosophy," which "vitiated his whole system and gave birth to that INJURIOUS MONSTROSITY and MISNOMER, Edwards on the Freedom of the Will"! The Saviour's language plainly teaches that any and every aspect of female charms, where marriage unites not the parties, continued and indulged even till it awakens a desire to enjoy carnal commerce with the subject of them, is adultery in the sight of God. The desire for enjoyment with the subject of such charms is sin. Our author's casuistry and morality may plead, that desire being involuntarily awakened, the man cannot be guilty till the will chooses and *intends* the act of indulgence; but our Saviour's judgment and authority unequivocally, as we judge, condemn such teachings, and hold every man under moral obligation to maintain such chastity that female beauty shall not even awaken the desire to enjoy it with any one where the mar-

¹ Mat. 6: 28.² III. p. 29.³ III. p. 30.

riage relation does not justify it.—The passion, affection, or lust, exciting and prompting the choice of the will, form a very important element, not to be overlooked in estimating the nature of moral depravity. It is much too short-handed and patent sort of a method to relieve the human conscience, and to assist us toward moral perfection, for philosophy to tell us that there is nothing criminal in desires, and that passions and affections take their character always and only from the ultimate choice or intention. When Christ and philosophy expound the law to us, we give heed to the former and reject the latter: and fatal will be their mistake, who so accommodate the law to human corruptions, and explain the nature of moral obligation, as to take the whole world of passions and affections in the human heart from under the control of God's law, except in so far as they may become indirectly the servants of the sovereign will, the executive means of accomplishing an ultimate intention. We deprecate the prevalence of such morality; and augur immense injury to the church, and corruption in the world, as the legitimate result of such philosophy.

But admit for a moment the author's position, that the desire, affection, passion, appetite, or the state of the sensibility, as he generically designates them, possess no moral character, and come not under the control of moral obligation, until, and then only as the will chooses and determines that to which they urge,—that the moral depravity consists in choosing to gratify the demand of selfishness,—it may be very properly asked, in investigating the nature and origin of moral depravity, why does man uniformly and invariably from the very first choose and seek the gratification of self as an ultimate end? Is there nothing anterior to choice which operates as a cause, to determine choice always in the way of selfishness? Our author, in denying such a cause or causes must answer, that man chooses in a selfish way because he chooses, and resolves all into the absolute sovereignty of the will. If so, then let him say, amid the numberless developments of human nature, the ceaseless flow of successive generations, the millions that have been evolved from the first pair of transgressors, *why* there should have been but one being, and He miraculously conceived, and intimately united with the essential Deity, in the person of the Son of God, that has ever exercised that sovereignty of will in any other than a selfish way? The Pelagian will here assign the influence of example and the natural imitateness of the race, as the cause of this moral depravity. In doing so, he acts more ingenuously than our author, who *virtually*, with the Manichee, if not explicitly, traces moral to physical depravity.

It is much preferable, in our judgment, to do as the orthodox standards and divines—conformably with the Scriptures—have

done; viz., refer it to the relation we sustain to our prime and guilty progenitor—the constitution or covenant God ordained and established with him for the government of the race, which constitution, through its moral influence, should determine the moral character, as well as through its physical, the physical structure of the race. The moral character of Adam's race depended upon his. It was made to follow certain laws, established by the Creator and Governor of men, affecting and determining their relation and condition, and rendering the developments of moral depravity throughout successive generations, as morally certain as those of body and mind were physically necessary. Coming into existence under that constitution, with no other than the light of nature, and nothing but the feeble and faint notices of the law of God written on the heart, to direct and help us, or to present motive influence to induce holy choice, we say it is rendered morally certain, not only that we shall yield or consent to the motive influence induced through sensual appetites and propensities, through the passions and affections—the impulses of feeling and concurring sentiment, but also by default of will, allow our minds to be determined in selfish or sinful choice. This default of will we believe cannot be either strictly and philosophically, or according to the language of common sense, identified with choice or ultimate intention. Man, by neglect and omission, avails not himself even of all the helps he has naturally. For moral depravity exists and operates in other forms and ways than in choice and ultimate intention. Consenting to the qualification had, in some feeling produced by causes without, and awakened not at will, and yielding to the present pleasurable impulses of excited sensibility, urging to what is wrong, is as truly a development of moral depravity as when the choice and ultimate intention have been formed to seek it as an end. Consent given, it gains strength, and ripening into choice and purpose, becomes efficient as a principle of action, and fixes its indelible stamp on the moral character. Of this state of mind, which manifests itself in the very earliest of mental and moral developments, and results by virtue of our connection with, and according to the law of our descent from guilty progenitors, it has been customary to predicate moral depravity. It is to this, we believe, that the Shorter Catechism refers, when it speaks of “the corruption of our whole nature which is *commonly called* original sin.” In affirming it to be conveyed “by ordinary generation” we do not understand that form of sound words to teach, that it is a physical entity, or property propagated by the law of reproduction, as are life and limb and other animal powers. The Larger Catechism, in common with the Shorter, says that “the corruption of nature” is “commonly called original sin,” but explains that corruption of nature to consist in man's being “utterly indisposed, disabled,

and made opposite unto all that is spiritually good and wholly inclined to all evil and that continually." This is induced proximately through the want of original righteousness. That original righteousness consisted in the bias or tendency of all man's powers, passions, and affections, in his state of innocence, to conformity to the law or will of God, which, created as our first parents were, in a state of perfect development, their love of God produced. By the law of natural generation, their descendants are devoid of this love. It is not transmissible as are physical powers and properties. They come not into being holy creatures, as did Adam, with a bias or tendency of their nature to holiness; but from the very first, the workings of the mind, the will, and the affections, are not conformed to the law of God. Nor is there any security whatever in the constitution and circumstances under which they are born, that any motive influences from such sources will induce right and holy choices. On the contrary, there is manifest from the very first, a disrelish for God and divine things,—such an aversion from Him and supreme regard for self, as to indispose, and thus morally, or in that state of mind disable and make opposite to all spiritual good. The race has sustained a loss of that bias and motive influence provided for by God, according to the original natural constitution or "covenant of works," and designed, had that constitution been confirmed by the obedience of Adam, to affect and determine the free-will of man in holy obedience. A derangement also has ensued, in the exercise of those powers appropriate to men as moral agents; so that, from the first moment of the successive generations of the race becoming capable of acting as moral agents, a tendency to sin operates to render it morally certain, that in all the appropriate circumstances of their being they will sin. Of all this want of original righteousness, derangement, and tendency to sin, characteristic of man as a moral agent, and having an influence on the development of his moral character, it has been customary, and we think correctly, to speak, as part and parcel of his moral depravity. When we thus designate it, we mean by it that defective deranged state of intellect, will, and feeling, existing anterior to ultimate choice or intention, which tends to induce sinful choices, and which may, therefore, in ordinary style of speech be spoken of as a property characteristic of fallen man considered as a moral agent.

Our author makes moral depravity to consist wholly in acts of will, and to be identical with positive transgression. The man, according to his philosophy, is not morally depraved, but only his purposes, choices, intentions—which are opposed to God—his acts of transgression. Moral depravity is the property of the acts, not of the man. These, in common with those who make no great boasts of metaphysical accuracy, we call crimes, offences,

vices, iniquities, sins, the moral turpitude of which may vary; so are they generally designated. But moral depravity or corruption are both regarded in the Scriptures, and spoken of, by the multitude, as well as by technical theologians, as the property or attribute of the being who performs the acts. It is that which characterizes man as a moral agent, so uniformly, so invariably, so universally, that, in the language of common sense, we say of human nature, it is morally depraved or sinful. It is the universal property of the race. To this our author will perhaps object; and by means of the *odium theologicum* think to answer or ridicule it with the charge of physical depravity—monstrous, absurd. But we have taken issue with him on a point of fact, not a question of philosophy merely, and deny that disposition, inclination, or bias, determining to sin, are identical with choice or intention. He has not even attempted to prove their identity; but, attributing to his “new school brethren” the assumptions of his own philosophy, he labors, by the argument *ex concessis* to show that consistently they must adopt his theology. We protest against such attempts of Oberlin to identify itself with the theology of new school Presbyterians. They may differ from their old school brethren in understanding, interpreting, and explaining the system of doctrines taught in their standards, while they agree in the faith of all the great truths or facts set forth in them. But the difference between them and the system of our author, is wide as the poles.

When we say that man is a rational being, we do not mean merely that his acts are rational, but that rationality is a characteristic property of his nature. There is an adaptation and tendency of mind to exert itself in ways evidential of wisdom and reason, of forethought and intelligence. Whether we call it power or property, energy or attribute, it makes but little difference. Rationality is not predicated of the acts, but of the being who performs them, who is thus distinguished from irrational creatures. We call him also a social being, meaning that the tendencies of his nature are to society, not to solitude. In like manner when we say that man is a sinful being, we mean that the bias and tendency of his powers, in his natural state, is to sin and not to holiness. Dr. Dwight¹ speaks of a “controlling disposition, or energy which constitutes the moral character. By this disposition or energy,” says he, “I intend *that unknown cause, whence it arises, that the actions* of the mind are either sinful or virtuous. On this energy depends the moral nature of all actions, and the moral character of every mind.” Our author may allege, that this energy is what he means by the ultimate intention, the choice of self-gratification as an end; but that, previously to the knowledge of God and of his law, there can be no

¹ Discourses, I. p. 462.

moral agency and moral obligation, the will not having intelligently decided against God ; and therefore it is improper to affirm that the child is sinful or depraved. Yet the fact is unquestionable, that from birth the appetites, passions, and affections of the child, as they develop themselves, crave indulgence ; and the habit of such indulgence being formed before intellect is developed sufficiently to have cognizance of law, the bias of its nature therefore is to sin, according to our author's own showing of what constitutes the essence of selfishness. Is the child like any mere irrational animal, under no moral constitution whatever ? Nor can it be till its intellect is sufficiently developed to be furnished with the knowledge of God's character, supremacy, and law ? Then are innumerable adults, and whole masses of the heathen world who have not the knowledge of God, under no moral constitution, for the same reason. The Bible, however, teaches a very different doctrine.

The moral constitution or covenant, ordained with Adam, was ordained for the race, and both affects the condition and exerts a determining influence on the character of his offspring, as it forms the rule which God observes in His treatment of them. If language can have any meaning at all, the Bible, plainly and pointedly teaches, that our first parents, by their sin, became the cause of the sinfulness of their race—that all the successive generations of men which have invariably and uniformly been sinners, have been rendered such by their violation of that constitution or covenant. “By one man's disobedience many were made sinners.” “By the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation.” This is not a mere natural result,—the simple effect of physical causes operating according to the established laws of nature. It is the legitimate moral result of a moral constitution ordained by God for the race, which has been violated by their divinely constituted head and representative, their first father, Adam. The moral government of God, as the Bible teaches, includes in it other elements than that of distinct *personal* responsibility. Philosophy may pronounce it unreasonable, unjust, for God to deal with men, on any other principle, than direct personal accountability. But revelation announces the fact that God has organized and conducted His moral government in this world, on the principle of federal representation also. It is so interwoven with the very structure of human society that it is impossible for government to be successfully maintained without acting upon it. Governmental constitutions, treaties, leagues, and covenants, charters and corporate obligations, and the succession, perpetuity, and unity of the political organization, all involve it. The acts of one man, as parent governor or public officer, affects others according to the law of relationship, and that, both as to conditions and developments of character, just as that of Adam did his

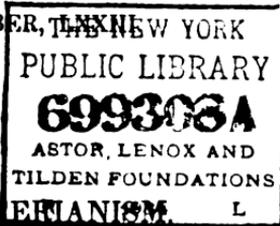
offspring. The bias of our nature to evil as well as the dominion of death was consequent on the fall, and ensued by virtue of our relation to Adam, according to the provisions of the moral constitution ordained with him for the race. His sin and fall have exerted a determining influence upon the developments of human nature,—have given, as it were, a stamp to the moral character of men. The fact is undeniable, however philosophers may theologize upon the subject. That it would have been different if our first parents had not sinned, is just as true as that neither they nor their offspring would have died. *How*, we know not, nor care to inquire. By sinning against God, and perverting thus that moral constitution which have been efficacious to preserve from death, and to confirm the race in holiness, our first parents have given it power to draw down universal death, and rendered themselves fountains of corruption.

