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ARTICLE I.—*Letters to the Rev. Ezra Stiles Ely, A. M. Author of a Contrast between Calvinism and Hopkinsianism. By James Wilson, A. M. Pastor of the Second Congregational Church in Providence, (R. I.) Boston, 1814. pp. 325. 8vo.*

DIVINE PROVIDENCE has, until lately, withheld from us the opportunity of paying our respects to our ingenious opponent, the Rev. James Wilson, of Providence. He is in good repute for piety, and zeal in performing ministerial duties; and, if we have not been misinformed, is pastor of the most flourishing congregation of believers, in the state of Rhode Island. This corroborates the sentiment often expressed, that God frequently makes use of pious men, who are quite heretical on many subjects, but who preach a great portion of his truth, for the purpose of building up his kingdom in the world. Most graciously he neutralizes the poison of their theory, which they mingle with *the sincere milk of the word*: so that babes begotten by his Spirit, actually live and grow thereby.

Mr. Wilson is a bold controvertist, that deals largely in assertion and irony; yet he evidently thinks for himself, hates all "Isms," but his own, and defends Arminianism with much of the skill, and little of the caution of Whitby. We readily accredit his assurance, that he is not our enemy, that *victory* is not the object at which he aims, and that should it be obtained by him, at the *expense of*

country have been accustomed to grammatical phraseology from their infancy.

If the reverend author of this sermon will take the same stand against Hopkinsianism, that he has against Socinianism, and admit none to preach in his place who do not maintain a system of thorough and consistent Calvinism, he may be the honoured instrument of producing a religious revolution in Boston : but we warn him, that a temporizing policy in relation to *any* system of error will not prosper. So far as we know any thing of Mr. Sabine's views and exertions, we wish him God speed.

ARTICLE IV.—*Review of Several American Writers on Moral Agency.*

THE questions, What constitutes a moral agent? and, What is a moral action? are of immense importance in theology. Could these be settled, it would terminate many disputes about moral agency.

President Edwards, in his "*Inquiry into the modern prevailing notions of that freedom of Will, which is supposed to be essential to Moral Agency,*" &c. Part I. Sec. v. gives us his opinion, in the following words:

"A moral agent is a being that is capable of those actions that have a moral quality, and which can properly be denominated good or evil in a moral sense, virtuous or vicious, commendable or faulty. To moral agency belongs a *moral faculty*, or sense of moral good or evil, or of such a thing as desert or worthiness, of praise or blame, reward or punishment; and a capacity which an agent has of being influenced in his actions by moral inducements or motives, exhibited to the view of understanding and reason, to engage to a conduct agreeable to the moral faculty.—The essential qualities of a moral agent are in God, in the greatest possible perfection; such as understanding, to perceive the difference between moral good and evil; a capacity of discerning that moral worthiness and demerit, by which some things are praiseworthy, others deserving of blame and punishment; and also a capacity of choice, and choice guided by understanding, and a power of acting according to his choice or pleasure, and being capable of doing those things which are in the highest sense praiseworthy."

Man is *capable* of doing all those things for which he has the requisite faculties and powers. A moral agent, therefore, must have faculties for moral agency. What then are these faculties? First, *Conscience*, or a *moral sense*, is one of them; and without this, men would surely be *incapable* of any sense of obligation to observe any law. Secondly, *The faculty of choice*, that is, *the will*, is also requisite; for a being who should not *will, choose, resolve, determine, or purpose* to act as he does, would not be a voluntary agent. Thirdly, *The faculty of conception*, or of understanding, is also necessary, that we may *discern* between moral good and evil; that we may *conceive* of our duty; and that we may *comprehend* the law. President Edwards names, fourthly, *reason*. These are the only *faculties* which he speaks of, as necessary to constitute a moral agent. His language would imply, the necessity of other faculties, especially that of *agency*. He states other things besides faculties, nevertheless, which belong to a moral agent; such as *power* to understand, choose, act, and exercise the conscience. A moral agent, moreover, must be so constituted and governed by the laws of mental operation, that he shall conceive of motives for every act of the will; and that every volition shall be consequent upon, and connected with, the apprehension of some sufficient inducement. So far as this we argue with our great American metaphysician. But he has stated only a part of the faculties and powers, and only one of the laws of volition, which are essential to a moral agent. It is not requisite, that *choice* should always be *guided by understanding*; for moral agents sometimes choose, or will, from a dictate of conscience alone, and sometimes from a sensation, a passion, or an affection. It is a law of moral agency, that every act of the will shall be consequent upon some motive; but any thought, any feeling may be that motive. Should any one choose without being able to assign some motive for his choice, he would not act rationally, or as a sane, intelligent being. It enters into the very nature of the human mind, that we should never feel, but in consequence of some thought; that we should never will, but in consequence of some thought or feeling; and that a

great portion of our mental and all of our external moral operations should be consequent upon volition ; so that man is a *thinking, feeling, voluntary agent*.

Some acute writers have objected to President Edward's Enquiry, that it makes *motives* to be something existing without the mind ; and thus represents the human will as being irresistibly governed in its determinations by external objects. Much of his language would admit of such a construction ; but an attentive reader will see, that he really accounts a motive to be some operation of the understanding which is the occasion of a volition ; and under the term understanding he includes the faculties of *Reason, Judgment, and Apprehension* or *Conception*. p. 17.*

“ By motive,” he remarks, “ I mean the whole of that which moves, excites, or invites the mind to volition, whether that be one thing singly, or many things conjunctly. Many particular things may concur and unite their strength to induce the mind ; and when it is so, all together are as it were one complex motive. And when I speak of the *strongest motive*, I have respect to the strength of the whole that operates to induce to a particular act of volition, whether that be the strength of one thing alone, or of many together.” p. 7.

All this looks like material motives, and the exertion of physical energy upon the will ; but the very next paragraph sets the matter right, so far as respects one class of our motives : for he says,

“ Whatever is a motive, in this sense, must be something that is *extant in the view or apprehension of the understanding*, or perceiving faculty. Nothing can induce or invite the mind to will or act any thing, any further than it is perceived, or is some way or other in the mind's view ; for what is wholly unperceived, and perfectly out of the mind's view, cannot affect the mind at all. It is most evident, that nothing is in the mind, or reaches it, or takes any hold of it, any otherwise than as it is perceived or thought of.” p. 8.

“ Perception” is here used to denote any act of *conception, perception* properly so called, or *consciousness* ; and the meaning of the writer undoubtedly was, *that men cannot will except in consequence of some operation of the un-*

* Enquiry, London Edition, 8vo. 1790.

derstanding, of which they are conscious. We would add, after the word understanding, the clause, *or of the faculty of feeling*, and then the whole proposition would be the truth on this subject. We *feel*, and are *conscious* of feeling; and *will*, from feeling. The *feeling*, and not the consciousness of it, is the motive to volition in this case. When any one thought or feeling constitutes the motive to an act of the will, it is called a *simple motive*; but when two or more mental operations conspire to constitute a sufficient inducement to volition, the will is said to be governed by a *complex motive*. Let a man, for instance, choose to eat, simply because he *feels* an agreeable *sensation* attendant on eating, and *his motive* for willing to eat *is simple*: but let him will to eat, because he *desires* to live, to be useful, and to glorify God, and because he *finds* an agreeable *sensation* accompanying the gratification of his appetite, and *his motive* for willing to eat *is complex*.

The greater part of the volitions of adults are consequent upon *complex motives*. The right volitions of pious persons are the result of a sense of duty, the feeling of love for God, and regard to their own and their neighbours' interest. *Conscience* particularly capacitates us for the sense of duty, and *the heart* for exercising *feelings* of love for ourselves and others. Our mental constitution and the laws of God indicate the divine pleasure, that our motives for voluntarily keeping the commandments should be complex. No man ever yet hated his own flesh, and no man was ever wisely religious, without intelligence and feeling, or without love to himself, his fellow-men, and his God. Indeed, our own personal happiness, and our duty to our Maker, are so intimately connected by the Divine hand, that it is impossible, in obedience to his counsels of wisdom and goodness, to consult one without promoting the other.

President Edwards repeatedly calls the motive, in consequence of which we will in any case, the *cause* of that act of the will. This use of the word *cause* has produced much confusion in the minds of many of his readers. The fact is, that no motive is *the efficient cause* of any act of human volition: but some human soul is the efficient

cause of every act of the will; and indeed of every other mental operation, which can justly be predicated of man. We agree with Mr. Locke, that *a cause is a substance exerting its power into act, to make something begin to be.* In this strict sense of the word, it is evident, that no one act of the mind, no one motive, that is, *thought* or *feeling*, is the *cause* of another act of the mind, denominated a volition; for the agent himself, the man, is the efficient cause of all his own mental operations. He makes them exist, or *begin to be.* The word *cause*, however, is used to denote *the reason*, and even *the occasion* of any action and event; and in this sense President Edwards would be understood, when he says that motive is the cause of volition. His words are these:

“I sometimes use the word *cause*, in this Inquiry, to signify any *antecedent*, either natural or moral, positive or negative, on which an event, either a thing, or the manner and circumstance of a thing, so depends, that it is the ground and reason, either in whole, or in part, why it is, rather than not; or why it is as it is, rather than otherwise; or, in other words, any antecedent with which a consequent event is so connected, that it truly belongs to the reason why the proposition which affirms that event is true; whether it has any positive influence or not. And, in agreeableness to this, I sometimes use the word *effect* for the consequence of another thing, which is perhaps rather an occasion than a cause, most properly speaking.” p. 58.

Having thus explained his meaning, he lays down the indisputable axiom, *that every effect has some cause*; and this law of mental operation, that *every act of the will is excited by a motive.* Then he proceeds to show, that

“If the acts of the will are excited by motives, then motives are the causes of their being excited; or, which is the same thing, the cause of their being put forth into act and exercise. And if so, the existence of the acts of the will is properly the effect of their motives.—And if volitions are properly the effects of their motives, then they are *necessarily* connected with their motives. Every effect and event being, as was proved before, necessarily connected with that, which is the proper ground and reason of its existence.” p. 118.

The words *necessity*, and *necessarily*, are used in the *Inquiry* in a limited sense, generally, in the same manner

as *cause* is; to denote the *certainty* of those events which are said to be necessary. The words, however, are frequently misunderstood; and the more so, because President Edwards uses them sometimes in their common acceptance, instead of invariably attributing to them, what he has explained to be their philosophical meaning.

It is this philosophical necessity, which he asserts to be perfectly consistent with, and indeed essential to moral agency; for were there no *necessary* connexion between motives and volition, men would never will as rational, intelligent agents. His doctrine is true, but his sentiments might have been expressed in a more faultless, and profitable manner. In our exhibition of the nature of moral agency we would shun that use of the words *cause* and *necessity* which is uncommon, however philosophical may be the meaning which may be definitely attributed to them, because few will read with philosophical eyes and attention. Let us express the doctrines of President Edwards so as to defy all opposition, from men of common sense and candour.

1. No intelligent being wills, in any case, without some motive.

2. There is a sure connexion between every volition and the motive for that volition; so that he who could foreknow what motives a man would have, might be certain what would be his volitions.

3. This *certainty* that a man will always choose, purpose, determine, or will, according to motives, is not inconsistent with free agency.

4. Should a man will without motive, his volitions would not be the volitions of an intelligent agent.

5. God foreknows what will be the thoughts and feelings of every man, in every given situation; and equally what will be his volitions, consequent upon such of those thoughts and feelings, as will be the occasion of any volitions. This foreknowledge implies the actual and certain connexion between those motives, or mental operations, which will induce certain volitions, and those volitions.

6. The connexion is not of the same nature with that which subsists between physical causes and physical effects; but it is as infallible; for it is no more certain, that

God has established some laws of physical operations, than that he has made it a law of mental operation, that there shall be no volition without some motive; and that a man, if he *will* at all, shall *will* from such motives as he has.

This is the sum and substance of *President Edwards' Inquiry*.

The common clamour of Arminians against this celebrated work is, that it represents moral agents to be mere machines, destitute of any actual efficiency in producing their own mental operations; and yet it expressly declares, that "THE ACTIVITY OF THE SOUL MAY ENABLE IT TO BE THE CAUSE OF EFFECTS." p. 67. The great point in dispute between President Edwards and all Arminians, is not whether man is the efficient cause of all his own volitions, but whether the will has in itself the power of determining its own volitions. He affirms that it has not, and they maintain that it has. If the faculty of the will, he argues, correctly, determines to produce a certain volition, it must be by a volition to produce that volition; and that previous volition must exist in consequence of some act of the will anterior to itself, or it must exist in consequence of the operation of some other faculty, in which case volition depends on something besides a self-determining power of the will. The Arminians, therefore, must admit an infinite series of volitions, or relinquish their favourite thesis.

Yet, President Edwards, we think, has gone too far, in maintaining that a volition is in no case the result of a previous volition.

"I can conceive of nothing else," he says, "that can be meant by the soul's having power to cause and determine its own volitions, as a being to whom God has given a power of action, but this; that God has given power to the soul, sometimes at least, to excite volitions at its pleasure, or according as it chooses. And this certainly supposes, in all such cases, a choice preceding all volitions which are thus caused, even the first of them. Which runs into the fore-mentioned great absurdity." p. 71.

Every man will find upon reflection, that he is not conscious of ever producing *immediately* one volition by another. But every man may be conscious, we think, of

approving in his conscience, of a virtuous course of conduct, and of *resolving*, or *willing*, from that approbation, to pursue it. He may *will*, or *choose*, or *resolve* too, (and these are all *volitions*,) that he will *choose* the same course of conduct to-morrow; and may *purpose* then to attend to the same considerations which induced him to approve and will to-day, that he may repeat his volition. When to-morrow arrives, he may *remember* his choice, purpose, or intention to *choose* the same course of virtuous conduct, which he pursued yesterday, and from the *remembrance* of his previous purpose, together with a *reconsideration* of his ground of approbation, may actually will as he intended to will. In this case one volition produces another, through the purposed interposition of some of the faculties of the understanding: and yet, we are not reduced to the absurdity of a *choice preceding all volitions*, or of a series of volitions without end. The first volition of which we have spoken, in the supposed case, had for its motive an act of the *conscience*; and that volition secured the existence of the second, similar volition, on the ensuing day. Very frequently the recollection, or the remembrance, of a former volition, is a motive for another volition; and by willing in consequence of some previous purpose, (and every act of the mind in *purposing* is a *volition*,) we form habits of continued operation. If the recalling of a previous volition did not in some cases induce a subsequent volition, there could be no intentional fulfilment of promises; for when we sincerely promise to do something at a future time, we intend at that time to will the performance of it, or else we are so absurd as to expect to perform our promises without any volition to do it, at the time of performance.

Although one volition cannot, therefore, induce immediately another volition: yet mediately it can, through those intellectual faculties, which obey the will in recalling the motives which have once induced volition and are likely to do it again; or which recollect some previous purpose to will, in a certain manner, at some subsequent time. We fearlessly assert, therefore, that *God has given power to the soul of man, sometimes at least, to excite volitions according to its pleasure; and indeed very*

frequently as it chooses. And on this power depends all that consistency of religious character, which we discover in some intelligent Christians; for having come to a deliberate choice of Jehovah for their God, and of his service for their employment, they *resolve*, that is, they *will*, to renew their choice of him, and their volitions to serve him, daily; so that *in the inner man they are*, through a divine blessing on the operations of their own minds, *renewed day by day.* In this way, to a considerable extent, the soul determines what its future volitions shall be.

Freedom, or Liberty, President Edwards predicates of a moral agent, when he is "free from hinderance or impediment in the way of doing, or conducting in any respect, as he wills." p. 38. Such an agent we agree with him is *free.* But he maintains that *liberty* cannot be predicated of *the will itself,* (p. 39,) because the existence of the faculty of the will is essential to the idea of liberty in any being; and it would not be good sense to say that *the will acts according to its will.* It may be deemed presumption to oppose this eminent divine in any thing; but we would that our understanding should bow only to conviction. We cannot think it nonsense to affirm, that the faculty of volition is free to will, from the recollection of some previous volition, when there is no impediment in the way, and no extraneous energy exerted to prevent the operation. A moral agent to be free in his moral actions must have a will, we allow; but we see no impropriety in saying, that every faculty of the soul has a *natural freedom* in its operations, when no *constraint, force, compulsion, or coercion* is exerted to prevent it from operating according to, or to make it act contrary to, the constitution of the human mind, and the divinely established laws of mental operation. Our readers will permit us to quote, what we have elsewhere published, as an exhibition of *moral liberty.*

"LIBERTY OF ACTION consists in such a connexion between the faculties of volition and efficiency, that a man may perform what he wills. So far as a man may effect what he wills, so far he is free in his agency.—LIBERTY OF VOLITION, or freedom of will, consists in such a connexion be-

tween the will and a sufficient inducement to volition, that a man may will upon the presentation of the motive. Hence man has no such freedom of will that he can choose without motives, or independently of all knowledge, judgment, conscience, and feeling. Hence, also, a man cannot will from such thoughts and feelings, whether they be holy or unholy, as he has not; any more than he can see what is not to be seen.—LIBERTY OF THOUGHT is predicated of any faculty of the understanding, precisely so far as a connexion is established between that faculty and our voluntary efficiency.”

Both kinds of liberty, of which we have spoken, namely, a natural freedom from the physical compulsion of any faculty; and the moral liberty of thought, volition, and action; seem absolutely essential to the constitution of a moral agent; and the continuance of his moral agency. Should the divine energy physically constrain the mind to any act, that act would be a work of God, and not an act of any human efficient being, or agent. Should man be the efficient of mental operations, and yet be prevented from exercising some voluntary government over his own thoughts, feelings, volitions, and actions, he would not be a FREE MORAL AGENT.

Had President Edwards avoided the use of the word *cause*, when he did not intend an *efficient cause*; and of the word *necessity*, when he meant *certainty*, the REV. JAMES DANA, D. D. would probably never have written “*An Examination of the late Rev. President Edwards’s Inquiry on Freedom of Will.*” Boston, A. D. 1760. pp. 138. 12mo.

Dr. Dana says, “we readily grant, that there can be no act of choice without some motive or inducement.” p. 109. This is one great point which the President laboured to establish: but he unfortunately said, that there is a *necessary* connexion between every volition and the motive which is the occasion of it. That there is a *necessary* connexion Dr. Dana denies, and asserts that if every volition be *necessary*, man is not accountable for *necessary* volitions, or the actions that *necessarily* flow from them. President E. informs us, that he means a *moral*, or a *metaphysical*, or a *philosophical necessity*; but this Dr. D. overlooks, and insists upon it, that necessity is necessity, of whatever kind it may be. Had President E. asserted,

that in the Divine foreknowledge it was *certain* that all men would infallibly choose as they do, from the motives which induce them; so that in the Divine foreknowledge there was a *sure* connexion between each motive and the volition consequent upon it, Dr. D. would never have contradicted him.

The President asserts, that a motive is the *cause* of a volition, and *produces* it. Then replies Dr. D. *man* is not the *cause* of his own volitions; his soul is not; nor does the will produce them: for they cannot have two distinct causes. This inference is just; but if the President had said, *man never wills but from some motive*, which was the very thing he intended, his acute opponent would have found no fault with his doctrine.