Our author may talk and rail, as he pleases, about the injustice of God and of His transactions, viewed in any other light than that of his philosophy. He may pour torrents of ridicule on that style of speech which designates the race as morally depraved, and represents them to have been rendered such by the fall of the first pair, by the forfeiture of Divine influences, and the consequent bias or tendency in all to sin, and he may think that he has delivered himself from all embarrassment and perplexity in his theologizing; but he only leaps out of one difficulty to land in another and still greater. For, affirming that “moral depravity can ONLY be predicated of selfish ultimate intention.”—not of the mind or soul or man himself, only of its exercises—he is forced, absurdly enough as it appears to us, to give no less than eight long and labored dissertations, on what he calls the *attributes of love!* and five on the attributes of selfishness!! Love and selfishness, it will be remembered are, with him, mere acts of the will, ultimate choice or intention, which however simple at one time he makes them, now, according to his own showing, become so complicated that there is no end to the ever-varying attributes pertaining to these acts. What a vast mass of elaborate confusion he has heaped together, under the category of attributes of an act, by which he has continued to cover up from his own view the *πρωτον ψευδος*, the radical error of his philosophy, the reader will perceive, when we state that he has numerically detailed some *thirty-seven qualities of benevolence*, considered as an act of the will—all essential to that act's being veritable holiness, and some *twenty-seven qualities of selfishness*, considered as an act of the will, and constituting it sin!! Why he has not made the antagonism more complete, we are somewhat curious to know.

[*The balance of this Review we are obliged to defer to a future number.—Ed.*]

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ARTICLE I.

OLD AND NEW SCHOOL PRESBYTERIANISM. L

By REV. SAMUEL T. SPEAR, Brooklyn, N. Y.

Differences between Old and New School Presbyterians. By
REV. LEWIS CHEESEMAN, Rochester. Published by Erastus
Darrow.

IN the following Article it is proposed to make some comments on the Book, designated by the above title. The book carries with it the name of John C. Lord, D.D., of Buffalo, for a voucher; besides which, it has already received a favorable notice from the Biblical Repertory, as well as from several religious journals of the day.

It may perhaps be well to inform the reader in the outset, that, although the reviewer is conscious of no special love for the work of criticism, still he need not expect to find many commendations in this article. The book has many faults, and but few virtues; and to review it with justice is to criticise it with pointed severity. In the above opinion we may not agree with Dr. Lord, and some others, who think the work a valuable performance, an important addendum to the religious literature of the age. If so, then this will be an illustration of *subjective* "differences," not *objective*, surely, since the printer has given us but *one* book to read, though the readers be many.

We should be quite willing at once to submit the "doctrinal" points, and join the issue of orthodoxy and truth with the author in regard to them; and this would be our course, were there not some important preliminary matter, whose inspection is requisite to a just understanding of this strange assault upon "New School Presbyterians," and virtually also upon the entire body of orthodox Congregationalists in New England. Some attention to this branch of the subject will be no loss to the reader.

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not exhibited in the noisy declamations of popular meetings, but in the overflowings of a heart full of love to our fellow-men, and prompting to earnest prayer and efficient effort in their behalf.

ARTICLE V.

REVIEW OF FINNEY'S THEOLOGY.

By REV. GEORGE DUFFIELD, D.D., Detroit, Michigan.

Lectures on Systematic Theology, embracing Lectures on Moral Government, Atonement, Moral and Physical Depravity, Regeneration, Philosophical Theories and Evidences of Regeneration. By REV. C. G. FINNEY, Professor of Theology, in the Oberlin Collegiate Institute.

(Concluded from p. 746, last volume.)

MORAL AND PHYSICAL DEPRAVITY.

THE main issue to be met on this point is very simple. Is there any tendency, bias, inclination, or disposition, call it what you please, whether simple or complex, negative or positive, which operates, with determining influence, as a cause or reason why men, uniformly and invariably, in all the appropriate circumstances of their nature, choose to do evil? Does the existence of such a causative influence determining to sin, imply a physical necessity and impair the freedom of the will appropriate to man as a moral agent? Our author, virtually, if not explicitly, denies the former and affirms the latter. Some, in affirming the former, may have erred in their illustrations, calling it taste or instinct, and comparing it with that which renders the serpent venomous, the tiger ferocious, the canine and feline tribe carnivorous, and the like; and they may have prosaically or poetically expressed themselves so as to be obnoxious to the charge of believing or teaching, that there flows a poisonous lues, from parent to child, or there exists a fever in the blood, or some physical entity, which is sinful *per se*. But to avoid an error in this extreme, must we run so far to the other as to deny all causative influence determining to sin, and insist that freedom of will consists alone in absolute sovereignty and independence? Our author says explicitly, "Moral depravity is *sin itself*, and not *the cause of sin*;" nor, of course, *a cause of sin*; which is in effect to resolve all moral depravity into acts of will, and rebuke the common sense notions of mankind, who distinguish between a state of the affections and passions affecting the will, and the acts of the will, and predicate moral depravity of both in given cases. Dr. Dwight will not

give a name to that specific particular state of the affections, &c., which determines the will to sin—which, in other words, renders it pleasant and agreeable to sin, which finds enjoyment in this and the other thing God forbids, and is pained and affected with aversion by that which He requires. But that such a state exists, and is culpable, men almost universally assume; and they generally estimate the degree of a man's moral depravity, by the degree of satisfaction experienced in doing wrong, and of aversion to doing what is right. In estimating moral depravity, we must not confine our attention to the volition, choice, purpose, or ultimate intention merely; but embrace also the feeling of pleasure or satisfaction had in doing wrong, and of pain or aversion to do what is right. We think, speak, and judge of it as the working of a mind, will, and heart, or affections and passions averse from God, and unaffected by His love, or regard for Him—which finds its satisfaction in opposing His will, and not in doing it. So the Scriptures describe it, and call it "enmity against God," which from the very first is morally certain to manifest itself in all the race.

Our author may say that this is but what he means by selfishness, or that it means nothing more. We are willing, for the sake of argument, to admit it. But in analyzing that selfishness, in resolving it into its constituent elements, we differ widely from him, and believe, that to describe it as consisting wholly in generic purpose, ultimate intention and choice, operating in successive executive volitions, will not tell all the truth, nor will it help the matter to make self-gratification the end on which choice terminates. For the question comes back, and must be met and satisfactorily answered by our author, before he is done with his analysis of moral depravity, why do men, universally and invariably, from the very first, find their pleasure in gratifying self, and not in doing the will of God, in pleasing self rather than in pleasing God? What is it, in other words, that uniformly from the first, makes man choose self-gratification as the ultimate end, instead of "the good of God and the universe?" We answer, that such is the condition in which we are born into this world, such the derangement of our moral powers, and the original moral constitution of the race produced by the sin and apostasy of our first parents, that selfishness is natural to man. It ensues by virtue of our connection with, and descent from, a guilty progenitor, that under whatever circumstances we may be born, in all the appropriate conditions of our being, sin will be preferred to holiness—man will find it more natural and agreeable to serve himself than to serve God. And of man thus related, affected, and conditioned, we predicate moral depravity.

Our author ascribes the uniformity and universality of sinful choice, "to the influence of temptation, or to a physically-depraved

constitution, surrounded by the circumstances in which mankind first form their moral character, or put forth their first moral choices." Whatever he may say to the contrary, he thus, in reality, admits that some causes operate to determine the will to sinful choice, and that they are permanent, uniform, and efficient to secure the total depravity of the race. For he says, "We can also *predict* that with a constitution physically depraved, and surrounded with objects to awaken appetite, and with all the circumstances in which human beings first form their moral character, they will seek to gratify themselves universally unless prevented by the Holy Spirit." His predictions rest on fixed operative causes, according to this showing. Of course, therefore, his free-will, after all, is not absolutely sovereign and independent; but is influenced, affected, and determined by antecedent thoughts or feelings. Some causative influence is operative; and whether it be physical depravity, temptation, circumstances, or what not, or all together, we care not. His philosophy fails him, and he gains nothing, nor approximates one step nearer than we do to a solution of the fact of the universal depravity of the human race, which, we frankly confess, is like many other phenomena in the moral government of God, totally inexplicable by human reason. Why have these things operated so uniformly for near six thousand years, so that there is not a solitary exception in the developments of Adam's race, except the babe of Bethlehem, miraculously conceived, but "they have all together become corrupt, there is none that doeth good, not one." If the will possesses that sort of self-originating, self-determining power, that, of its own simple unaided sovereignty, it acts, and this is the freedom he claims for it, then why are there not some found who from the first are wholly uncontaminated by sin? Let him answer this consistently with his philosophy. If physical depravity, together with temptation and outward circumstances, operate uniformly to render men sinners, then may he be truly charged, equally with those he condemns, with teaching that man sins by a law of physical necessity. "His "philosophy of free will," in contradistinction to that of a necessitated will, relieves him not. We will not suffer him to escape in the fog of his metaphysics, but demand of him that he tell us, in terms which cannot be misunderstood, what he means by the freedom of the will. The exceeding obscurity and defectiveness of his definition, we pointed out in our first article, when examining simply the claims of what he calls a superior philosophy. The freedom of the will has long been a subject of theological as well as a metaphysical discussion, and our author has produced nothing new, but rather revived the old Armenian philosophy, which Edwards and Owen before him so effectually exposed. He must be much more explicit and tell us precisely in what it consists, and not play fast

and loose between the Calvinistic and Armenian schemes, if he would have us respect the consistency and honesty of his teachings. To claim to be a Calvinist and appear in Arminian dress, to profess to hold substantially to the doctrines of the Westminster Confession of Faith, as he has very recently done, and yet ridicule and abuse it and its framers, does not well agree with our ideas of consistency or morality. But we judge him not. If the freedom of the will, in his judgment, be the absolute unqualified power of its self-determination—unaffected, uninfluenced, uncaused by anything whatever antecedent in the mind—the liberty of indifference—let him speak it out openly and manly, that we may place him with the school to which he seems to belong, and cease to discourse to us about motive or end, or any other reason for willing than the will's own sovereign independent determination or choice. Universal consciousness will oppose effectual barriers against such a philosophy. The veriest child will rebuke our philosopher. By self-determination, therefore, he must mean something different from absolute independent self-originated acts of will—the liberty of indifference, or of contingency. Honesty requires that on this point he define his position.