The chief part of the *Examination* is devoted to a very loose paragraph of the *Inquiry*; and truly Dr. Dana makes the great metaphysician appear ridiculous, by substituting *volition* where the President uses the word *motive*; because the *Inquiry*, (p. 11, and 12,) says,

“ I have rather chosen to express myself thus, *that the will always is as the greatest apparent good, or as what appears most agreeable is*, than to say, *that the will is determined by the greatest apparent good, or by what seems most agreeable*; because an appearing most agreeable or pleasing to the mind, and the mind's preferring and choosing, seem hardly to be perfectly and properly distinct. If strict propriety of speech be insisted on, it may more properly be said, *that the voluntary action which is the immediate consequence and fruit of the mind's volition or choice, is determined by that which appears most agreeable, than the preference or choice itself*; but that the act of volition itself is always determined by that in or about the mind's view of the object, which *causes it to appear most agreeable.*”

Dr. Dana was a divine that always *insisted on strict propriety of speech*. If then, says he, *a motive*, which is *an appearing most agreeable or pleasing to the mind*, is not *properly* DISTINCT from *the mind's preferring and choosing*, which is a *volition*; we may use *motive* and *volition* as synonymous; for if they denote not *distinct things*, they must be two names for *the same thing*. With this weapon, thus prepared by the President himself, Dr. D. dissevers every bone and muscle of his opponent's

Inquiry. *Motive causes volition*, says the President. Then *volition causes volition*, according to your own scheme, and contrary to it, says Dr. Dana. *Volition is always as the greatest appearance of good*, says the former : and the latter remarks, then *volition is always as volition* ; and then, *a man always wills as he determines to will*.

Into this difficulty the President was brought, we must think, by not accurately distinguishing between the operations of the faculties of the understanding, and those of the heart, or faculty of feeling. *Agreeable* is an attribute of certain sensations and emotions, in which human happiness consists. All our happiness consists in such sensations as are termed agreeable, or in those emotions which are termed affections. Were we destitute of these, we could not be the subjects of happiness. This is the principal sense of the word agreeable ; but it is also used to characterize any thing which is the occasion of an agreeable feeling. Hence those material objects which excite pleasing sensations are called *agreeable objects* ; and those thoughts which are followed by felicitous affections are called *agreeable thoughts*.

Any thing is said to *seem* as it is mentally *seen*, that is, *perceived* or *conceived of*, or *thought of*, by any one. That contemplated action which *seems agreeable*, is an action which we conceive would promote or indulge some agreeable feeling. When several acts are contemplated, and we *conceive* that one would *most* promote those feelings in which our happiness consists, it is said to “*seem most agreeable*” to us. Now an *agreeable feeling* is one mental exercise ; the *conception* of that agreeable feeling another ; and the *thought*, that any particular act of body or mind will induce that agreeable feeling, is a third.

That is said to *appear good* to us, and for us, which we *think* of as conducive to our happiness ; or, which we think will be, or remember has been, the occasion of agreeable feelings.

Thoughts are the operations of the seven faculties of the understanding ; *feelings*, of the heart ; and *volitions*, of the will. Now it must be manifest, that *a motive*, according to the scheme of the President himself, is either

some *thought*, or some *feeling*; is either a *conception* of something in an action contemplated; or a *judgment* that the act will be good, or agreeable; or a *remembrance* of some pleasure afforded by a similar action; or a *feeling* of an agreeable kind. In consequence of some one, or all of these operations, the contemplated action is, by the faculty of volition, *chosen* to be done; or *preferred* to some other contemplated action. This *choosing* or *preferring* is an operation of a very different faculty, from any which perceives, conceives, judges, approves, reasons, remembers, is conscious, or feels; so that *an appearing most agreeable or pleasing to the mind, and the mind's preferring and choosing, DO SEEM, actually, to be perfectly and properly distinct.* They are as distinct as any two operations, or exercises, of the human mind, that can be mentioned: and *if strict propriety of speech is insisted on*, as it ought to be, we shall deserve reprehension if we confound them.

We agree, that "voluntary action," whether it be purely mental, or connected with bodily motion, is the effect of a mental faculty of agency, *which operates either instinctively, or in consequence of the mind's volition*, so that voluntary action is the *fruit of volition*, and is determined by it.

"If strict propriety of speech be insisted on," says the President, "the act of volition itself is always *determined* by that in or about the mind's view of the object, which *causes it to appear* most agreeable."

Here is the very root of the difficulty, Dr. Dana judges, which the President attempted to explain; and in which he has failed. Dr. D. remarks,

"The enquiry in this place is not, Whether the highest motive hath always a causal influence on the will? But, admitting this to be the case, what is it that *causeth* any supposed motive to *be* highest in the mind's view?—Now, as there is a manifest difference between an object's *actually appearing* most agreeable, and the *cause* of this appearance; the proper question, in the first place, is, What is the ground, reason, or cause of the agreeable appearance *itself*? For, admitting the strongest motive to be the more *immediate* cause of volition, how doth this prove that it is the *original* cause? *Whence* is it that any proposed object hath the greatest appearance of good? From

what cause? Hither we must *ultimately* recur for the ground of volition.—Till the answer to this question is found, the original ground of volition is not discovered." *Examination*, p. 1.

These interrogations are certainly very pertinent, for the President had informed the Doctor, that an act of volition is always *determined* by something which *causeth it* [the motive] *to appear most agreeable*. Dr. D. insists upon knowing what this *something* is, which in fact *causeth* the motive, which *causeth* volition.

On the assertion of the President, that "the act of volition itself is always *determined*," by something, we must remark, that a *mental determination* is neither more nor less than a volition, or an operation of the faculty of will. A mind that *determines* to perform any act, *wills* to do it. Now the President would not have maintained, that every act of volition is the consequence of a prior volition. He must have intended, therefore, that every act of volition is in consequence of some mental view, which is a motive; and that every mental view which moves us to volition, becomes a motive in consequence of being caused by something in or about the mind's view, to *seem* or *appear most agreeable*. What this something in or about the mind's view, which *causes* one view to be more agreeable, and another *most agreeable*, he has not informed us.

Shall we, then, undertake to say what it is? We can but give our opinion; that those *views* which are followed by the most agreeable *feelings*, are the most *agreeable views*. Man has *feelings*, because his Maker has given him a faculty of feeling; and has placed him in a situation favourable to the operation of that faculty. Of his feelings some are agreeable and others disagreeable; and of the agreeable ones, some are more agreeable, and others most agreeable. Why one feeling is, in its own nature, more agreeable than another, we can assign no other reason than this, that God has so constituted the human mind and the nature of things, that it is so. No other reason can be assigned why we think, or feel, or choose, or act at all. No other reason can be offered, why *love* is a felicitous, and *hatred* a painful *emotion*; or why the *sensation* consequent upon touching a smooth substance is pleasing; or a rough, gritty surface unpleasant, to one of a delicate hand.

It is a fact, too, that some thoughts are ordinarily the occasion of our having certain agreeable affections; while others are almost invariably followed by some one of the disagreeable passions; and for this we can account, in no other way than by saying, that God has so constituted the mind that it is so; or that it is natural for us thus to feel. God, who intended to make *Wisdom's ways, ways of pleasantness, and the way of transgressors hard*, has rendered the amiable affections pleasing, in their own nature, to him who exercises them, and all immoral passions painful. With the same design his hand has coupled, in the formation of our mental nature, certain thoughts with certain feelings. Hence if a man's conscience condemn him, the mental act of *disapprobation* is followed by the painful emotion of *shame*. If his conscience *approves* of his own conduct, his heart feels *esteem* for himself, and *delight* in the approved actions.

It is worthy of remark, that *similar views* of the same thing are not always equally agreeable or disagreeable; but our agreeable or disagreeable feelings, consequent upon any views, *are dependent on, and according to, the nature and degree of the antecedent mental operations, which are the occasion of them*. Thus a very lively and energetic *view* of the goodness of God to us, will be followed by a proportionate emotion of *love*, or of *gratitude*, or of both.

Would we, therefore, pursue our investigations into the nature and origin of all those motives that excite our wills to volition, we must attempt to account for our *thoughts*; for we never *feel* but in consequence of some *thought*, and our *feelings* correspond with them, as accurately as our actions of an external kind with our volitions. "*As a man thinketh, so is he,*" in his feelings, volitions, and actions.

Should one be able to show how a man comes by every one of his thoughts, and what is the occasion of each; he would then be required to account for the difference in energy and vivacity, which he experiences, at different times, in similar thoughts about the same thing; and so would arrive at that which CAUSETH *any particular VIEW TO BE MOST AGREEABLE, at any particular time*.

To the work of giving the history of the thoughts and

different states of any human mind we confess ourselves inadequate. Who but God could tell, in relation to all men, why they think as they do think? A few general remarks, however, we can make, and the experience of all men will vouch for the truth of them. 1. There could be no mental *perceptions* of external objects, if they did not exist, in such a state relative to us, that we can perceive them. We can no more touch, taste, smell, and hear, things not to be touched, tasted, smelled, and heard, than we can see *what is not to be seen*. 2. All our *sensations*, which are sometimes motives to volition, are dependent on our *perceptions*; and those *perceptions* could not exist, without the existence of percipient beings, and of all those objects which are perceived, in such a state as to be capable of being perceived by them. Hence, had God never created objects of sense; or having created them, had they been situated beyond the circle of our observation, we should never have had any perceptions, or any consequent sensations. If there are mines of platina in the moon, we cannot at present see them; nor can we have any sensations from seeing them.

3. Some of our *perceptions* exist without our volition; some of them contrary to our volition; and some of them in consequence of our volition. Without willing it, we may perceive a blow upon our head: finding the light unpleasant we may will not to perceive the sun when our face is turned towards it, and yet perceive it; and having heard of Pittsburgh, we may will to perceive it, and to use the proper means for so doing, in which case we shall behold that emporium of the west.

4. Some of our *judgments* are formed in consequence of voluntary attention to the subject of them, while others are the result of our mental constitution. Our *judgments* are frequently motives to volition.

5. *Acts of reasoning* are always voluntary, and terminate in *inductive judgments*.

6. Some of the operations of *memory* are voluntary, and some involuntary. *Remembrance* and *recollection* both may occasion volition.

7. Those operations of mind, which are termed *conception*, *intuition*, *the forming of an idea or notion of a thing*,

comprehension, apprehension, imagination, and the understanding of a subject, are all of one class, and are performed by the faculty of conception. In the exertion of this faculty we are frequently voluntary; but sometimes we conceive without volition to do it, and sometimes in opposition to the will. A sinner may will to form some conception of heaven, and do it; he may not will to understand his own character, and yet form just notions of it; and he may will not to conceive of his own perdition, and yet do it in spite of himself. We rarely will from bare conception, but very commonly from conception and the emotions that follow it; or from the combined influence of conception and judgment, or of conception and conscience. Let a man *judge* that certain good, of which he *conceives*, will follow any action, and the judgment and conception may be a motive for willing to perform that action: or let him *conceive* of a deed, and *approve* of the same, and he may will its performance.

8. We may will to consider a subject, that our *conscience* may be exercised about it; and some dictates of conscience may follow this voluntary consideration; but still conscience approves or disapproves according to our conceptions and judgments upon moral subjects. Conscience is not under the direct control of the will.

9. *Consciousness* seems to be essential to every motive; for did we not *know* what we think and feel, we could not be influenced by our thoughts and feelings. Nor could we know that we will at all. Consciousness is a *necessary* mental operation.

10. It must be thought evident from inspection, that all our *involuntary thoughts* result from our constitution, our state, or the agency of some other being. Men certainly have some power over each other's thoughts, and by their actions are the occasion of them. Thus a parent states a truth to a child; the child conceives of the meaning of the statement, judges it to be true, and in consequence of this judgment wills to perform something. In the way of revelation, and by his allotments of providence, God is the agent that occasions many of our involuntary thoughts; and by the constitution of the mind he lays the foundation for consciousness and all our constitu-

tional judgments. We are, moreover, informed by revelation, that some of the angels of the spiritual world are able to excite thoughts, and thereby tempt us, in our present fallen state. One, we know, the Devil, was able to utter a lie in the hearing of the ear of female innocence, and was the occasion of Eve's judging it to be a truth.

11. Neither our constitutional mental operations, nor the thoughts suggested by divine instruction, ever of themselves become motives to sinful volitions. On the contrary, they are calculated to restrain, and counteract, the depravity of mankind.

We pass on to another question concerning moral agency. *Does the will always follow the last dictate of the understanding?* President Edwards says it does, if the word *understanding* be taken in a large sense, "as including the whole faculty of perception or apprehension, and not merely what is called *reason* and *judgment*." This opinion he was necessitated to maintain, or else give up his position, that the *view most agreeable*, or *the greatest appearance of good*, constitutes the motive for every volition. Dr. Dana denies this position. We answer that it is true, only in this sense; we are always *conscious* of our thoughts and feelings; so that if *a feeling* be our motive, we are always *conscious* of that feeling immediately before volition. According to the President's scheme, nothing but *a thought* can be a motive; and that *thought* must be a *judgment* that the contemplated thing is good for us, upon the whole. Dr. D. denies, very properly, that we are always moved to choice by such a judgment. Numerous instances might be stated, in which our *feelings* are our motives to volition in direct opposition to our conception and judgment of what is good for us upon the whole. Let us take for example the *feeling of hatred*. We *hate* a man, and *desire* to smite him. Shall we smite him or not? Conscience disapproves of the contemplated action. Judgment decides that it is not best for us, upon the whole, to perform it; but we *hate* him, and therefore we *will* to smite him. Here the last act of *the understanding* is a *judgment* that the action we have chosen to perform had best not be done; and the act previous was

that of disapprobation. The mental act which moved us to will was a *feeling*, of which we were conscious. It is in this way, that men *choose*, very commonly, to act contrary to their conscience and judgment: and the pious man, in hostility to his unhallowed *feelings*, that cry for indulgence, is moved by his approbation to voluntary, holy self-denial.

Another work of considerable celebrity is entitled, *An Essay on Moral Agency: containing remarks on a late anonymous publication, entitled, 'An Examination of the late President Edwards's Inquiry on Freedom of Will. By Stephen West, D. D. Pastor of the Church in Stockbridge (Mass.) Second Edition. Salem, 1794. pp. 313. 8vo.*

Dr. West teaches, that "moral agency consisteth in spontaneous, voluntary exertion." This he repeats at every turn, through three hundred pages. Of course, any action which springs up in any mind, that is a voluntary action, is a moral action: and any mental operation which is not a spontaneous voluntary action, is not a moral action.

So far as we derive any idea from the word *spontaneous* in this connexion, it is equally applicable to every mental operation, and denotes that without compulsion men think, feel, will, and act. *Thought* is as *spontaneous* as *volition*. Is, then, every *voluntary operation* of any creature, a *moral action*? Dr. West affirms, "that spontaneous, voluntary exertion, is such an agency as hath moral desert in it;"—and such as *really renders us fit subjects of punishment, or reward.* p. 17. Mr. Wilson of Providence,* here remarks, "This definition, if correct, would render every beast of the field, every bird of the air, every fish of the sea, and each and every insect and creeping thing, a moral agent deserving of reward or punishment; for every one of them performs 'spontaneous, voluntary exertion.'"

Dr. West should have described men, angels good and bad, and the Deity; and then he might have said, *that the voluntary mental operations of any one of these beings, which are either required or forbidden by moral law, are MORAL ACTIONS, and deserving of praise or blame.* This

* Letters to the Rev. E. S. Ely, p. 94.

would have been true : but it would not have been the whole truth. Dr. W. is correct in saying, that “ when we talk of moral *agency*, we talk of some kind of *action* or *exertion* ;” p. 18. but it is not true, that our notion of a moral agent includes nothing but the conception of a being *in exercise* ; or of the fact of *his having put forth* some exertion ; for “ it is agreeable to the common sense and understanding of men,” to conceive of a moral agent, as a being possessed of certain faculties, capacities and powers, for obeying or disobeying some moral law that is laid down for the regulation of his conduct.

“ Moral liberty,” says Dr. W. p. 20. “ essentially consisteth in voluntary exercise.—Although liberty and volition may not be precisely the same, yet all the idea we have of liberty is to be found in voluntary exertion.” p. 21. This is strange indeed ; but then it is Hopkinsianism ; and therefore,—if we believe the advocates of it,—it must be metaphysics ! But why can we not form an *idea*, or *conception*, of liberty, of volition, or any voluntary mental operation, and of the difference between these objects of thought ? We certainly use the verb *may* to denote *liberty* ; and *can*, to signify *power* or *possibility*. Now a man is at *liberty* to do any thing which he *may* do : and he has *power* to perform any thing which he *can* do. Men of common sense say, that a man *may* will, choose, love, reason, remember, and the like ; and they conceive that *liberty* to do these things, is something wholly distinct from his actually doing them. Men may do many things which they never will do ; so that liberty of agency,—and actual agency, by no means run parallel to each other ; nor is it necessary to conceive of them as inseparably connected. A man *may* do, or has *legal liberty* to perform, any thing which the law allows : and he has *natural liberty* to perform any act, whether mental or bodily, for which he has the requisite faculties, provided he is not the subject of some physical restraint. Hence, a man may have *natural liberty* to perform actions, for which he has no present *moral ability*. For instance, a man may have faculties for *loving God*, and no *physical restraint* prevents him from performing this mental, moral operation : but not only the existence of faculties, but the actual *apprehension* of the loveliness of the

Deity is requisite to constitute the *moral ability* of loving God. This *apprehension*, or *right view* of God as lovely, he has not, and therefore he has not the *moral ability* of performing the moral action of loving God. Hopkinsians very frequently mistake *natural ABILITY* for *natural LIBERTY*; and hence they assert the absurd doctrine, that all men, by nature, have a *natural ability*, and a *moral inability* to love God. They have *natural liberty* to love God, it is true, but until they are changed in their views, they have *no requisite ability* for performing the *mental, moral operation* in question.

The enquiry, "Whether the *will is free*?" Dr. West pronounces to be "utterly unmeaning and impertinent." p. 21. Yet we cannot think it impertinent to enquire, whether the will of every man is, at all times, *free from physical restraint*? or, whether man's faculty of will is free in its operations, from the causal influence of every thing without his own mind? Neither does it seem unmeaning to ask, Is the will free to choose without any motive? We should think it good sense to say, that the original constitution of the mind effectually prevents the faculty of will from operating, except in consequence of some motive; so that the will is not free to act at all, without motives.

Of all the Hopkinsian metaphysicians which we have read, no one but the Rev. Isaac Anderson equals Dr. West, for confusion of thought, and abuse of language. To follow him into all his absurdities and expose them, would be a tedious labour. We shall advert to a few only. He remarks,

"The mind is conscious of nothing otherwise than in and by its own exertions. As it is conscious of a power of thought and idea, only in thinking and perceiving; so it is conscious of a *power of will*, only in the *exercise of volition*. That the mind should be conscious of a *power of choice* which is distinguishable from *actual choosing*, is no more conceivable, than that we should be conscious of a power of thinking and perceiving, without, at the same time, *feeling or exercising any perception or thought*." p. 22.

Consciousness is the knowledge we have of our own present mental operations. *The mind, truly, is conscious*

of nothing otherwise than by one of its own exertions ; even one of its own exertions, called an *act of consciousness*. The mind is *not* conscious at all, of " a power of thought and idea : " nor of " a power of will, " nor of a " power of choice ; " because power is not an object of consciousness. We are conscious of every kind of thinking, of feeling, of choice, or actual choosing ; and of every mental operation ; but we *conceive* of the *power* of choosing, and *judge* that it is distinct from the *act* of choosing. We *conceive* and *judge* that we *can* come to a choice, or that we can speak, or write, and thus form a notion of the meaning of the expressions, *a power to choose, a power of speaking, and a power of writing*. It will not follow, that we have no knowledge of *power*, because we are not conscious of it ; for we are not *conscious* of the existence of God, or of our neighbour, and yet we know there is a God, and that we have neighbours. The mind of man constitutionally *judges*, that actual volition implies a power of volition ; just as infallibly as we decide, upon the first apprehension of the meaning of the proposition, that there is no effect without an adequate cause. Dr. West continues to say, " *Minds* are conversant only with their own ideas ; they perceive and are immediately conscious of nothing beside their own exercises and ideas." An *idea* is a *conception* or *notion*. We are conversant about all our own mental operations, as much as about our ideas. Minds are conversant with material things, for they perceive them through their five senses : and they are conversant with all the objects of their thoughts, as well as with their thoughts themselves.