“*If the freedom of the will,*” says Dr. Dwight, “*is the freedom of contingency,* then plainly its volitions are all accidents, and certainly the chances, arithmetically considered, are as numerous in favor of virtuous volitions as of sinful ones. There ought, therefore, on this plan, to be, and ever to have been, as many absolutely virtuous persons in the world as sinful. Plainly *all* ought not to be sinful. *If the freedom of the will is the freedom of indifference,* the same consequence ought to follow: for if there be no bias in the mind towards either virtue or sin, at the time immediately preceding each of its volitions, and the freedom of each volition arises out of this fact, then, certainly, there being no bias either way, the number of virtuous, and of sinful volitions, must naturally be equal, and no cause can be assigned why every man, independently of his renovation by the Spirit of God, should be sinful only. If the liberty of the will consist in self-determination, and the mind, without the influence of any motive, first wills that it will form a second volition, and this volition depends for its freedom on the existence of such a preceding one; then it is plain, that from these preceding volitions as many virtuous as sinful ones ought to be derived; because the preceding or self-determining volitions, are, by the supposition, under no influence or bias from any cause whatever. Thus it is evident, that, according to all these suppositions, there could be no preponderancy, much less an universality, of sin in the world.”¹

This learned and sober theologian has well observed, in addition to the above, that the liberty of the will and consequently the moral

¹ Dwight's Theology, I. 485.

agency of man in this world, is the same in kind with that of the spirits of just men made perfect in heaven, of the holy angels, and of the man Christ Jesus. Whence then comes it to pass that the same moral agency in heaven is developed universally and invariably in holiness, but on earth in sin? Our author is bound to answer this, consistently with his philosophy of the freedom of the will. We say, with the Bible for our guide, that the moral depravity of man results inevitably and naturally from the fall of our first parents; that causes then were brought into action which gave such a bias to sin that it can only be counteracted and overcome by the atonement of Jesus Christ, and the regenerating and sanctifying influence of the Holy Spirit. It is not in man, ruined and depraved by nature, to reform and purify himself, and to perfect holiness without the Spirit of God.

With this subject our author's views of ability and inability, are intimately connected. They also are shaped by his philosophy. The distinctions made by Dr. Twisse, prolocutor of the Westminster Assembly of divines, by Phillip Henry, and President Edwards, and all the chief theologians of New England, between moral and natural ability, and inability, he rejects and ridicules, and insists that liberty is ability or power, and power or ability is liberty. "Natural ability, and natural liberty to will, must be *identical*," says our author. "If he (man) has power by nature to will directly as God requires, or by willing to avail himself of power so to will, he is naturally free and able to obey the commandments of God. Then let it be borne distinctly in mind, that natural ability, about which so much has been said, is nothing more nor less than the freedom or liberty of the will, of a moral agent. No man knows what he says, or whereof he affirms, who holds to the one and denies the other, for they are *truly and properly identical*."

The reader will notice the modesty here betrayed in thus, by his definition, confounding things that differ, and dogmatically pouring contempt on some of the profoundest thinkers, and most erudite writers who, on a subject confessedly complicated, and of difficult apprehension, have both used and carefully explained the import of terms long current in theology. Our author has not defined so well wherein consists the freedom of the will, nor rendered his subject so clear as to carry with it the proof of his accuracy and truth in the premises, and authorize him to stultify those, who, with the Shorter Catechism, affirm, that "no mere man is able in this life perfectly to keep the commandments of God," and yet teach, with the Westminster Confession, that "God hath endowed the will of man with that natural liberty that it is neither forced, nor by any absolute necessity of nature determined to good or evil."

The words, power or ability, and liberty or freedom, are not synonymous; neither are the things they represent identical.

1 III. 16, 17.

^a Con. of Faith, chap. ix. : 1.

Our author teaches that man has full ability perfectly to keep the commandments of God. Will he pretend to say that this ability is the liberty wherewith Christ hath made His people free? If the will of man naturally is perfectly free, perfectly able to keep the commandments of God, then what is the bondage from which Christ emancipates His people? Wherein, in this particular of the freedom of the will, do they differ from the unregenerate? And upon what just ground do the Scriptures represent men by nature to be led captive by the Devil at his will, to be his bond-slaves, to be in bondage to corruption? It will not do to say, these are mere metaphorical expressions. They must, even if this were admitted, have some foundation in real resemblance. The will of man is not naturally as free to choose holiness as it is to choose sin, and hence the necessity and infinite value to us of the *redemption* which there is in Jesus Christ. Man has not naturally equal power to produce the fruits of holiness, that he has of iniquity. If so, he would need no help of the Spirit, and could, at any moment, without the grace and power of God enabling him to will and do, emancipate himself from the bondage of his lusts, and perfectly keep the commandments of God. The whole work of the Spirit, so important and absolutely indispensable, according to the showing of the Scriptures, in order to the deliverance of sinners from the power of their lusts and the tyranny of the Devil, is altogether unnecessary, and an improper interference with man's liberty. Our author's philosophy places him directly in opposition to the Word of God, which teaches that but for Christ's interposition, and the grace of His Spirit, sin will reign in men's mortal body to their obeying it in the lusts thereof.—Rom. 6 : 12. Our author may express his amazement and abhorrence, talk of God's injustice and tyranny, and seek by a burst of passion, or a *ruse* upon the feelings, to storm the judgment. But this is an artifice that can only impose upon those whose reason is controlled by passion, and who are as ignorant of the principles of sacred logic as they are of the Scriptures. The reverential and believing student of the Bible will not fail to see, that the bondage of man's will in sin, his deep *moral* depravity, is set forth, not only as his crime, his personal guilt, but also as the awful calamity and curse of God, in which every one of the human race has been involved by the sin and fall of our first parents. In consequence of their transgression, we come into existence under circumstances, exposed to influences, and with a bias to evil that operate to determine our wills to sin, and most inevitably will ruin us for ever, if God interferes not, by the atoning blood and renovating spirit of Jesus Christ, to rescue our wills from the bondage of our lusts, as He enables us to renounce the world, the flesh, and the devil, and to become the freemen of Christ Jesus. This may be pronounced mere *figurative* language, and improper to be quoted on a subject properly

philosophical. But the freedom of the will is a subject eminently *practical*, and however the Scriptures may employ analogical terms, and the tropes of speech, their strict truthfulness, as the Word of God authorizes us to take it for granted, that there is and must be some real resemblance between the bondage and slavery among men and the enthrallment of the will by the lusts of the flesh and the desires of the mind. The common sense of men—where any appetite, passion, propensity, desire, or habit determines the will in sinful choices—leads them to pronounce those *enslaved* who indulge them. The subjects, too, of such appetites, &c., as the drunkard, the sensualist, and the vile, when reproved and warned of the danger of their conduct, will promptly say, they cannot resist, temptation overcomes them. But neither do themselves nor others conclude that they are removed beyond the reach of accountability, and are free from guilt; nay, they judge that this very enthrallment of the will, according to its degree, graduates their criminality. The freedom of the will, of which consciousness has cognizance, is not absolute and independent; but is consistent with subordination and dependence, agreeably to the laws and conditions by which God as Creator has limited the mind or soul of man, in the exercise of those powers with which He has endowed it. Our moral nature does, indeed embrace the elements both of ability and freedom; but they are distinct and different things, although our author, with many others, has confounded them.

The words power and liberty represent abstract ideas; and although we are incapable of defining their import or describing the nature of the things for which they stand, yet are we conscious that, by some necessary law of our minds, by some original suggestions that invariably, under certain circumstances or on certain occasions, arise, we form the idea of power, and, also, that of liberty as distinct from it. The idea in both cases being simple is not susceptible of definition; but resulting necessarily from the action of the mind, or laws of mental activity, under given circumstances, is referable to the sovereign constitution of our Creator, and, of necessity, to be regarded as the representative of an immutable reality. The idea of power implies that of cause, and cause, according to Edwards, that of some foundation or reason out of itself, why that which did not exist begins to be. We say that we have power to move, walk, run, &c., meaning that some energy excited by our wills, or put forth by our minds in the act of willing, causes these motions, or, in other words, that by some ordained and established law of the Creator, the antecedent act of will produced the motions or acts of walking, &c. God Himself, by the word of His power, the energy of His will, created and upholds all things. To a certain extent, He has endowed us, His rational creatures, and all moral agents, with a similar energy by the acts of our wills, to produce or give rise to or cause other

events which we hold to be related as their appropriate effects. The extent to which that power or energy may be exerted is that of our liberty or freedom. The will is but the exponent of the mind's or soul's energy, or the channel through which it operates. But this is not omnipotent. Its exercise is bounded and restrained by certain established laws and conditions, necessary in the nature of things which God has created. Hence arise our notions of ability or inability, natural and moral, and also of liberty or freedom of the will. The laws and conditions intended by God to limit the exercise of the mind's power, are either natural or moral; the former determining simply the *possibility*, so far as the nature of things is concerned, and the other, the character, rightful or improper, lawful or unlawful, of those acts or effects which the mind or soul of man may produce. When the mind, without hindrance or resistance, acts in its appropriate sphere, that is, in the sphere prescribed by God for its actions, we say, learning the reality from our consciousness, that it is free. God has not only prescribed the natural or physical laws of the will's actings, but, also, the moral. He has adjusted, in His wisdom and benevolence, the manner in which the mind of man, with the powers He has conceded to it, shall be affected and brought into action. The relations of intellect and sensibility to each other and to the will, and designed to regulate their actings, in the first man, Adam, who was created perfect, were not left at random, but prescribed by God, so as to preserve, when not violated, an harmonious exercise. The circumstances, too, or conditions under which those powers should be exercised, and the precise way in which, in those circumstances or conditions, man should exert his powers and put forth his volitions, being regulated by God's law, or the constitution which formed the charter or grant of those powers, it is obvious that human liberty, the freedom of the will, is not and cannot, in the nature of things, be absolute, but is restrained within the limits prescribed by God, our Creator, Lawgiver, and Judge. Provided the harmony of the mind be not disturbed, that is, provided each part or power operates in its appropriate and legitimate sphere, or, in other words, conforms to the law prescribed for it, and thus fulfils the great intents of the Creator, in the exercise of no one part or power infringing on another, but performing through each its proper functions, and the whole thus moves harmoniously, equally according to its proportions, in its proper place and relation, we are conscious of that state of things we call liberty. There is no unavoidable perplexity in the mind itself, and no restraint or infringement from any source without it. Beyond this consciousness we have no knowledge of liberty. Wherever this harmony is disturbed, this infringement takes place, and, according to the degree to which it prevails, we naturally, and as it were, intuitively talk of man being enslaved. Thus we

speak of the drunkard being enslaved to his cups, the lecherous to his lusts, and the like, where appetite has become inordinate. He is regarded as less free than the man whose appetites have not been vitiated. So say the Scriptures. It is the language of common sense. Yet no one dreams, in so saying, that the man is absolutely, irredeemably, irrecoverably, beyond all possibility of reformation, and free from the obligation to conform humbly to the laws of God, which define, and are designed to protect his liberty. Whether he ever will spontaneously so conform himself, without some external help or movement of God's providence and grace, changing the actual circumstances and condition which, by the inordinate indulgence of his appetite, he himself has produced, is a question that the Word of God most unequivocally answers for us. He will not. He has sold himself to work iniquity; he needs Divine help to restore him to liberty and virtue, to rescue him from the world, the flesh, and the devil, by whom he is led captive at his will. Yet has the man certain capacities or powers appropriate to him as a moral creature, which, by the help of God, may be placed under circumstances, and in a condition for self-recovery, that is, for a restoration to liberty and virtue.