Dr. W. says, p. 24, that " all mankind have immediate consciousness of spontaneous, voluntary exertion." It is agreed, that men are conscious of each volition, and of each mental act that results from volition. But are they conscious of nothing else ? Certainly we are conscious of mental operations which are not consequences of volition. We remember frequently when we do not will to remember ; yes, and even when we choose not to remember, and are *conscious* of these acts of memory. We are *conscious* of many judgments too, of many perceptions, of many conceptions and imaginations, of many acts of

conscience, and of many sensations, affections and passions, which are not the result of any acts of will; and which therefore may be termed *involuntary*. Are any of these *involuntary* mental operations moral actions or not? Dr. West must say they are not. Indeed he does affirm, that in voluntary exertion all moral agency consists; and that in voluntary exertion consist all the *liberty* and *power* which are necessary to render any one a moral agent, an accountable creature, and the proper subject of reward or punishment. p. 24.

“ This is a sort of agency which is the object of command and prohibition in the word of God. Accordingly we find that the exercises of affection, voluntary exertions, are subjected to law, and are the direct object of Divine precept.—Nor can any thing justly be considered as having the nature of obedience or disobedience any farther than it partaketh of voluntary *exercise and affection*. Mere voluntary exercises, of a certain kind, are accepted as obedience. These, and these only, are our conformity to the Divine law. And so much do all obedience and disobedience consist in the exercises of the will, so much do our voluntary exertions constitute the very essence and formal nature of virtue and vice, that no man will ever be, either rewarded or punished, for any thing besides his exercises of affection—spontaneous, voluntary exertions. Whatever action or event taketh place without any concurrence of our wills, or otherwise than as the fruit of our voluntary exertion, and which hath nothing of our will or choice in it, will never be set to our account for adjusting our reward or punishment. It is agreeable to the common sense and opinions of man, that all spontaneous, voluntary exertions carry in them desert of either punishment or reward. It is a maxim, established by the universal sense of mankind, that the exercises of our affections are, in their very nature, either virtuous or vicious. And so universally doth a sense of desert on this account prevail among mankind, that, in order to determine any man's character and desert, we always accustom ourselves to enquire into *his motives*, and the *temper, disposition, or state* of mind from whence his outward actions and conduct proceed. Here, all acknowledge, are to be found moral quality and desert. In the *exercises of affection* do men place virtue or vice.” p. 25.

This is a pretty good specimen of Hopkinsian metaphysics and theology. Let us analyze the extract.

1. By *exercise* Dr. W. and every one else mean *operation*; and by *mental exercise, mental operation, or action*.

2. *Voluntary exercises* must include all the operations of the faculty of the will, that is, *all volitions*; and *all other mental operations which are the result of volitions*.

3. All virtue and vice, all sin and holiness, consist in *voluntary exercises*, as thus defined; and, of course, nothing is blamable or punishable but voluntary exercises; nothing is to be rewarded but voluntary exercises.

4. Of course, if we have any mental operations that are not "the fruit of our voluntary exertion," those operations are no part of our moral agency, and for them we can neither be rewarded nor punished, with propriety.

5. Yet we form our opinion of a man's moral character, by judging of *his motives, temper, disposition, or state of mind*.

6. Hence, *motives, temper, disposition and state of mind*, are all of them *voluntary exercises*, or else we "determine a man's character," by enquiring into, and judging of, things which are neither virtuous nor vicious, neither rewardable nor punishable.

7. All *exercises of affection* are *voluntary exercises*, because in them men place virtue or vice; and nothing is either virtuous or vicious but voluntary exercises.

8. "All obedience and disobedience consist in the exercises of the will;" and, therefore, all our *affections* are operations of the faculty of the will;—or, all our *affections* are *volitions*. So says Dr. West.

That we have not misrepresented this writer may be evinced by some additional quotations. "There is nothing morally beautiful or deformed in any thing beside the exercise of affection—spontaneous, voluntary exertion." p. 26. In this passage he makes *voluntary exertion* exegetical of *exercises of affection*. This he frequently does; so that our *affections and volitions* must, in his esteem, be the same mental operations. "Mankind are *agents* in nothing but *spontaneous, voluntary exertions*." p. 28. Of course, our thoughts and feelings are all of them voluntary actions. "So that, upon the whole, nothing is found in the mind more than *voluntary, spontaneous exertion*." p. 29. "A view or conviction of what *the heart or the affection* really is, or of what is indeed *the very choice of the mind*, always terminates the enquiry,

and fixeth the judgment in regard to the beauty or deformity of the action. Upon this ground alone it is, that we form our judgment of the characters of men, or any moral beings; determining and judging them to be either good, or bad, only by their *volitions*, and according to the nature of them." p. 30. Here *the heart and an operation* of the heart, called *an affection*, are confounded: the heart, an affection, and the very choice of the mind, are represented as one and the same thing; and all voluntary mental operations, together with all man's affections, are reduced to *volitions*. "In the mind's perceiving any thing, which is fitted, by the nature and constitution of it, to be an object of its affection, is really all the choice which is ever made of it. Nothing that is, in its nature, the object of affection, is ever either chosen, or refused, with any feeling, exercise, or perception of mind, different from what is necessarily and certainly implied in the mind's perceiving it." p. 60. "The perception of the beauty of an object,—is not the cause and ground of choice, nor any thing distinct from it." p. 60. "There are but two senses in which the term Motive is commonly made use of among men. In the first of these, it importeth the very choice of the mind itself: in the second, the external object or quality which doth, or ought to, terminate it, and which is exhibited as a reason, in the view of which the mind ought to act, either in choosing, or refusing." p. 61. From these passages we learn, that perception is volition, is choice; and that motive is either volition, or some external object or quality. "An agreeable appearance to the mind, is no more distinct from choice, than a fixedness and cohesion of parts is distinct from solidity." p. 68.

If this is a specimen of the metaphysical science of the new divinity school, we do not wonder at the celebrity which the advocates of it enjoy, with some portion of the community, for profound obscurity. *Volition, misunderstood*, is the substance of Dr. West's Essay, and the mystery of Hopkinsianism. Men of common sense believe, and all but very uncommon writers say, that the expressions, "I will—I purpose—I intend—I design—I refuse—I choose—I resolve—I determine," denote acts of the faculty of will, which are called *volitions*. These they

deem a class of mental operations distinct from those which are called *feelings*.

Perceptions, again, are another class of mental exercises which always have for their object something without the mind. We *perceive* only through *the five organs of sense*. *Perception* is figuratively used to denote *conception*; as when we say, "we *perceive* the meaning of a proposition;" just as we figuratively say we *see* some statement to be true, or have a *view* of some object not visible through our eyes.

Affections, instead of being *volitions*, are a species of *feelings*; and very frequently are independent of volition.

We may *perceive* an object which is beautiful, and instantly *feel love* for it, without *willing to love* it. It is true, we may not have willed *not to love it*; so that our *feeling* of love is not *opposed to volition*: and it is moreover true, that, having perceived its beauty, and having loved it, we may will, from some motive, not to love it any longer, and yet feel the emotion of love in direct defiance of *the will*. In this case, the mental operation of *love* is consequent on *perception*, and is so far *involuntary* as to be *against our will*. Is this act of love a moral operation of the mind, or not?

We are conscious of feeling sensations immediately consequent upon perceptions, and both passions and affections that follow some of our thoughts, without any intervention of volition; and we cannot help judging, that other human beings are conscious of similar exercises. Our experience teaches us, that our feelings are dependant on some operation of some faculty of the understanding; and our volitions on our thoughts and feelings, much more frequently than our feelings on our volitions. Indeed, we are not conscious of ever exciting ourselves immediately to any particular feeling by a volition to do it. *Our hearts*, figuratively speaking, command *our wills* directly; but if *our wills* would regulate our hearts, they must do it, indirectly, by overruling our faculties of thinking. We *will* to act very frequently because we *love*; but we less frequently *love* because we *will to love*. If we love from volition, it must be by contemplating the

object from willing to do it, that we may discern its loveliness, and then the operation of love will follow.

Is the mental operation of *loving*, then, without a volition to love, and even without a volition to take such views of a subject, as may induce love, a moral action? Dr. West says it is not. But we ask, why should the mental act of *volition* be deemed a moral action, any more than an exercise of spontaneous *love*? Volition is as dependant on some motive, (by which we mean some previous thought or feeling,) as the feeling of love on some previous apprehension of loveliness in the object loved. *Loving* is as important an operation, for our own happiness and the glory of God, as *volition*. *Loving* some objects is as plainly required by the law of God, as *volition* to perform certain actions. For *loving* as well as for *willing* we are to be rewarded or punished: and for *loving* as well as for *willing* our consciences either accuse or else justify us. This is true even of an act of love which is performed not immediately in consequence of any volition, but immediately in consequence of some conception, judgment, remembrance, or approbation of loveliness in the object beloved. The same may be said of very many affections and passions.

One general remark, we are persuaded, will express the truth on this subject. It is this: *Any mental operation which is either required or forbidden by the moral law, is called a moral action, in contradistinction to a physical operation; and any mental operation required by the moral law is called a moral action, in contradistinction to an immoral action, which is forbidden by God.* In the last case, it seems desirable to insert *right*, or *holy*, or *spiritual*, so as to distinguish a *holy moral action*, not only from a *physical*, but also from an *immoral* operation.

By a *moral law* we intend any rule of conduct laid down for the regulation of any intelligent, sensitive, voluntary agent. By *the moral law*, we intend that law which God has given for the regulation of human actions. Now the law of God neither requires nor forbids men to have involuntary *perceptions*. We may *see* a flash of lightning, *hear* the sound of thunder, *smell* the fragrance

of the new mown grass, by which we pass, *touch* a rock upon which we stumble, or *taste* food which is forced into our mouths, without willing to perform either act; and these *five perceptions* are not *moral actions*; are neither holy nor sinful.

From these involuntary *perceptions*, involuntary *sensations* may result, which are neither required nor forbidden by the law of God. The moral law neither requires nor forbids us, to *feel cold* in winter, nor *hot* in summer: it neither rewards nor punishes men, for *feeling* hungry and thirsty; it neither praises nor blames any involuntary *appetite*.

Those *feelings*, on the other hand, which are denominated *emotions*, and which are divided into *affections* and *passions*, are all of them objects of moral law. God requires us to *feel*, for such things as are proper to excite them, all the different *affections*; and forbids us to exercise them in relation to improper objects; or in relation to proper objects in an improper degree. His law approves of the right exercise of affections, and condemns the wrong operation of them, whether they immediately result from volition or not. He forbids some *passions* altogether, and forbids the exercise of some of the passions in relation to some objects, while he requires them in relation to others, so that every passion is either forbidden or required; and is either censured or praised, whether it be immediately consequent upon volition, or some other mental operation. All our *passions* and *affections*, therefore, are moral, as opposed to physical, operations.

In like manner, all the operations of our faculties of conception, judgment, reason, memory, conscience, volition, and agency, are required by the moral law to be right, and all these, together with our voluntary perceptions and feelings, are declared to be either morally good or morally evil. We are even required to be *conscious* of our mental operations which are holy; and we are not forbidden to be conscious in any case; for God has so made every man that he is necessarily conscious of every thing which he is doing. External operations, such as eating, drinking, writing, walking, and speaking, are all of them under requisition by the moral law, and all of them imply

volition, and some other mental operations. Thus we have candidly shown what actions we believe to be of a moral nature; and trust that our readers are convinced, that all moral agency does not consist in *volitions*. After man was made a moral agent in Paradise, he must have had some thoughts and feelings, before he had any volitions; for on the supposition that a volition is the first mental act which any man performs, that volition must be without any motive, or reason; and of course wholly an irrational volition. And if the first holy mental act of any moral agent should be a volition, he would have a holy volition, without any holy, or morally and spiritually good motive.

Several other errors, on the subject of moral agency, in Dr. *Stephen West's* Essay, we have not time to expose. We pass to a publication entitled, "*A Dissertation concerning Liberty and Necessity; containing Remarks on the Essays of Dr. Samuel West, and on the writings of several other authors, on those subjects. By Jonathan Edwards, D. D. Worcester, 1797. pp. 234. 8vo.*"

The author of this Dissertation was the son of President Edwards. Dr. Edwards in general defends the President. The Essays of Dr. *Samuel West*, we have not been able to procure. We should judge, however, from the extracts before us, that his principal objections to the *Inquiry* had their origin in the improper use of terms; for, says Dr. Edwards, "When Dr. West, p. 46. holds, *that there may be a CERTAINTY, that a man will do such a thing, though he may have at the same time a physical power of not doing it*; he holds, that there may be the very thing which President Edwards calls a *moral necessity*, that the man will do the thing, though he may have at the same time a *physical* or *natural* power not to do it." p. 18.

This *power not to do a thing*, we do not pretend, however, to understand, unless by it Dr. Edwards intended to denote, a power of will to *refuse* doing it: for although power is requisite to perform every thing which is done, yet no power is required to do nothing, or not to do any given thing. To *refuse* to do any contemplated action, is

doing something; is an act of *volition*, and requires a *moral power*, quite as much as any other operation of the faculty of will.

Physical, mental, and bodily faculties man has; and some of these may be active or not active, according to his volitions; but *power* to do any action, always implies every thing which is requisite to the actual performance of that action. The existence of a *natural faculty* for performing any action, which may be in exercise or not, President Edwards, Dr. Edwards, and multitudes of other metaphysicians, have confounded with *natural ability*; which always includes, not only the existence of the requisite natural faculties, but of every thing else, in connexion with those faculties, requisite to the actual production of the *natural operation*.

Of *moral necessity* we shall not write, for "absolute *certainty*," says Dr. Edwards, "is all the necessity for which we plead," in relation to moral actions. "*Certainty* is the *necessity* in question." p. 39. *Certainty* is quite as intelligible a term in this controversy, as *necessity*; and when we mean *certainty*, therefore, we resolve to use that word. To the Divine Mind, all future events, that will ever occur, are absolutely *certain*; and of a *certainty* they will take place.

"Volition," says Dr. Edwards, "never takes place without the consent or with the entire opposition of the will." p. 21. Every operation of the will is a volition, this author being judge. *Consent*, therefore, in this case, is a *volition*. Now what propriety is there in saying, that volition never takes place without the volition of the will? It is a mere truism. If the will *opposes* any thing, it must be by a *volition*; for every act of the will is a volition. We learn, then, that volition never takes place when the will exercises an entire volition not to have the volition in question: that is, we never at any time will, contrary to our then present volition; which is another truism.

Dr. Edwards maintains, that *every volition is an effect of a cause extrinsic to the will itself*. He also asserts, that the efficient cause is *extrinsic to the mind* of him that wills. The dispute between him and his opponent would have been reduced to a point by an agreement about

the use of the words *cause*, and efficient cause: for Dr. W. says, "the sense in which we use self-determination is simply this, that we ourselves determine; i. e. that we ourselves will or choose." To this Dr. E. replies, "We doubtless will and choose as really as we think, see, hear, feel, &c.—It is to be presumed, that no man ever denied, that we determine, that we will, or that we choose." p. 22. 42. Dr. W. then affirms, that our own minds are *the efficient causes* of all our own volitions. Dr. E. denies this statement to be the truth; for while he and his father hold, "that we ourselves will or choose; that we ourselves act, and are agents;" they deny "that we efficiently cause our own mental acts." p. 30.

"President Edwards does not hold," says his son, "that we are *mere* passive beings, unless this expression mean, that our volitions are the effects of some cause extrinsic to our wills. If this be the meaning of it, he does hold it, and the believers in his system are ready to join issue with Dr. West on this point. Though we hold, that our volitions are the effects of some extrinsic cause, and that we are passive, as we are the subjects of the influence of that cause; yet we hold, that we are not *merely* passive; but that volition is in its own nature an act or action, and in the exercise of it we are active, though in the causation of it we are passive so far as to be the subjects of the influence of the efficient cause. This we concede; and let our opponents make the most of it: we fear not the consequence. In this sense we hold, 'that we are determiners in the active voice, but not *merely* determined in the passive voice.'" p. 31.—"But who or what is the efficient cause in either case, remains to be considered. To say that we are determiners in the active voice, and not the determined in the passive voice, gives no satisfaction. We grant, that we are determiners in the active: and yet assert, that we are determined, or are caused to determine, by some extrinsic cause, at the same time, and with respect to the same act: as, when a man hears a sound, he is the hearer in the active voice, and yet is caused to hear the same sound, by something extrinsic to himself. It will not be pretended, that a man is the efficient cause of his own hearing, in every instance, in which he hears in the active voice." p. 42.—"It is no more possible or conceivable, that we should cause all our own volitions, than that men should beget themselves." p. 38.—"If we cause our own volitions at all, we cause them either by a previous volition, or without such volition. If we cause them by a previous voli-

tion,"—" this volition is produced by another preceding, which runs into the infinite series." pp. 50, 51.—" From the supposition, that volition is not the effect of a cause extrinsic to the mind in which it takes place, it will follow, that there is no cause of it; because it is absolutely impossible, that the mind itself should be the cause of it." p. 59.—" But that we should thus cause them, is neither possible nor conceivable. If we should thus cause a volition, we should doubtless cause it by a causal act: it is impossible that we cause any thing without a causal act. And as it is supposed, that we cause it freely, the causal act must be a *free* act, *i. e.* an act of the will or a volition. And as the supposition is, that all our volitions are caused by ourselves, the causal volition must be caused by another, and so on infinitely: which is both impossible and inconceivable." p. 38.—" The causing of one act of volition by another is attended with this absurdity also, it supposes the causing act in this case to be distinct from the act caused; when in reality they coalesce, and are one and the same. For instance, to choose to have a choice of virtue, is nothing but a choice of virtue; to choose the choice of an apple, is to choose an apple: so that we have the volition before we have it, and in order that we may have it." p. 48.—" Some of the advocates for self-determinaation hold, that the mind is the efficient cause of its own volitions, yet not by any *act* or *exertion* of the mind, but by the *power* or *faculty* of the will. And how can this power or faculty produce volition, unless it be exerted *first* in order to the effect?" p. 50.—" So long as it is granted, as Dr. West does grant, that motive is necessary to volition, and that every volition, whether choice or refusal, is occasioned by motive, and never exists without it, every thing is granted on this head, for which we contend." p. 64.—" I do not pretend, that motives are the *efficient* causes of volition.—When we assert, that volition is determined by motive, we mean not that motive is the efficient cause of it; but we mean, that there is a stated connection between volition and motive." p. 66.—" A motive can have no influence, before influence is given to it; and nothing can be a motive, which has no persuasive influence or tendency. Therefore, the influence of motives and the connection between them and volitions, are the effect of some cause extrinsic to the mind." p. 109.—" It is an undoubted truth, that no agent can bring any effect to pass, but what is consequent on his acting." p. 128.—" Our volition must either be the effect of an extrinsic cause, or of an intrinsic one, or must happen without cause." p. 45.—" Motives, then, are the reasons, the occasions, the necessary previous circumstances or antecedents of volition. And what are these but *second causes*? Causes in the sense, in which President Edwards explains himself to use the

word *cause* with relation to this very subject. We say, that fire is the cause of the sensation of heat; that rain and sunshine are the causes of vegetation, &c. Yet they are no more than the stated antecedents. In the same sense, motives, according to Dr. West, are causes of volitions. Besides, all second causes are the effect of the First Cause. Therefore ultimately volitions are effects of the Great First Cause." p. 133.— "If we be the efficient causes of our own volitions, they are effects. But an effect is produced by a previous exertion of the efficient cause, which act is as distinct from the effect, as the divine creating act was distinct from the world created." p. 172.—"We grant, that the Deity is the primary efficient cause of all things, and that he produces volitions in the human mind by such second causes as motives, appetites, biases, &c. and the human mind, in being the subject of the Divine agency whether mediate or immediate, is passive. Still we hold that volition is an *action*." p. 178.—"My thoughts and all my perceptions and feelings are *mine*; yet it will not be pretended, that I am the efficient of them all." p. 181.—"The volitions of rational beings are in their own nature moral acts, and for that reason the subjects of them are accountable for them." p. 185.—"Virtue and vice, desert of praise and blame, consist in the acts themselves, and not in their cause." p. 184.