It is on this actual state of things of which human consciousness takes cognizance, whatever may be men's metaphysical philosophy, that those distinctions are made, and that style of speech employed, which our author repudiates and ridicules as unmeaning, absurd, and false, but which are to be found in the writings of many, both cis and trans-atlantic divines, who speak of natural and moral ability and inability. It is worthy of attention to notice, how the same contempt of this distinction founded, in the very nature of things, has led our author, and certain ultra "Old School" writers to opposite extremes. While the one teaches, that man has full ability by his own spontaneous and unaided self-determining power of will to change his heart, and become a new man in Christ Jesus, the other utterly and absolutely denies all ability whatever in man, resembling him to a block of wood or stone, or a lifeless corpse, until a literal new creation by the Spirit of God, impart to him new power or capacity for spiritual or holy acts. We would avoid both extremes, believing that the truth lies between them, and that the divine counsel here is what common sense gives in many other matters, *in medio tutissimus ibis*. While such men as Edwards and Bellamy, and New England divines generally, have carefully drawn out and stated the distinction, such men as Davies and Witherspoon, and many other devoted ministers of Christ have actually assumed it in all their urgent exhibitions of truth upon the consciences of their hearers. "The deplorable and naturally helpless state of sinners," says Dr. Witherspoon, "takes not away their obligation to duty; the *moral inability*, under which sinners now lie, as a consequence of the fall, is not of such

nature as to take away the guilt of sin, the propriety of exhortation to duty, or the necessity of endeavors after recovery." ¹

The words ability and power are by no means synonymes of liberty or freedom. They are of mutable import, like many others, to be determined always by a reference to the nature of the subject of which the thing they express is predicated. The careful reader of the Scriptures will not fail to notice numerous shades of meaning in which they are used—sometimes denoting, when applied to God, that attribute or energy by which He can accomplish His will—and when applied to man, to notice no other of its generic applications, sometimes the faculties of mind or body, one or all, or in other words the natural capacity which adapts man, as a creature, for certain kinds of actions, sometimes the force or energy exerted in the use of those faculties, sometimes the means or condition necessary in the nature of things for the exercise of that energy, sometimes the moving cause or reason, or motive influence that excites and determines to its exercise, sometimes the right or privilege or authority for its exercise, and sometimes several or all of these together. It is obvious, therefore, what a wide opportunity is afforded, through the varied signification of these words, ability or power, in their varied applications and use, for the indulgence of sophistry, where either ignorance, pride, obstinacy, perverseness, selfish or improper designs, or want of logical accuracy, may employ it, to the great confusion, deception and injury of those who are not accustomed closely to discriminate and view the import of words, in their proper connections, and shades of import, as indicated by the nature of the subject. Our author seems to be skilful in this sort of skirmishing, indulging in remarks and a style of reasoning eminently calculated to mislead and bear away uneducated minds, by taking terms in loose popular senses and using them as the technics of his philosophy.

Our senses are capacities of nature for taking cognizance of various properties or modes of operation pertaining to material things, and so we speak of being able to see, to hear, to smell, to taste, and to feel. Our mental faculties are capacities for operations appropriate to mind; as are our muscular and animal powers to body, to the nature we possess in common with the animal tribes. We mean, that God has so constituted our minds, that under certain circumstances and conditions, we are able to think, reason, feel and will; and also our bodies, according to established laws of connection with our minds, that we can stand, walk, run and perform those various muscular and animal movements dependent on organization. Using the word in the same sense of capacity, we say that we are able to will and call into exercise the various mental and physical faculties or powers for action, with which we are endowed by our Creator. But the capacity to

¹ Witherspoon's Works, I. 142.

will is one thing, and our ability actually to exercise it in given cases is another, and very different thing. Our author confounds them.

Our capacity or power to will, depends on the law of our constitutional being or organization. It has its foundation in nature and hence is called natural ability. The actual exercise of that power depends on certain circumstances or conditions, as well determining the mode in which the will shall act, as being prerequisite, in the very nature of things. We have power to walk, but not to fly, will to do so as we may, God having never endowed us with capacity for such action. In reference to all those actions for which we have been furnished with the natural capacities, men say without fear of being misunderstood, that they have power to perform them. Yet may there be circumstances which prevent us from exercising those powers so that we shall naturally say, we have not liberty to do so. What tyro in philosophy or logic would *therefore* identify power and liberty?

The actual exercise of a natural power depends not merely on the possession of such capacity. It is indeed an essential circumstance or condition; but there are many actions of a complex character, for which there must be outward favorable concurring circumstances, and necessary means and conditions, without which the power or capacity will no more be exerted than if we were destitute of it. Thus at this present time I say, that I have power to pass the next hour into Canada, meaning that I have the natural capacities of mind and body to will to rise up and walk and perform all the actions necessary on my part, to take me voluntarily there. But having done so, on reaching the river and finding no means of transit procurable, or if procurable, happening to be destitute of funds and none at hand from whom to procure them, or credit failing me, and being unable to man the boat myself or to obtain help from others; in view of any one or all of these circumstances and conditions necessary for the accomplishment of my purpose, I naturally turn away and say, I have not power to cross into Canada. This latter declaration does not contradict the former. The former was founded on my knowledge of the existence of public and well-established means or facilities of passage, which, at moderate and fixed prices are afforded every five minutes, or thereabouts, during the day, and I meant no more, than that I had the natural capacity to avail myself of the means and helps, the conditions requisite to visit Canada, should I purpose or choose to do so. The latter was founded on the unusual and unexpected absence and failure of those means and necessary conditions. Our author in this latter case, however, according to his philosophy, and with characteristic good breeding would say, "you fool, you had no such power at all, you lied in saying you had." According to his idea of power, as being identical with liberty, he must

embrace in it all that Pascal represents the Thomists and the Jesuits meant by the "*pouvoir prochain*," or next power. So when he says that we have power to keep the commandments of God perfectly, and if not we are not free, he must mean that we have all and always every requisite concurring circumstance and condition, means and motives, not only to execute our will when thus exercised, but also to determine the will itself to choose to do so. His idea of power admits of no distinctions between the capacity to act, the requisite concurring means and conditions, the motive influence determining the will to act, and the acting of the will itself, but loosely comprehends them all. "The human will is free," says he, "therefore men have power or ability to do all their duty,"—alias, to be perfect! He is a fool, according to our author, who denies the inference; a very easy sort of logic, truly!

The proposition, *the human will is free*, is not, as an absolute proposition, true; for it is not independent, being restrained and limited in its exercise by certain laws and conditions. Our author must be more explicit, and tell us precisely what he means by liberty or freedom of will. It cannot, as has been shown, be volition totally self-originated, without any causative influence of desire, feeling, or motive, or whatever determines the mind to put forth the volition. Nor can it be volition without reason or end, or any connection with a previous state of mind; for human consciousness contradicts such an idea of liberty. Our author predicates moral obligation and character, of the ultimate intention or choice of an end; but this choice when analyzed, amounts to nothing more than an act of will determined by the causative power of motive. The end or object to be obtained moves or determines the man to will. He is not independent and possessed of absolute sovereignty over his actions. External things, and suggestions of mind, affect and excite to act. Inclination, or the tendency of desire or wish, aversion or disgust, toward particular objects and acts, moves to act. When choice is in accordance with such inclination, and no obstacle interferes to frustrate or prevent from acting according to it, men generally say they act freely. "The unlearned," says Dr. Burton, "define liberty in different words, yet their definitions amount to the same thing. And their definition is the result of their feelings and experience; and of course is as just as any given by the learned. They commonly say, *to act as they please* is liberty. So far and so long as they can act as they please, or as they have a mind to act, they enjoy all the liberty they can conceive of, and all they desire. Perhaps a better definition than this cannot be given." This author comprehends under the idea of pleasure those agreeable senses produced by external objects, or suggestions and sentiments which awaken wishes and desires for the objects, or whatever produces them. Accordingly, the corrupt

! Burton's Essay, pp. 116, 117.

and vicious, who feel that the law of God imposes restraints upon the indulgence of their wishes and desires in many respects, regard Him as being opposed to their liberty, and find it difficult, or, as they say, impossible, to resist self and conform to His will. On the other hand, those who find pleasure in doing the will of God, although solicited to evil, make no complaints of trespasses from God upon their liberty, but account themselves never more free than while yielding to the determining influence of His spirit, they say, as did Joseph, "how can I do this thing and sin against God?"

Every man feels when he chooses or wills in a given case, that he might have chosen or willed the contrary, that is, that he has capacities of mind and will, which might have been differently determined; but there having been no constraint upon him, and having acted according to his wishes and desires, consciousness affirms his freedom, and he says he had ability or power to have chosen or acted otherwise. And yet the same man will say, in view of the motives by which he was actuated, and under the influence of the feelings, the desires and wishes by which he was affected at the time, that he could not do otherwise. In so saying he does not mean that he was a mere machine, governed and turned about by fixed laws, like those of mechanism, or those of physical organism, but merely that there was such an incompatibility between the desires and wishes, which at the time actually determined his choice or volition, and those which his conscience told him ought to have prevailed, that without resisting, renouncing, and overcoming the one, the other was impossible. The desires, wishes, and feelings, that determined to self-indulgence in sin, were stronger than any antagonistical influences or considerations brought to bear upon his conscience, or feelings and desires thence awakened. He might have exerted his intellect and powers of perception, so as to have summoned to his aid opposing thoughts, and feelings, and motives; he might have turned away his eyes, or closed his ears, from the sights and sounds that were fascinating and bewitching him; he might have yielded himself to the direction and control of other motives, and resisted the massive power that temptation was exciting. There was nothing in the constitution of his mind, or the nature of things to prevent it. But he did not.

The question is, why did he not? Our author, according to his short-hand patent philosophy, will reply, because he chose not to do so. But why did he not choose? The will is not a despot acting from caprice, without motive, or end, or any causative influence or reason why its actions are thus and not otherwise. It is indeed, as our author says, an executive power; but the very idea of executive power implies a judgment or purpose, which, in the nature of things, is precedent, and for the time being forming the law or mandate of the mind the will obeys.

The distinction between generic purpose, or what our author calls the choice of an ultimate end, and executive volitions, is of no avail here. For what is the choice of an ultimate end? According to our author, it is but a benevolent or selfish choice. This, it is obvious, is not a simple element or act. It is a complex state of mind, a choice determined by motive, and in this respect differs not radically from an executive volition. Consciousness teaches us, that the mind first forms a judgment of what it deems right or best, under the circumstances in which it is called to act, and, thus judging, throws its energy out in the way of choice or will. The affections and passions, or sensibilities, also exert a determining influence or power. The mind's judgment is greatly influenced by them, and thence the choice of the will. Every passion and affection may be resolved into two elements or operations of the soul, the one a sensation which is either painful or pleasant, the other a desire to avoid it if the former, or obtain or enjoy it if the latter. What we call emotions, are kindred sensations or feelings, or movements of the soul, arising, not so immediately from external objects present producing sensations, as from thoughts, views, considerations, or pictures of fancy, which the mind itself may form, and these are resolvable as the former.