In these extracts may be found the substance of Dr. Edwards's *Dissertation*. Some of his doctrines we shall certainly oppose; but before we do it, let us declare our hearty assent to some of his propositions. We believe, that "as volition always implies and supposes a motive; so does a motive as evidently imply and infer a volition. For by the very terms, that is no motive to a man, which does not persuade, move, or excite him to volition." p. 68. We agree, that "there is no absurdity in the supposition that one volition," or rather the *recollection* of one volition, "should be a motive to another volition." p. 110. We believe, "that we efficiently cause our own volitions, but invariably according to motives:" (p. 70,) that there is no effect without an adequate cause: that God has so constituted and governs the human mind, that no man can will without a motive: that God from everlasting foreknew all human volitions and their motives: that to the Divine Mind it was always *certain* that every volition would be exercised in consequence of its motive: that

Jehovah has determined all his own actions; and that all events accord with the Divine foreordination of them.

Having premised these things, we proceed to a consideration of the foregoing extracts.

By an *efficient cause* of any effect, we understand that cause which by its own efficiency produces that effect. Of *efficient causes*, we think, there are two classes; the first of which contains the Deity alone, and the second all created souls. The Divine Mind is the only uncreated, infinite, efficient cause. All other souls are finite, efficient causes. Besides these we know of no efficient causes in the universe. Nothing but a soul, a spirit, a mind, has any real efficiency. Material things have nothing more than an *instrumental* agency in the production of any effect. We define a soul, a spirit, a mind, to be a substance that can think, feel, will, and act. Of any spirit, soul, or mind, we have knowledge only by its operations, and our own conception, reason, and judgment. It is not an object of perception or of consciousness. The knowledge we have of matter is derived from our *perception* of its attributes, and our constitutional judgments, that the objects of our perception really exist; and that there could be no attribute without something to which it belongs.

The existence of a spirit is just as evident as the existence of a portion of matter; notwithstanding this variety of manner in becoming acquainted with the two objects. We have knowledge of a mathematical line and point, not by our senses; not by *perception* of any marks upon paper, which really have length and breadth, whereas a mathematical line has no breadth, and a point neither length nor breadth; but by conception. Our knowledge of a point is nevertheless as perfect as our knowledge of the existence of a man, or a mountain. In like manner, *power* is not an object of *perception*; and yet we *conceive* of it, and constitutionally judge, *that every operation implies the existence of the power to perform that operation.* This is as evident, upon inspection, as the truth upon which Dr. Edwards insists, *that every effect implies the existence of its cause.* Indeed the word *cause*, if properly used, must denote *power*, for evidently there can be *no*

causation of an effect, where there is *no power to cause an effect*. CAUSE, however, we do not use for OCCASION ; nor do we intend by it, in this connexion, an *instrumental cause*.

It seems to us incontrovertible, that every mental operation of man, proves the previous existence of power to perform it ; or else, the operation must have existed without any efficient cause of its existence. Of course, every *volition* evinces the existence of the requisite *power* of producing that volition. Under the term *power* we include every thing requisite to produce an effect. *Power to will* implies the existence of a being who has a faculty of volition, and the actual apprehension of some motive to a volition. Without these there *can* be no volition : so that the power of volition includes the notion of a motive.

Now then, we affirm, that every man has had power to perform every mental act, whether volition or other act, which he ever did perform ; and that he will have power to do every thing, which will ever be truly predicated of him.

Of all those mental operations, which man has power to perform, and actually does perform, we say that man is *the efficient cause*. Man *effects* them, by his own power. Yet his power, as well as his existence, is of God his Maker ; for had he not been created, had he not been formed with the faculty of volition, had he not been rendered capable of thought and feelings which constitute his motive to volition ; had he not been so constituted as to will from motives ; had he not been formed a finite efficient cause, he would have possessed no power of volition.

A real agent of an action, and *the efficient cause of that action*, we hold to be expressive of the same thing ; for *instrumental agents*, we distinguish from *real agents* ; and *the efficient cause*, from the *motive*, *reason*, or *occasion*, of any volition. Whether our use of language be correct, or not, our readers must judge ; and we fear not the verdict of common sense.

We *do pretend*, that man is the efficient cause of all his own mental operations : and that he really does every thing which he performs. God has made him *an agent*,

an efficient, who acts within prescribed bounds, and according to certain laws of mental empire, as really as God himself acts, and produces effects. He is the author of all those mental and bodily operations which are truly predicated of him, as much as God is the author of the universe. But these things, in Dr. Edwards's opinion, cannot be; for, "if a man be the efficient cause of any given volition, he must cause it by some previous act, or exertion of his agency; so that we must suppose one act to precede the first act, which is an absurdity." This is the drift of his reasoning. A volition, he says, is an *effect*, and of course must have some *cause*; and that cause must produce the effect, by some previous causal act; for "it is impossible that we cause any thing without a causal act." A volition is indeed an *effect*, that is, something produced by *an efficient cause*; but it is such an effect as we call an *action*, and requires nothing but *an agent*, having requisite power, to perform it. In performing the very act, the agent causes the effect; and a previous act is not necessary to its existence; any more than an action before every action is requisite to an agent's performing an action. Volition is a mental operation; and for the production of such an effect as volition, nothing is requisite but the power of volition in actual operation. One who has the power to will, actually wills, and thus the efficient produces this given effect, called a volition.

Every mental operation is an *effect*; and Dr. Edwards might have said, the human mind can perform no mental operation, without performing a previous mental operation, that is, it cannot act at all, with just as much propriety as he asserts, that no man can be the efficient cause of his own volition, without having a volition before any volition. By *the agent*, *the author*, and *the efficient cause* of any mental act, we mean one and the same thing, the soul of whom the act is predicated. This we think is the common, the justifiable use of these expressions.

If "volitions are the effects of some extrinsic cause;" that is, of some cause without the mind of which they are predicated, they are effects of some other being than the person to whom they are charged; and since these *effects*

called volitions are *actions*, they must be the actions of some other being than the person who is the agent of them. This is the same as to say, that a person's actions are not his own actions; that they are not done, produced, or effected by himself. The *causation* of a volition, Dr. Edwards attributes to the efficient cause; "and this efficient cause," he says, "is not the man of whom we predicate the volition; for he does not cause it: it is inconceivable, it is impossible that he should." Now by the *causation* of an effect we understand the production, the effecting, the performing, the doing of any thing. The effect in question is a volition; and if we may not ascribe to the man who wills, the causation of his volition, we may not say, that he performs, produces, or effects the mental operation called volition: we may not call him the doer, the author, the agent of his own mental action.

We read much about man's being a *determiner*, in the active voice; and at the same time *determined* in the *passive voice*. This means, we suppose, that man *wills* and at the same time *has his volition caused*; or that he is the agent of every volition which some other being than himself causes to exist. He wills, we grant, because he has power to will; and this power to will implies the existence of some motive to volition, besides other things. We grant, too, that some other agent may be instrumental in furnishing the motive to volition, than the being who wills; so that an extraneous efficient, or object, may be the *occasion* of volition, and may contribute to our ability for volition in a particular case. Nevertheless, a volition is an effect, and the cause, the performer, the efficient, the producer of volition, let him be whom he will, causes the effect in question, when he actually wills. We have no other idea of the causation of a volition. He wills, and this is the causation of such an effect as we call a volition. How we can be active and passive in the same mental action; how we can ourselves perform it; while another is the efficient of it, is beyond our power of conception. *What we do, another does not*, however he may assist, dispose, and enable us, to perform the act; and what another effects we are not the authors, agents, or efficient of. Had Dr. E. taught that we are *passive* in re-

ceiving those motives, which are the occasion of our volitions; and *active* in volitions, it would have been a doctrine much more probable than this; and yet, not true.

Dr. E. seems to have thought that motives exert some causal *influence* on volitions, and that we are passive in being acted upon by this influence. "We are passive," he says, "so far as to be the subjects of the *influence* of the efficient cause:" and this *influence* is given by the Great First Efficient Cause, he intimates, to motives. "*A motive can have no influence, before influence is given to it; and nothing can be a motive, which has no persuasive influence or tendency.*" This *influence*, he says, *is an effect of some cause extrinsic to the mind.* What, then, is this *influence*? What is its nature? How does it operate? After God has given a motive influence, how does that influence affect the will? Is it by any voluntary or involuntary operation, causation or agency? Dr. Dana, with great force, remarks,

"The original (that is, the *true and real*) cause of volition is, therefore, yet to be explained. For if it be the immediate effect of motive, still this cause is an effect in regard to something preceding,—and whatever is the next or immediate cause of the strength or energy of motive itself, this again is an effect in relation to a cause preceding, as well as a cause in relation to motive,—and thus the inquiry may be pursued *in infinitum*.—Should it be said, that the energy of motive, in every case, is to be attributed to the First and Supreme Cause, as the immediate efficient—this, indeed, is making short work; but it is cutting the knot, rather than untying it. However, when it shall be shewn, that every act of will, in every creature, is an immediate, necessary effect of the Supreme Cause, the dispute will at once be at an end." *Examination*, p. 6.