Between the mind's judgment and the passions, affections or emotions—the sensibilities, there is often a direct antagonism. The mind is convinced, and judges that the will should act thus and thus; but the passions and affections—the sensibilities, oppose. Impulses, inducements, or motives, to will one way and the contrary, operate together. To assist us, God has given us His law, the expression of His will, and the counsels of His word, through which, He, by His Spirit, throws in a motive influence to do what He requires. He holds us responsible to do His will in all things, and threatens to punish if we refuse. Thus He restricts our liberty to what is rightful, and seeks to bring an influence to bear upon us to determine our wills to what is right. But our passions and affections, or sensibilities, exerted by external objects or suggestions of thought, oppose, and we feel aversion from what He requires and desires, for what He forbids. Still further to aid us in doing His will, to counteract the influence of feeling, and to prevent us from exalting our own desires, or pleasures, or will, as supreme, He has endowed us with conscience, by means of which both the intellect and sensibility, the judgment of the mind, and the feelings of the heart, may combine to determine the choice of the will. According to that power or property of the soul, which we denominate conscience, the mind sits in judgment on its own acts, compared with the standard of right, whereupon a feeling of approbation, satisfaction, or pleasure, arises when conformed to it, but of dissatisfaction, displeasure, or pain, when the contrary. The will of God is the absolute and supreme rule of moral right and obliga-

tion. Conforming to His will, yielding our wills to the determining influence, direction, and control of His law, we have peace. No check, no restraint whatever from God, is thrown in to prevent us from acting according to the desires and wishes, or feelings thus inclining. When the contrary course is pursued, we have pain. Thus constitutional provision is made, by means of conscience, for combining the motive influences of the mind's judgment and the heart's sensibilities, in determining the will to what is right. Such are the bounds or restraints which God interposes, beyond which liberty is not conceded to us—morally or constitutionally. But besides conscience, God has placed in the human mind another sentinel, to guard and protect from evil. Natural instinctive regard for personal safety or well-being operates continually; and, in all cases of corporal or physical danger and detriment, intuitively lends its impulses to direct and control the will. On moral subjects, through the feebleness of intellect from want of information, and other causes, it does not intuitively direct and control. The mind often forms a wrong judgment of what is right and best, and the sensibilities equally take a wrong direction. This derangement and tendency to sin, exist from the beginning of our moral agency, and are incident to our descent from fallen parents, and to the condition in which we are born into this world. Left to ourselves, without the Spirit's illumination and aid, the choice of the will will be selfish, in favor of selfish indulgence, for the gratification of some present desire, or wish leading from God, or opposed to His will, rather than to Him, and for His glory. This is what is commonly called native depravity, sometimes original sin, sometimes the corruption of our whole nature, and sometimes total depravity. All men's natural powers or capacities are excited, influenced, directed, and swayed,—or, in other words, the will is determined in the exercise of them,—in a way that either falls short of, or is opposed to, God's requirements. The state of the mind and heart adapt the man to be determined by selfish and sinful motives. There is not that positive directing influence of love to God, which He requires, but, on the contrary, the want of it. In that state, the disposition or tendency being to sin, the motive influences—that give pleasure, and excite desires and wishes tending to determine the will in sinful choices—being against, and not for God and his claims; and there being an actual incompatibility between them, the man naturally says, while conscious of his selfish desires, he cannot do the will of God; not that he is devoid of the natural or physical capacities for it, but, in the absence of other motives, and of helps to excite and give a different direction to his will, he is morally unable. He falls short of God's requirement, and is guilty. Thus from the first all are found sinners.

Our author may think to entrench himself behind a few favorite postulates and defy attack. He may allege, that sin having been

defined, in Scripture, to be "the transgression of the law,"¹ it must, therefore, be voluntary and a positive act; and that this is the whole of it. But we have another scriptural definition of sin, which must not be overlooked. "All *unrighteousness* is sin"²—that is, all want of conformity to the law. Defects in the way of omission and failure in duty, forgetfulness of God's requirements, inattention to them, neglect to meet them at the right time, and in the right way, and to their full extent, and whatever, in the state of the mind and feelings of the heart, unfits and turns away from them, is sin. We therefore predicate moral depravity, not only of the voluntary acts of disobedience, but also of the anterior state of mind—the disposition, which fits the man to be affected and actuated by selfish rather than benevolent motives. It is unrighteousness, a coming short of God's commands—"a want of conformity to the law of God," and therefore sin.

Our author, identifying disposition and choice, confounds and virtually denies all moral connection between the moving, exciting influence of particular objects or considerations operating on the mind and heart, and leading to sin, and the act of choice between the predisposition or fitness to be thus excited and determined to evil, and the intentional choice of the will. But however he may judge this to be the simplest and truest philosophy, neither are the judgments nor the consciences of men generally satisfied with the casuistry founded on it. Despite of all our author's attempts to relieve them from any sense of moral depravity, irrespective of ultimate intention, they feel that the disposition, standing related to choice as its pre-determining cause, forms part and parcel of the guilt, which renders us justly obnoxious to the punishment of an holy God. Their very inability of themselves, without Divine aid, to will or choose contrary to the motive urgent desire determining to sin, of which inability they are wont to complain, they feel does but indicate the degree of their depravity, the measure of their guilt. It is often affirmed, in self-condemnation, and in proof of the depth of their moral defilement. And when our author, and teachers of his school, will tell them it is just as easy to will contrary to their present sinful inclinations, as it is to yield to them, as easy to believe, repent, and love God, as it is to rise up and walk, or pass from their seats to one appointed, the more intelligent and deeply convicted, knowing it is false, turn away with disgust and alarm from those who thus make light of the evidence their own consciousness gives them, of their dependence upon God for the aid of His Spirit. They feel themselves powerfully determined to evil, and truly described as the "bond-slaves of Satan," "led captive by the devil at his will;" and their cry is "help, Lord, or we perish." Conversions, where such experience has not in some degree been developed, may be from gross crimes, from

¹ I. John, 3: 4.

² I. John, 5: 17.

outward sins of life, and habits of sinful action in given cases, to a self-complacent and self-confident reliance on the strength of human resolution, a mere *reformation*, but not that saving change of heart which the Spirit of God, by his regenerating influence alone can secure. We make no more account of them as genuine conversions to God, than we do of those produced by the moral and ethical lectures of the old Greek philosophers, or the preaching of Unitarian divines. Deeper must be the views of depravity, and more powerful the convictions of sin, than such casuistry will secure, in order to convert a sinner from the error of his ways, and save a soul from death. We deprecate greatly, on this very point, the tendency of our author's philosophy, and we think, not without cause, already seen in the developments of character it has produced in the churches, in the sad, painful, and numerous forms of current self-deception, and in the crowds of self-conceited, censorious, inconsistent, and corrupt professors of religion it has mustered into the ranks of Christ's followers. They are but the legitimate practical results of making power or ability, and liberty or freedom of the will identical, and of rejecting those distinctions which men commonly make in the subject of natural and moral ability and inability,—distinctions which accord with consciousness and the teachings of Scripture, which recognize, and foster a sense of dependence on the Spirit of God, and which give intensity and power to their convictions of guilt.

Our author has attempted by various means to account for the fact, "that so many men have denied the liberty of the will, or ability to obey God."¹ In doing so, he has paid little or no attention to this point in the experience of awakened sinners, but arrayed himself against Locke and Edwards, and the great mass of Calvinistic divines with their hearers," who, he says, "have denied the freedom of the will, because they have loosely confounded the will with the involuntary powers—with the intellect and sensibility." We account not our author good authority for the assertion, that "since *they* did not in theory distinguish between the sensibility and the will proper, they denied in theory the freedom of the will." We have never understood or regarded them as confounding desires and emotions with the actings of the will. They did indeed teach that they had a relation to, and influence in, determining the will, and were, in so far under the control of the will as to make us responsible and justly punishable for them when wrong, but they did not confound them. They were much more careful in their discrimination than our author. In applying the dogma of his philosophy to practical matters, he says, in reference to the actings, or the intellect and sensibility, in the way of blasphemous and unkind thoughts of God, "the will *abhors* them, and struggles to suppress them, but for the time-being finds itself *unable* (mark,

¹ III. 52.² III. 53.

the will, he says, finds itself *unable*), to do *anything more* than to fight and resist them." He endorses the teaching of "ministers of all schools," who tell such tempted persons, "your will resists them, and this proves that you are unable, for the time-being, to avoid them." Of course then, the man's liberty, for the time-being, according to our author, is gone, and his obligation destroyed. Accordingly, he says, "you are therefore *not responsible* for them, while you resist them with all the power of your will, any more than you would be guilty of murder, should a giant overpower your strength, and use your hand against your will, to shoot a man." Far otherwise do we, along with the holy men whom our author condemns, believe and teach. In such cases of Satan's molestation,—who adapts his temptations to the mood of the mind, or state of the heart, or condition of the body, at the time, and exerts his influence mediately,—God holds us responsible to put forth appropriate faith in Himself, which is the only way successfully to "resist the devil," and so doing, He has assured us, "he will flee from you." Our blessed Redeemer has set us an example here for our imitation. And the apostle Paul tells us that faith is the shield wherewith "we shall be able to **QUENCH ALL** the fiery darts of the wicked." It is by no means strange, therefore, that our author's will resisting leaves him powerless. It is in exact accordance with the view we take of our inability in ourselves, and of our dependence on the Spirit's aid. But resistance of will is not all that God requires in such a case. He has sinned by failing to perform the duty appropriate, and required in the circumstances, just as did our first mother in her conflict with Satan. His will, his heart, it is true, have not consented to, and approved of the wicked suggestions, and made those blasphemous and unkind thoughts his own; but their renewance and continuance prove that he has *failed* in discharging the appropriate duty of faith in Jesus Christ. His own power is inadequate to overcome the evil one. He has resisted in his own strength, not in Christ's, and that is his sin, for "whatsoever is not of faith is sin." We regard our author's casuistry here as exceedingly erroneous and dangerous; but it is the legitimate result of his philosophy, which exalts itself, and idolizes free-will, to the rejection of Christ, and to the exclusion of a sense of dependence on the Spirit of God. He affirms, that "to hold that men are always responsible, because they loosely think themselves to be so, is absurd." Thus does he set aside, by one stroke of the magic wand of his philosophy, all the experience which has entered so deeply into the formation of the character, and development of the piety, of such men as Owen, Bunyan, Halyburton, and others, as pitiable errors. It is absurd; they supposed themselves to be responsible when they were not!

¹ III. 55, 56.

² III. 56.

³ II. Jam. 4 : 7

⁴ Eph. 6 : 16.

⁵ Rom. 14 : 23.

⁶ III. 56.

Not so does the Word of God instruct us. "He that doubteth," says the apostle, "is damned if he eat," notwithstanding his conscience may in reality be too scrupulous. "In cases of temptation," says our author, "such as that just supposed, as soon as the attention is directed to the fact of inability to avoid those thoughts and feelings, and the mind is conscious of the will's resisting them, and of being unable to banish them, it readily rests in the assurance that it is not responsible for them." A flat contradiction of Paul's judgment in such a case. "For I know that in me, (that is, in my flesh), dwelleth no good thing; for to will is present with me, but how to perform that which is good I find not. For the good that I would I do not; but the evil which I would not that I do. Now, if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me. For I delight in the law of God after the inward man. But I see another law in my members warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. Oh wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" It makes but little difference, so far as this question is concerned, whether our author's opinion be correct or not, as to the interpretation of this passage. We unequivocally dissent from it, however, as by no means proved by the authorities to which he refers. Whether Paul be understood to personate an unconverted Jew, or to recite his own experience as a Christian, he distinctly teaches, that freedom of will, and ability or power, are very different things. The conviction of weakness, helplessness, inability, guilt, and ruin, which commingles with the will's resistance of Satan's temptations, and which is so totally at war with our author's whole system of religion as interpreted by his philosophy, the apostle regards, and presses as important and essential to the exercise of that faith in Jesus Christ which brings succor to the mind, through the light and power of God, so indispensable for the right performance of our duty, and for triumph over the adversary. Paul, though involved in conflicts, which developed his own weakness, nevertheless was victorious, and praised God for the grace and overcoming power, obtained through faith in Jesus Christ. What he could not do naturally by mere strength of will, he nevertheless could do through the grace of Christ. "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me." The reason he assigned for his energy was not the native power of his freewill, but the strength and grace of Christ which by faith he realized. "He said unto me, my grace is sufficient for thee; for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly, therefore, will I rather glory in my infirmities, that *the power of Christ* may rest upon me. Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in

¹ Rom. 14 : 23.

² III. 56.

³ Rom. 7 : 16, 24.

⁴ Phil. 4 : 10.

persecutions, in distresses, for Christ's sake ; for when I am weak then am I strong."¹

Our author acknowledges the fact of our dependence on the grace of Jesus Christ, and of their need of help and support from the Holy Spirit, who "seriously undertake their own *reformation*." But, according to his teaching, the need of that help is "in consequence of their physical depravity, and because of the great strength of their habit of self-indulgence ;" and the aid of the Holy Spirit consists in illumination merely. Yet does he speak with strange inconsistency, and vagueness, if not self-contradiction, when he attempts to explain that sense of dependence and weakness which he is constrained to admit, men generally express by alleging their inability. "They are prone," says he, "*as is natural*, to express their sense of dependence on the Divine Spirit in strong language, and to speak of this dependence as if it consisted in a real inability, when in fact they do not really consider it as a *proper* inability. They say, in respect to many things, *I cannot*, when they mean only *I will not*, and never think of being understood as affirming a *proper* inability. The inspired writers expressed themselves in the common language of men upon such subjects, and are doubtless to be understood in the same way. In common parlance, *can not* often means *will not*, and perhaps is used as often in this sense as it is to express a *proper* inability." This is just what Edwards, and that class of divines whom he condemns as necessitarians, mean carefully to express by their distinction between natural inability, or destitution of the capacity to act, moral inability, or the absence of motive considerations or influence sufficient to determine the will ; and the mind's conviction of incompatibility between the state of the will as at present determined by prevalent motives, and that state to which opposing but ineffectual or powerless motives urge it. According to our author, such distinctions are false and worthless. Liberty is power, and power is liberty. If the man has not equal power to do the right thing, and at the same moment, that he has to do the wrong, he has no power at all, and is therefore, in that instance, not a free agent. This is an error too palpable, and fraught with fatal practical results, to be openly affirmed. Our author's own mind would revolt from it when plainly stated ; and therefore, in his explanations, he abandons his favorite position, and virtually avails himself of the distinction between an absolute physical or natural impossibility, and a moral inability, concealing his own inconsistency from himself, by talking of a *proper* inability. According to his philosophy, there must be no qualifications here—no such distinctions on the subject of inability as "*proper*" and improper, total and partial, absolute and relative, natural and moral. But thus to carry out his philosophy of the freedom of the will consistently, he would out-

¹ III. 62.

¹ II. Cor. 12 ; 9, 10.

rage common sense and universal consciousness, and, therefore, after his facile manner, conveniently cheats himself and his reader by sophistically changing the meaning of his terms and propositions.

We will give the reader some of his comments on Paul's experience, as recorded in the seventh chapter of Romans, that he may see his inconsistency. "The fact is, he (Paul) was portraying a legal experience, and spoke of finding himself unable to keep selfish resolutions of amendment in the presence of temptation. His will was in a state of committal to the indulgence of the propensities. In the absence of temptation his convictions and fears and feelings were the *strongest* impulses, and under their influence *he would form resolutions* to do his duty, to abstain from fleshy indulgences, &c. But as some other appetite or desire came to be more strongly excited, he yielded to that *of course* and broke his former resolution."¹ What can our author, according to his philosophy, mean by the use of such language as "the strongest impulses," and yielding to them "of course?" If, according to his showing, liberty is ability, and there is no causative influence determining the mind to will thus or thus; if the will is absolutely and sovereignly free, that is, possessed of full power to originate its own acts, as he teaches, it is altogether out of place, and foreign to his philosophy, to talk of impulses *stronger* or *weaker*, and the stronger *of course prevailing* to determine the choice. The phrase, "of course," in such connection, if used by Edwardean divines, would be interpreted by our author to mean, of necessity, that is a *physical* necessity; whereas, it and the phrase necessity, with them means no more than moral certainty. What else does or can our author mean? and why shall he put a construction on their language, and give it a meaning they disavow, and yet, while constrained to admit these facts, claim to use words which, implying a causative influence in determining the will, denote the very same thing. His explanations, conflicting with his theory of the freedom of the will so palpably, his censures recoil with accumulated force upon himself. He does in reality teach, that man is brought into existence, and placed under responsibilities as a moral creature, under circumstances or in a condition, where, naturally, the desires and wishes, the propensities and inclinations, produced by physical depravity, give the strongest impulses to his will, and "of course," by determining his will, render him morally corrupt. We see nothing in Edwards that assigns so unequivocally as this does, our moral depravity to a physical necessity as its proximate cause. Apart from the revelation and grace of the gospel, our author formally admits, that human nature is destitute of ability—that is in his full and unqualified sense, of *all* ability to keep the commandments of God, and that by reason of physical depravity. We see not, therefore, wherein he differs from

¹ III. 62.

the Arminian, who teaches that the gospel imparts to each a modicum of ability, which, if only exercised and improved, will render availing and efficient the power of God on his behalf. For the inability, which by nature, i. e. left in their natural condition—mankind labor under, he avers is removed by the gospel. “Under the light of the gospel,” say he, “and with the promises in our hands, God does require of us what we should be unable to do, and be, but for these promises and this proffered assistance. Here is a real inability to do directly in our own strength all that is required of us upon consideration of the proffered aid. We can only do it by strength imparted by the Holy Spirit. That is, we cannot know Christ and avail ourselves of his offers and relations, and appropriate to our own souls his fulness, except as we are taught by the Holy Spirit. The thing immediately and directly required, is to receive the Holy Spirit by faith to be our teacher and guide, to take of Christ, and show it unto us. This confidence we are able to exercise. Who ever really and intelligently affirmed that he had not power or ability to trust or confide in the promise and oath of God? Much that is said of inability, in poetry, and in the common language of the saints, respects not the subjection of the will to God, but those experiences and states of feeling that depend on the illuminations of the Spirit just referred to. The language that is so common, in prayer and in the devotional dialect of the church, respects generally our dependence upon the Holy Spirit for *such* discoveries of Christ as to *charm* the soul into a steadfast abiding in him. We feel our dependence on the Holy Spirit to *so* enlighten us as to *break up forever* the power of sinful habit and *draw us away* from our idols, *entirely* and forever.” “This dependence does not consist in a *proper* inability to will as God directs, but, as I have said, partly in the power of sinful habit and partly in the great darkness of our souls in respect to Christ and his mediatorial work and relations. All these together do not constitute a *proper* inability, for the plain reason, that through the right action of our will, which is always possible to us, these difficulties can all be directly or indirectly overcome. Whatever we can do or be, directly or indirectly by willing, is possible to us. But there is no degree of spiritual attainment required of us that may not be reached directly or indirectly, by right willing. Therefore, these attainments are possible.”* But, says our author, “a right state of the will constitutes, for the time being all, that strictly speaking, the moral law requires.” The moral law, “in a less strict and proper sense, requires all those acts and states of the intellect and sensibility, which are connected by a law of necessity with the right action of the will. Of course it also requires that *cleansing* of the sensibility and all those higher forms of Christian experience that result from the indwelling of

* III. 63.

* III. 63, 64.

the Holy Spirit. That is, the law of God requires that these attainments shall be made when the means are provided and enjoyed, and as soon as, in the nature of the case, these attainments are possible. But it requires no more than this."¹

All this is totally inconsistent with our author's teaching elsewhere, that man, of himself, naturally, with his natural powers, is able or free perfectly to do the entire will² of God, and of course without the Holy Spirit. If such freedom or ability in the full sense in which he uses the words, exists, man must find it *as easy*, at any and every moment, to obey as to disobey: no motive influence must sway his will one way or the other. His own sovereign power over his will must be of itself sufficient, even in his fallen state, to meet the full requirement of God; and if so, what does he want more? Where is his need of the Holy Spirit?

According to our author, that Spirit does not exert his influence and help, till the sinner has willed to receive him. His obligation afterwards rises and falls, narrows and widens, just as that Spirit, by His revelation varies the amount of light and instruction, and the proffer of needed grace and help. "The Scriptures," says he, "abound with assurances of light and instruction and of all *needed* grace and *help*, upon condition of a right will or heart, that is, upon condition of our being really willing to obey the light, *when and as fast* as we receive it."³ A right state of the will being the condition of the Spirit's influence and instruction, light and assistance, how is the will, in the first instance, to be brought into that right state? Not, according to our author, by the Holy Spirit, for His help can only be had on this very condition: the right willing must precede, and until that is done, no help is to be expected or will be vouchsafed from the Spirit. The sinner must, by the energy of his own will, convert himself, and afterward the Spirit will take him up! He must first "*cleanse*" his sensibility, by the right action of his will, and then the Spirit will develop in him all those higher forms of holiness that result from His indwelling! We know not what our author can mean by *cleansing* the sensibility, unless it be from physical depravity, for he does not allow moral corruption to be predicated of anything but acts of the will, the sensibility following a law of necessity. To it there can pertain no moral character, except as it is under the direct or indirect control of the will. "It is denied, at least by me, that either reason or divine revelation affirms moral obligation or moral character of any state of mind that lies wholly beyond both the direct and the indirect control of the will."⁴ And yet the mass of mankind will affirm, that the will follows the inclination; that the wishes and desires determine the will; and that only in acting according to their dictates do they recognize and acknowledge themselves to be free, however often mistaken in the fact. We see not but that our author cuts off depraved and

¹ III. 64.² III. 67.³ III. 64.⁴ III. 32. ;

ruined man forever from the grace and help of the Holy Spirit. We need His influence and aid to *make* us willing, and to *keep* us willing; nor do we know of anything in all the teachings of the Word of God, which sanctions the idea that man has ample power, in and of himself, in his present fallen state, by any energy of his own unaided will, to meet the requirements either of the law or of the gospel. The will is naturally opposed to God—the heart is enmity against Him, and the carnal mind is neither subject to the law of God nor can be. Unless the Spirit of God, by His efficacious energy counteract, overcome, and renew our stubborn wills and dispose us to receive His grace and help, we shall not only at first, but continue for ever to rebel and resist the Holy Ghost. Such is the deplorable condition into which we have been brought by the apostasy of our first parents, and such the native depravity of the human heart, that the powerful grace of God is indispensable to change his heart and renew a right spirit within him. In this condition, his case is hopeless and helpless, and left to himself, he must remain to all eternity a damned rebel, justly obnoxious to the same treatment his guilty primogenitor deserved. By no unaided spontaneity of will can he lift himself to God—nature's help is utterly ineffectual.

Our author, however, adapts the law of God to man's fallen nature—brings it down to the level of human weakness and depravity, and denies that it requires him to be what it did his prime progenitor, or that "sinners be just in all respects what they might have been had they never sinned." It is contented with vastly less, and does not require of them "as high and perfect a service as if their powers had never been abused by sin." For God to hold up to us the law given to our first parents, in all the length and breadth that He did to them, our author protests would be absurd and unjust, and that with as much show of reason and as much authority He might require of all sinners, to "*undo* all their acts of sin and to substitute holy ones in their place." "Why may not God as well require one as the other? They are *alike* impossibilities, originating in the sinner's own act or fault." They are not. There is as wide a difference between them as between the past and future, between a natural impossibility and a moral inability. It is not an absolute physical impossibility but a relative one,—like to that we sometimes predicate of vision, where the atmosphere has been rendered dense by fog or imperious by darkness. External means may disperse the fog—light may be diffused through the medium of vision, and then the natural eye can discern what no such change would make perceptible to the man devoid of the power or faculty of vision. So in the sinner's case. He is fallen in darkness, prejudice, ignorance, errors, and hosts of things to which he is exposed by reason of the

¹ III. 57.