When all this is proved, it will be a settled point, that there is but one efficient cause, one agent, one author of all physical and moral operations in the universe.

Of the influence of motives we know nothing more than this, that, when we exercise a volition, it is in consequence of some thought or feeling, which we call a motive; but we cannot conceive of any causal influence which one mental operation has upon another, nor are we conscious of any. Should any one say, "I chose to eat an apple,

because it seemed desirable to me to do so;" he would exhibit a volition and its motive. Now, can any one tell us, how this motive, this conceiving, judging, or thinking it desirable to eat an apple, exerted any causal influence on the act of choosing, or on the faculty of choice? Is this causal influence a volition, a thought, a feeling, or a physical operation? The motive is itself one mental operation of mentally seeing, that is, of conceiving and judging; that a certain action is desirable to be done; and the volition is an act, related to the former mental act, as a volition to a motive; but of any causation in the case, strictly speaking, we have no knowledge. This we know, that God has made us capable of thinking, and choosing; and that such are the laws of mental operation, that we never choose but in consequence of some motive; yet the motive cannot cause the volition, because motive is not an efficient cause, is not a being possessed of a faculty of agency.

Dr. E. would illustrate his notion of the activity and passivity of man in his volitions, by referring to the act of hearing. "*When a man hears a sound, he is the hearer in the active voice, and yet is caused to hear the same sound, by something extrinsic to himself.*" Hearing is a mental act, called a *perception*; and the *efficient cause* of it, is the mind that performs the operation of hearing. Yet God, who made and governs man, has ordained this law, that man shall perform this operation only through the medium of his ears, and the percussion of the atmosphere. His ears and the percussion of the atmosphere are, therefore, called *instrumental causes* of hearing. They really do not produce the effect called an act of hearing; so that a man is *the efficient cause* of his own hearing, in every instance in which he hears. His ears exert no efficiency in the case, neither does the atmosphere. It is *conceivable*, by us, that a man should really perform all his own mental acts of seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting, and touching, whatever be the appointed, but not, in the nature of the case, essential, instrumentality, of material organs. We can even conceive, that all our mental actions should be performed by a spirit in a state of separation from the body. It is quite as conceivable, that God should create a mind ca-

pable of seeing and hearing, as that his own uncreated, immaterial spirit should hear his own thunder, and see the stars which his own hand has made. We can, moreover, as readily conceive of man's efficiently exerting himself, of man's originating his own finite actions, as of any causation on the part of the Deity.

We have shown, we trust, to the satisfaction of our readers, that although a man cannot *immediately* cause a volition by a volition, yet *mediately* he can. Indeed, Dr. Edwards admits, that one volition may be a motive to another, and have influence in producing it; and Dr. Stephen West, his coadjutor, says, "Habit means nothing more than a certain fixt connexion between our *present* exercises of will, and *future* voluntary exertions of the *same general nature, and denominations.*" *Essay*, p. 56. Yet Dr. E. thinks it absurd to speak of one volition's causing another, (he must mean *immediately*,) because the two volitions, in the case of a man's choosing to choose, in his opinion, *coalesce and are one and the same*. "For instance, to choose to have a choice of virtue, is nothing but a choice of virtue; to choose the choice of an apple, is to choose an apple: so that we have the volition before we have it, and in order that we may have it." To-day we may choose to have a choice of virtue to-morrow; and this choice of to-day is something distinct from the choice of virtue; for it is a volition concerning a future volition; so that it is not quite so absurd, *to choose to have a choice*, as Dr. E. seems to have imagined. The expression conveys good sense. And if we may now choose to have a choice to-morrow, why may we not this evening, an hour hence; or one moment after our present volition?

Besides, a man may not choose virtue from the love of it; and so strictly speaking does not choose virtue; while he may be convinced that virtue is necessary to everlasting happiness, and from the desire of the latter may choose to have the choice of the former as the requisite means of everlasting felicity. An unrenewed man may thus, from selfish motives, now choose at some future time to choose virtue; just as one who loathes medicine may choose to have a volition by and by to take it,

as the necessary means of self-preservation. Should a man choose virtue for its own sake, or from a desire to glorify and enjoy God, he would in this volition have evidence of being a renewed person. The pious choose virtue for the present, and will to choose it in future ; but the ungodly, when afraid of hell, will, purpose, intend, determine, or choose, as a matter of direful necessity, to have a choice of it, at some more convenient season. This is a matter of daily experience : it is nothing like *having a volition before we have it, and in order that we may have that identical volition.*

That the Deity is the sole efficient cause of the existence of all substances is undeniable. Of course, he is the maker of every human soul and body, with all their constituent faculties. He has ordained all our modes of mental operation ; as infallibly as all modes of physical operation. Yet should we advance still further, and affirm that the Deity is the efficient cause, the producer, the author of all human volitions, we should, in our own esteem, make God the only sinner in existence. We deeply regret, that Dr. Edwards should have been of the opinion, that God efficiently causes all sinful volitions, and think he has not exonerated his Maker, according to his own theory, from deserved blame, by allèging, that all virtue and vice, desert of praise and blame, consist not in the *cause* of volitions, but in the acts themselves. Any mental operation contrary to the moral law is a vice ; any one conformable to it, is a virtue : and any being who is the performer, the producer, the efficient, the doer of any one of these, is blamable or praiseworthy according to the nature of the operation performed. This is the language of common sense, and of the Bible. The divine law blames, censures and condemns those *persons* who produce any moral evil, for their criminal efficiency in the matter : so that the criminal author of any mischief is the being censured by God. Could he, then, excuse himself, were he to produce, or efficiently cause every rebellious thought, feeling, volition, and action ? May the Lord preserve us from charging all, or any of our sinful mental actions, and voluntary external conduct, upon Him, who cannot look upon sin without abhorrence.

Moral Disquisitions and Scriptures on the Rev. David Tappan's Letters to Philalethes, by the Rev. Samuel Spring, D. D. require a little attention. The edition from which we quote was printed at Newburyport, in 1789. Dr. Spring tells us that man's *intellectual exercises are no more depraved than his finger nails; for, they are not of a moral kind.* Exercises of reason, judgment and conscience, he says are not *moral exercises.* p. 9.

“Mere desires to enjoy pleasure and to escape misery are natural exercises, and not moral.” “Natural gratitude, sympathy and natural affection,—are not of the moral kind,” p. 10. “That sin consists in self-love it is evident from this consideration, that it is impossible for it to consist in any thing else. Sin, every one grants, whatever be the nature of it, is inseparable from volition. It is a wrong choice or volition.” “Sin is nothing but self-love in some shape or other; for it cannot possibly be any thing else. That all sin consists in self-love, it is evident from this consideration, that self-love is the only exercise which is opposed to disinterested love. As disinterested love, therefore, is holiness, self-love is sin.” p. 16, 17. “It is impossible to prove that sin is not a volition: and it is equally impossible to prove that there are any volitions which are neither selfish nor benevolent.” p. 39. “The term motive denotes not only an object of choice, but it denotes the choice of an object.” p. 51. “These are the two senses in which the term motive is frequently used, by those who write and speak with propriety. And, if the word be used properly in a third sense, I wish to see it pointed out and exemplified. Motives are objective and subjective.” “In one word, motive sometimes means the object of volition, and sometimes the volition itself. p. 52.—What is a moral action? A moral action is the exercise of the will, or heart of man. For the heart of man is the only source of moral exercise.” “In other words, a moral action is the volition of a moral agent: and not any animal, intellectual, visible, or external motion.” p. 54.” “Moral actions and motives are the same thing.” “For there is no difference between moral actions and motives.” p. 55.

In the foregoing extracts we have the following doctrines:—That *the heart* and *the will* of a man are the same thing:—that every operation of the heart is a volition:—that *love* as well as *choice* is a *volition*:—that a *motive* is an act of the will, or a volition:—and that nothing in man is either morally good, or morally evil,

but acts of volition. It is needless, after all we have formerly written concerning the heart, the will, and motives, to expose the inaccuracy of Dr. Spring. His attempt to simplify mental science, by reducing every mental act of a moral nature to a volition, produces nothing but confusion. He is the only writer we have ever read, that ever called a volition a motive. A motive to volition cannot be the volition itself, unless a thing can exist before it exists. If we take his term *volitions*, however, to denote not only volitions, properly so called, but also all of our affections and passions, it will not be true, that nothing is either morally good or morally evil, but "exercises of the will," or the "volitions" of man. We refer for the proof of our assertion to the word of God. "The *thoughts* of the righteous are right," says the author of the Book of *Proverbs*. xii. 5. Now *thoughts* are distinguished in the Bible from *volitions* and *feelings*. If some *thoughts* are right, in a scriptural sense, they must be morally right; they must be holy. Yet Dr. Spring says, nothing is morally good or evil, but "the *volition* of a moral agent." A *thought* is an *intellectual operation* of a moral agent, and the Bible tells us, that thoughts are good or bad, holy or sinful; but Dr. Spring insists upon it, that no intellectual operation of a moral agent can be either holy or sinful any more than a man's "finger nails." This is Hopkinsianism.

"The *thoughts* of the wicked are an abomination to the Lord." *Proverbs* xv. 26. Such *thoughts*, as well as such *volitions*, *affections*, and *passions* as the law of God requires, are morally good; while any mental operation that is forbidden by the law of God is morally evil. This is a doctrine of Calvinism.

Dr. Spring, to be consistent, would no doubt say, that thoughts are volitions. In short, all mental operations are volitions, according to his theory; for it is as easy to show, that perceiving, understanding, reasoning, judging, memory, consciousness, and conscience, are volitions, as that love, hatred, fear, hope, desire, and disgust, are acts of choosing. But the Hopkinsians are the metaphysicians! No doubt of it! For they assert that they are metaphysicians; and how can they, in profound disinterestedness, misjudge concerning their own talents and acquisitions?