² III. 58.

apostasy of the parents of the race, interfere with and prevent him from exercising his natural capacities, according to the requirements of the law. The law has not been changed by the fall. It is not a fluctuating gnomon, like the gauge of a steam engine, indicating always the degree of power. It remains forever immutable like its Author. Man's corruption and ruin are incident to his relation to guilty progenitors, descending as he does from them, originally placed under a moral constitution that makes no provision in nature for his help or recovery after it had been violated. Our author's objections and reasonings are founded on the assumption, that there is no federal relation between our first parents and their offspring, and that God does not deal with men morally through a public Head or representative, but that each one born into this world is placed under a similar probation with Adam's before he fell. This we regard as the *πρωτον ψευδος* of his theology. Consistently carried out, it cuts us off from all hope of redemption through Jesus Christ the second Adam, our newly constituted covenant Head and representative, who has obeyed the law and suffered for us, and thus accomplished what our fallen parent failed to do; or perverts the whole gospel scheme from a system of grace extended to those elected of God the Father, brought into union with Christ the Son, and adopted children of His family, into a mere modified moderated system of moral government, which adapts the law's requirements to human weakness and corruption. The *gospel* is thus rendered a galling yoke of bondage; and our author's philosophy, while denying native depravity subverts it entirely, and robs us of the grace of God. We cling to the precious Word of God, and rest satisfied and thankful for its revelations, which, finding us ruined and helpless, inheriting corruption, misery and death, from Adam, points us to Christ, and tells us, not of works or legal righteousness, not of a modified and moderated system of moral government, but of salvation, "redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches" of divine grace,—of justification freely by faith without the works of the law, which brings the influence and aid of the Spirit of God, to work in us the work of faith with power—to enable us to put that confidence in God for acceptance, which previously was morally impossible, and which, lifting us from deep degradation and damnation, and placing us in the situation, with means and under influences through which we may attain to the higher developments of holiness, leads from strength to strength, until we arrive at the perfect stature of manhood in Christ Jesus.

Our author evidently gains nothing by his philosophy but sacrifices everything of value in the gospel. His rejection of native depravity, so far from relieving from embarrassment and difficulty, only increases them. Nor has he placed himself on such vantage ground as to give him just occasion to ridicule as he does, the

faith of those who with the Westminster divines believe, that the natural inclination, the bias of our nature, is to sin, and who account this part and parcel of our moral corruption. He brings man into the world, the subject of physical depravity, with debilitated powers of mind, and a sensibility that needs cleansing, and so renders it a matter of course that he will sin. We see not but that he is as veritably, if not equally, obnoxious to the charge of teaching a moral depravity transmitted "by ordinary generation," as he holds they do whose Confession of Faith and teachings he condemns. For if by a law of necessity the developments of intellect and sensibility are effected, and the will, without the Spirit's aid, "of course" yields to the strongest "impulses," and if the impulses thence imparted, are undeniably stronger than any natural bias to God and holiness, he plainly teaches the doctrine of sinning by necessity of nature as veritably as those whom he charges with believing and teaching, that the corruption of man's moral nature is propagated and descends by natural generation from Adam.

REGENERATION.

Our author's views of Regeneration also take their shape from his philosophy. Regeneration is variously represented in the Scriptures : sometimes as the beginning of a sinner's new life ; as his awakening out of the sleep of death ; his rising from the death of trespasses and sins ; his being translated out of the kingdom of darkness into light, and his entering upon a life of holiness. It is hence tropically called the new birth, a new creation. Again it is described as a change of heart, and by many theologians is spoken of as the proximate cause of conversion, or faith and repentance. By others it is regarded as synonymous with conversion. Our author is of this last class, and denies any distinction between them. He sees no propriety in the distinction made by those who use the phrase regeneration or the new birth, to denote the Spirit's agency in changing the sinner's heart, and that of conversion the sinner's activity in the process or rather act of that change. The facts of importance here to be noticed are, the total depravity of man, rendering a radical change of moral character indispensable to salvation : man's obligation to be and to act holy, to change his heart, to transfer his supreme affection from self to God : the certainty that if left to himself, he will never spontaneously effect that change within himself : the necessity of the Spirit's agency in order to produce it : the voluntary agency of the sinner in yielding to and concurring with His influence : and the consequent developments of holy character. Our author has expressed himself generally on this subject as a point of faith, distinctly and definitely, in accordance with orthodox divines and evangelical Christians. But in applying his philosophy to the subject of regenera-

ting influence, and describing the nature of the change produced in the sinner, he gives occasion to fear, that practically he may differ in his views of what constitutes its nature. According to his philosophy, it consists in a change in the attitude of the will, or a change in its ultimate choice, intention or preference, a change from selfishness to benevolence; from choosing self-gratification as the supreme and ultimate end of life, to the supreme and ultimate choice of the highest well-being of God and of the universe; from a state of entire consecration to self-interest, self-indulgence, self-gratification for its own sake or as an end, and as the supreme end of life, to a state of entire consecration to God and to the interests of His kingdom, as the supreme and ultimate end of life." The sensibilities, according to our author, following a law of necessity, undergo a change as a natural consequence of the change of the will. The will having power to change itself, no causative power can be brought to bear upon it, that shall determine its choice without destroying its liberty. The intellect also follows a law of necessity and can only be indirectly controlled by the will. Of course neither intellectual views of truth, nor sensitive emotions, according to him, can have any determining influence upon the will. It originates its own acts, by the fiat of its own sovereignty. Intellectual views of truth may be a condition of the will's acting; but no more. Whatever emotions or feelings may exist anterior to the change of the will, being selfish, are opposed to God, and can have no causative influence in determining its choices. It follows, therefore, from these positions of our author, that the agency of the Spirit can consist only, in arranging the condition necessary for the mind's willing, that is, in presenting the truth before it. But the presentation of the truth, according to his theory, can exert no causative influence whatever. The will being itself the sole cause of its own actions, and being sovereign and free, it has equal ability, at any moment, to will the opposite. The sinner, therefore, is the prime and sole author of this change of will, whereupon, but not till then, the law of necessity begins to operate, and passions and affections, emotions and actions, correspondent, all follow as a matter of course. He is indeed changed, but he has changed himself, and the Spirit of God had no other agency in the matter than to present truth to the mind, that is, to supply the necessary condition of the will's action. To say that the Spirit, under such circumstances, is the author of regeneration, that the new-born soul is a new creature, created anew in Christ Jesus unto good works, is altogether a misnomer. The Spirit of God, according to our author's philosophy, does but afford the occasion, and is not the cause of the sinner's regeneration. As to His having the regeneration of the sinner as an end, specifically in view, and operating specially with that design—appropriately and

powerfully to secure that end—our author says not a word. It falls not within the range of, and is utterly inconsistent with, his philosophy, being, according to his view, a violation of the liberty of the sinner's will. He does indeed speak of the Spirit's *so* presenting truth, that the will shall decide for God, and of a suasive urgent overcoming power on His part, subduing the sinner's corruption, swaying his affections, and making him willing, which things are wholly inconsistent with his idea and philosophy of the freedom of the will. But when he speaks on the subject, his language becomes mystical and offensively extravagant. "I have often feared," says he, "that many professed Christians knew Christ only in the flesh, that is, that they have no other knowledge of Christ than what they obtain by *reading* and *hearing* about Him, without any *special revelation of him to the inward being* by the Holy Spirit."¹ "O how infinitely blind he is to the fulness and glory of Christ, who does not know himself, and know Christ, as both are revealed by the Holy Spirit. When we are led by the Holy Spirit to look down into the abyss of our own emptiness—to behold the horrible pit and miry clay of our own habits, and fleshy and worldly and infernal entanglements; when we see, in the light of God, that our emptiness and necessities are infinite; then and not till then, are we prepared wholly to cast off self and to put on Christ." (The reader will notice here how he contradicts all his teaching about the first act of entire consecration to God, being perfectly holy, full, entire obedience, the total renunciation of self, by thus making a preparation of the Spirit's teaching, which, as we have seen, according to his view, is consequent on faith, and our entire consecration to God, indispensably necessary, in order "wholly to cast off self and to put on Christ!") "The glory and fulness of Christ," he continues, if we understand his language, truly as we believe and teach, "are not *discovered to* (?) (he must mean *disclosed* or made known to) the soul until it discovers its *need* of him. But when self, in all its loathsomeness and helplessness, is fully revealed, until hope is utterly extinct, as it respects *every kind and degree of help in ourselves*, and when Christ, the all and in all, is revealed to the soul as its all sufficient portion and salvation, then and not till then, does it know its salvation. This knowledge is the indispensable condition of appropriating faith, or of that act of receiving Christ or that committal of all to him that takes Christ home to dwell in the heart by faith, and to preside over all its states and actions."² "We need to have Christ *so* revealed as to so completely ravish and engross our affections, that we would sooner *cut our own throats* (!) or suffer others to cut them than to sin against him. Is such a thing impossible? Indeed it is not. Is not the Holy Spirit able and willing, and ready thus to reveal him *upon condition of our asking it in faith*? Surely

¹ III. 261.² III. 262.³ III. 259.

He is."¹ Our author, as we think, in the above quotations, suffering his heart rather than his intellect to speak, has betrayed that deep sense of dependence upon the Spirit of God, for the right and sanctifying exercise of faith, that forms an essential trait of every truly humble Christian. But in the first, his language is so mystical as to be capable of sustaining the veriest fanatic in his claim to extraordinary revelations. In the second, he obviously is betrayed by his feelings into the use of the strongest hyperbolic language; and in the third, into strains as offensive to meek Christian sensibility as to good taste. While at one moment he seems to make the Spirit's influence of incalculable importance and indispensable as preparatory and in order to our regeneration, which is, according to him, entire sanctification, perfect holiness, for the time-being, at another moment he affirms that influence to be *the result* of appropriating faith, or the act of receiving Christ, the *condition* to be fulfilled previous to its being had. Regeneration with him is but the choice of the will, the first act of a sinner's consecration of himself to God. The change of the affections, what he calls the ravishing of the affections, &c., is no part of it, but consequent on special revelations, made by the Spirit in answer to the prayer of faith, until which takes place, the regenerated sinner is liable to fall into sin and condemnation, just like the impenitent sinner. The will has been changed, but the physical depravity of the sensibility has not been corrected; and for this, "entire sanctification" is necessary, which he teaches to be a permanent state of the will swaying the affections, the man "*established, confirmed, preserved continued in a state of entire consecration to God.*"² "One great thing," says he, "that needs to be done, is to *correct* the developments of our sensibility. The appetites and passions are *enormously developed* in their relations to earthly objects. In relation to things of time and sense, our propensities are greatly developed and are *alive*; but in relation to spiritual truths, and objects, and eternal realities, we are naturally as *dead as stones*. When *first* converted, if we knew enough of ourselves and of Christ, to thoroughly develop and *correct* the action of the sensibility, and *confirm* our wills in a *state* of entire consecration, we should not fall."³

Thus our author again contradicts himself, as he conforms to universal experience, and admits that the sensibility here does not follow the decisions or choices of the will by a law of necessity. The Spirit of God has something to do to correct it; but how it is to be cleansed he does not say. Instead of imparting, in regeneration, in His own inexplicable and inscrutable way, some sensitiveness to the human conscience and sensibility, instead of giving power to the truth to change the mind and heart from enmity to love, which evangelical ministers believe and teach, he makes the office of the Spirit to consist, simply and exclusively, in revealing

² III. 201.¹ III. 259.³ III. 266.

Christ and himself to the sinner. The consecration of himself to God, in which he makes regeneration to consist, results from the passive perception of the truth presented by the Spirit, for, that "He exerts any other than the influence of Divine teaching and illumination, is sheer assumption." Yet again he contradicts himself. The office of the Spirit, in regeneration, according to his view, is to reveal enough of self and of Christ to the sinner, to make him consecrate himself entirely to God. But what that *making* is, and what amount of knowledge is *enough* for it, he does not say. At one moment, merely illumination or teaching is sufficient, as though the knowledge of Christ and of the sinner's self, obtained from the revelation of the Spirit, was itself adequate. Again it is something more. "For when we sin," he says, "it is because of our ignorance of Christ." "In most, if not in all instances, the convert is too ignorant of himself, and of course knows too little about Christ to be established in permanent obedience." A great deal more knowledge, it seems, is necessary to keep the convert presently perfect from sinning, than to regenerate the sinner. "It must not be inferred that the knowledge of Christ in all relations, is a condition of our coming into a state of entire consecration to God, or present sanctification," that is, of being born again. Temptation occurring subsequent to regeneration, is the occasion of revealing the present and pressing necessity of the soul, and "the Holy Spirit is always ready to reveal Christ in the particular relation suited to the newly-developed necessity. The perception and appropriation of him in this relation, under these circumstances is the *sine qua non* of our *remaining* in a state of entire consecration." So then, according to this view of the matter, there is no change whatever produced in the nature, the inclination, or bias, and sensitiveness of the sensibilities—the taste or relish, by whatever name it may be called, in reference to sin and holiness, the world and God—that will prove permanent, and exert a determining influence on the will. All depends on the free will of man. He must *first* apply to the Spirit for revelations in his necessity, when tempted. For want of the knowledge which the Spirit imparts, he, a sinner, in the first instance, and even when, by the exercise of his free will, having made choice of the good of God, and of the universe, as his ultimate end, he has become regenerated—passed into a state of present sanctification, and received thereon the Spirit's aid, for want of still further and fuller knowledge of himself and of Christ, he will not, and cannot remain permanently so consecrated, and be established in a state of "entire sanctification." "He needs," says our author, "renewed conviction of sin, to be revealed to himself, and to have Christ revealed in him the hope of glory, before he will be steadfast, always

¹ II. 518.

² III. 266.

³ III. 266.

abounding in the work of the Lord." We are accustomed to believe and teach that this is not the *condition* prerequisite, but the *cause* necessary and efficient to secure this result. Without the Spirit's aid we can do nothing, and shall certainly stumble and fall. But so far from the sinner's commencing by his freewill, the Spirit begins the work of bringing him to God; and when by regeneration, he becomes "His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God had before ordained that we should walk in them," He does not abandon His work and leave man to his own free will to work and keep himself, but exercises His powerful and sanctifying watch and care to keep him through faith unto everlasting life. Paul's teaching on this point was directly the reverse of our author's. He gives the Spirit of God precedence in the work of salvation, and makes the permanency of the relation into which the regenerated sinner is brought to Jesus Christ, and established as a child of God under His fatherly watch, and care, and discipline, motives for his zealous, prayerful, and persevering efforts to increase and abound more and more in the fruits of holiness, "*Being confident of this very thing, that He which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ.*" Equally strong, and opposed to our author, is Peter's testimony on this subject. He blesses the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who, according to His abundant mercy, hath *begotten us again* unto a lively *hope*, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, *to an inheritance* incorruptible and undefiled, and *that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time*, wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now, *for a season*, (if need be), ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations, *that the trial of your faith*, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, *might be found unto praise, and honor, and glory, at the appearing of Jesus Christ.*"⁴ No language can be more explicit and pointed, to express the blessed truth, that salvation from beginning to end, is the work of God. The fact is, He renews the sinner's mind and heart as He brings him to exercise faith in a once crucified, but risen Saviour, and that He keeps him, through the exercise of faith, continually persevering and maturing for the glorious consummation of his state and perfection of his being and glory, at the second coming of Jesus Christ. The Spirit is the author of regeneration: the Spirit is the author of our sanctification: the Spirit is the author of our perseverance; the Spirit is the author of our triumph, and the consummation of our glory. The free will of man is not left to its own absolute unaided spontaneities, but is influenced, determined, renewed, and established by the Spirit's agency in the choice of Christ and cordial obedience to

¹ II. 266.² Eph. 2: 10.³ Phil. 1: 6.⁴ I. Pet. 1: 3—8.

God. Glory be to God for "the exceeding riches of His grace in his kindness to us through Christ Jesus." Our author's system and philosophy invert the whole order of the causes of salvation, and making the Spirit of God but the subsidiary of man's freewill, give Him the second place. According to him, man's free will converts itself; sanctifies itself; perfects itself; and keeps itself; and even uses God, and grasps his energies, and clothes itself with His almighty and infinite attributes! "When a soul can be found who thoroughly knows, and has embraced and appropriated Christ, he is a host of himself. That is, he has appropriated the attributes of Christ to himself, and his influence is felt in heaven, earth, and hell."² We make all due allowance here for rashness and extravagance of diction, and yet it is in perfect keeping with our author's philosophy of the freedom of the will. There is no security whatever in any change of heart experienced, for the regenerate man's "entire sanctification," or establishment in a permanent state of holy obedience, or for his final salvation. By yielding to temptation and relapsing into sin, he falls into death again, legally and morally, and needs just as much to be born again the second and third time, and no one can tell how many times, before, if ever he gets into the kingdom of heaven. Such are the legitimate results of his attempt to engraft his philosophy on the Calvinistic faith, which, most inconsistently, he professes yet to maintain. We should respect both himself and his theology vastly more, if he would come out at once, openly and fully, and place himself on Arminian or Pelagian ground, to one or other of which his philosophy, and his exalting of the power of freewill, inevitably must lead him and his followers.

If we may judge of the tendency of any system by the developments of sentiment and practise among those who adopt it—which according to our Saviour's rule, viz., "by their fruits shall ye know them," we are bound to do—we shall be at no loss to give the author his true place. The doctrines of God's sovereign election unto everlasting life, of the efficacious influence and agency of the Spirit of God to renew, sanctify, and render meet for it, those whom He "did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his son,"³ and of the final perseverance of the saints, are as openly and avowedly opposed and slandered by teachers emanating from our author's school, as ever they were by those who repudiated altogether the Calvinistic faith. Arminius, himself had many redeeming features in his system, and never went to the extent in error to which Episcopius, Grotius, Limborch, Vossius, Casaubon, Le Clerc, and their followers have gone. He retained much more of the semblance and spirit of the gospel, than does our author's system; and we confidently anticipate a wide-spread and fatal defection from the truth, as it is in Jesus,

¹ Eph. 2 : 7.² III. 263.³ Rom. 8 : 29.

at no distant day, through its influence. *Facilis descensus averni. Sed revocare gradum—hic labor hoc opus.* We fear that all attempts to counteract its fatal influence will prove too late and ineffectual. The churches and ministry had need awaken to a sense of the danger. Its practical results already display themselves to some extent, and they commend it no more to us, than do its theological features.

If ever a system of dialectics was eminently adapted to stultify the intellect, and to sear the conscience, we think it is precisely that which has received the favor of our author, and is so pertinaciously advocated and propagated by him. The spirit appropriate and peculiar to his philosophico-theological system, may commend itself to those who are fond of what is coarse and severe, and who account these things plainness and faithfulness, but cannot fail to offend the meek and gentle, as well as persons of refinement and delicacy. Its introduction and indulgence in the pulpit, have degraded it, and done more than all its enemies had accomplished, to bring contempt upon the ministry of reconciliation. We write with real pain and deep sorrow of heart; but cannot withhold the expression of our sober conviction, that seeking immediate effect, and mistaking mere dramatic power for the power of the truth, through its influence a very serious deterioration, in the style of preaching, has been produced, which has brought the pulpit, to some extent, to the level of the stage, and engendered that mercenary spirit in many churches which prompts them to "hire" ministers for times and occasions. A flippant air and irreverent manner of speaking on sacred things, by ministers of the gospel, prepare the way for profanity on the part of those whose minds are not affected by the fear of God. Abounding in anecdote, the familiar use of the dialogue and other dramatic methods for the exhibition and illustration of truth, relieve from the necessity of careful thought, and by the aid and power of the imagination, give impulse to passion. Pride, arrogance, extravagance, and self-conceit are incident to its developments. Censoriousness and denunciation, with all the disputes and divisions, suspicions and schisms, ever sure to follow in their wake, find abundant aliment in the style and manner of applying its principles of casuistry, for the analysis of character. In reverence toward God in prayer, and the absence of all that courtesy toward man, and the winning tenderness of that sympathy and charity which the gospel so much commends, betray themselves in the style and manner of expression.

We deprecate the influence and spirit of this system, and think they have long since been well described by the great New England Patriarch, whose home is in the West, and who yet lingers on the shores of mortality to bless the churches with his cheering voice, as a spirit of spiritual pride, censoriousness, and insubordination to the order of the gospel. Our author's attempt to develop

a system of philosophy and theology in which it has found its permanent lodgment, and through which it has made its prurient developments, has contributed not only to increase the prejudices against evangelical religion in the minds of persons of taste and education, and to drive them off to other denominations where they will not be offended by rudeness and vulgarity in the pulpit, but to repel even the friends of the pure, unadulterated truth of the gospel. The very names of revivals and spiritual religion, as well as the religious profession of multitudes, have been rendered a taunt and a reproach. We attribute the present dearth of Divine influences, and the absence of the true spirit of revival, to the influence of this man-exalting and God-dishonoring philosophy, which has attempted to naturalize religion, if we may so speak, denied the very office and grieved the blessed Spirit of God. Its prevalence will prove but the pioneer of a mere natural religion to foster Deism, Unitarianism, and Infidelity.

ARTICLE VI.

THE PREACHING OF JONAH.

By the REV. GEORGE SHEPARD, D.D., Professor at Bangor.

THE Saviour speaks, in one place, of the preaching of Jonah. From this it appears that Jonah was a preacher. From the little specimen we have of his preaching, and its effects, we wish we knew more of him in this calling. We know very little; still we may, perhaps, derive some benefit from the brief notices of his character, and the dim intimations of his labors.

Respecting his early history, his education, and training, we are very much in the dark. He was the son of Amittai—was a Galilean, and prophesied in the reign of Jeroboam II., king of Israel.

He was sent of the Lord to Ninevah, to cry against it, because its wickedness had come up before the Lord. Ninevah, without doubt, was then in its glory; an exceeding great city of three days journey—nearly sixty miles in circumference. The prophet did not, at first, proceed in obedience to the injunction he had received, but foolishly attempted to flee from the presence of the Lord. He took ship to Tarshish; but the Lord sent out a great wind into the sea, and there was a mighty tempest in the sea, so that the ship was like to be broken. The prophet, as the cause of the trouble, was cast into the sea, and swallowed by a monster of the deep, which God had prepared for the purpose, and thus became a type of Christ, who was three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. The prophet, when thrown upon the land, pro-